Tirax grammar and narrative:

an Oceanic language spoken on
Malakula, North Central Vanuatu

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Abstract

This work provides the only description of the grammar and narratives of Tirax, an Oceanic language spoken in three villages on Malakula, North Central Vanuatu. The data on which the work is based was collected by the author during a three-month fieldtrip to Malakula in 2004, with a short follow-up fieldtrip in 2007, and regular correspondence for final fact-checking.

Tirax has many features typical of North Central Vanuatu languages, such as obligatory subject-mood markers distinguishing realis and irrealis mood, ‘inalienable’ and ‘alienable’ possessive marking, a range of possessive classifiers for alienable possession, verbal behaviour in the numeral system, ‘nuclear’ verb serialisation, and a range of strategies for paratactic linkage. Additionally, several morphosyntactic processes, such as object marking and plural marking, are sensitive to the animacy of the referent.

The pattern of distribution of some of the grammatical features identified in the language was studied to determine their discourse-pragmatic function. In particular, aspect markers and NP markers encoding definiteness and number are grammatically optional in Tirax, and it is found that they are strategically used by speakers for marking prominence or otherwise engaging the hearer in the narrative. The work therefore represents a novel approach to language description, highlighting the relationship between discourse and grammar. A holistic analysis of the narratives was undertaken, studying the prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic layers of structure. This holistic, integrated approach has revealed the existence of transition clauses, hitherto undescribed discourse structures which are frequently encountered in Tirax.

Appendices include illustrative texts, a methodology for identifying intonation units, and a description of Tirax phonology. There is a CD ROM version available of this work with links to illustrative audio clips, reflecting a general trend in grammatical descriptions towards transparency and interactivity.
Declaration

This is to certify that

1. the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,
2. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
3. the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, examples, bibliographies and appendices.

Amanda Brotchie
May 2009
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The text and audio quoted in this work have been provided by the Tirax speakers for educational purposes only, and permission has been given for the use of the stories in this work. The audio and stories should not be used elsewhere without the prior consent of the speakers.
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## Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>allative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANA</td>
<td>anaphoric marker</td>
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<td>anaphoric pronoun</td>
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<td>causative</td>
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<td>R</td>
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<tr>
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<td>recently completed</td>
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<td>subordinate conjunction</td>
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### Person and number markers

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<td>dual</td>
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<td>PX</td>
<td>plural exclusive</td>
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<td>first person</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
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Glossing conventions

Morphological boundaries are written as dashes and equals signs:
- is an affix boundary
= is a clitic boundary

Grammatical morphemes are glossed with small caps, and portmanteaux are glossed with colons, eg. third person singular realis is represented as 3:S:R. Hesitations and false starts are left in the examples, except where they obscure the exemplified phenomena, and glossed as HES, for hesitation. The examples have a code next to them, which locates the audio in the database, such as \aud AB1-018-A.wav\as 1028.559\ae 1033.873, where \aud identifies the cassette and side, \as gives the location of the audio on the tape in seconds, and \ae gives the end point.

Transcription conventions

There is little punctuation in the examples. Dialogue is given in inverted commas, except for in the narrative analysis, where intonation units are transcribed with prosodic information, given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation Unit \</th>
<th>IU has falling intonation</th>
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<td>Intonation Unit \ \</td>
<td>IU has steeply falling intonation contour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation Unit /</td>
<td>IU has rising intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intonation Unit —</td>
<td>IU has continuing intonation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intonation Unit =</td>
<td>following IU is latched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . .</td>
<td>Pause of less than 0.2 seconds duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . (X)</td>
<td>Pause of X seconds duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^ Clause ^</td>
<td>Clause has high pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^^ Clause ^ ^</td>
<td>Clause has very high pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . Clause .</td>
<td>Clause has low pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:</td>
<td>Lengthened vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word</td>
<td>Word is loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word -</td>
<td>False start</td>
</tr>
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Map 2: Vanuatu
Map 4: Present day Tjekk language area
1 Introduction

This work is a description of the grammar and narrative of the Tirax language of North Central Vanuatu. It represents a novel approach to language description, placing grammatical description in the context of language-in-use, and in doing so, exposing the interaction between narrative pressures and the language’s resources.

This short chapter begins with an introduction to the language and its sociolinguistic context. There follows a typological sketch and a brief summary of the sound system. The methodology for the present research and a description of the corpus is given in section §1.2, and there is a brief discussion on the role of discourse in language description. The chapter concludes with a summary of the contents of the thesis.

1.1 Introduction to Tirax

1.1.1 Background: the language, language family and sociolinguistic situation

Resan Tirax, the language of Tirax, is spoken in several villages across the north east of Malakula, Vanuatu. Map 1 shows Vanuatu, an archipelago off the northeast coast of Australia, and map 2 shows Malakula, the second largest island in the archipelago, in north central Vanuatu. As shown on map 3, the traditional home of the Tirax speakers is in the mountains of north central Malakula, and its traditional neighbours are V’æn Taut and Tape. As the Tirax people converted to Christianity, they migrated towards the coast and established the villages of Mae, Bethel and Rori with several Tirax families also moving to Orap and Wala-Rano further up the east coast (see map 4). I estimate the total number of people who are regularly using Tirax today to be around 800.

Tirax is referred to as Mae in the Ethnologue listing, and in Tryon (1976). The name Tirax is used by the speakers, and is likely to have come via a neighbouring language, such as Tape, where it is used to refer to the Tirax speakers, and means man bus, ‘inland person’ in Bislama, as opposed to man solwata ‘coastal person’. While the

---

1 The name of the language spoken in the Lingarak area is on maps 3 and 4 as Nevwerwer, from Lynch and Crowley’s (2001) survey of Vanuatu languages. Since preparing the maps, I have become aware of the name change, as a result of Julie Barbour’s work on the language, and the language is referred to in the text of the present work by its new name, Neverver.
Tape word for the Tirax language is *Tirax*, the Neve‘ei word is *Dirax* (Crowley 2006a:14), and the word *Dirak*, which is used by Lynch & Crowley (2001), comes from the speakers of Northeast Malakula (Crowley 2006b:3 footnote). *Resan* is the Tirax word for ‘speech, language’, and is also informally used by the Tirax community to refer to their language. The putative owners of the language are the Batarvxalin, one of the Tirax sub-groups, and at the time of writing there was a court case pending to officially change the name of the language; the new name is not presently public knowledge and would be announced following the court case. In the meantime, Tirax is an accepted name, and preferred over ‘Mae’, as it is inclusive of all speakers in the different villages.

The Vanuatu languages are part of the Southern Oceanic sub-group of the Austronesian language family (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002). Vanuatu has the highest number of languages per capita in the world, and Malakula has the highest number of living and moribund languages in Vanuatu. With a population of about 27,000, there are an estimated forty distinct languages spoken on Malakula (Lynch & Crowley 2001:67-70, Crowley 2006a:3). There have been a number of proposals for sub-groupings within the North and Central Vanuatu languages (eg. Pawley 1972, Tryon 1976, Clark 2004, Lynch 2006). Due to the limited data available on Malakula languages there have only been tentative proposals for sub-groupings within Malakula. The languages of Malakula have been variously grouped with languages to the north in a north sub-grouping and with languages to the south in a central sub-grouping. Clarke (2004) groups Dirak (sic) with Malua Bay, spoken on the North West coast of Malakula. Tryon (1976) splits the languages of Malakula into two groups: ‘Malakula Interior’ and ‘Malakula Coastal’, with ‘Mae’ (sic) included in the Malakula Coastal sub-group. The data for both these analyses was from Tryon (1976). Lynch recently reassessed the internal relationships of the Malakula languages using the latest available data, including a Tirax wordlist collected by the author, and has tentatively concluded that Tirax is a part of a northeast sub-group, with closest relatives Unua and Uripiv (Lynch 2006).

Most of the fieldwork for the present work was conducted in Mae, the largest Tirax village. Here, most villagers speak at least two languages: Tirax, and the national language, Bislama, with both being used regularly in daily life. Mae is a francophone
village, meaning that French is the official language of instruction at the local primary school. However French is rarely used outside the school.

Public speaking and public events are generally conducted in Bislama. These include local versions of national celebrations such as Independence Day and Children’s Day, local events such as community meetings, and extended family events such as first birthday celebrations. For smaller events, particularly traditional rituals, the language used is likely to be Tirax. Unless an outsider is present, most chatting and gossip by adults is conducted in Tirax, otherwise the language used is Bislama.

Many Tirax speakers can speak or at least understand V’anen Taut and Northeast Malakula, and according to Lynch and Crowley (2001:80) there have been unconfirmed reports that the Tirax language is being eroded by Northeast Malakula. So far I have not seen any evidence that Tirax is losing ground to either of these two larger languages. By far the greatest threat to Tirax is from Bislama, via intermarriages. The population of Mae is growing rapidly, with an average of three or four children in every family. However the number of children learning Tirax as a first language appears to be in decline as a result of intermarriages, where children are likely to grow up learning Bislama as a first language and learning Tirax later.

The Tirax spoken by middle-aged and younger speakers tends to include Bislama words, and it appears that most younger speakers have only a relatively small working vocabulary of Tirax. The older speakers have a larger Tirax lexicon, but only a handful of older speakers have a detailed knowledge of the language, including the range of flora and fauna terms for example. Even the older speakers tend to use some Bislama words when speaking Tirax. With these considerations, the language is clearly threatened. However the community is aware of the possibility of losing the language and some are making an effort to use Tirax with their children.

While the language is currently used in most social situations and is reasonably healthy, it will require the concerted efforts of adult speakers to ensure its long-term viability.
1.1.2 Typological overview

The Tirax phoneme inventory comprises fifteen consonants and seven vowels. It does not contain apicolabial consonants, labiovelars or bilabial trills, each found in neighbouring languages. Voiced oral stops are pre-nasalised, as is common in the languages of Vanuatu. Unusual for the languages of Malakula, Tirax distinguishes three front vowels and three back vowels. Schwa occurrences are common in Tirax speech, but there is no evidence that the schwa is phonemic, being accounted for by rules of epenthesis on the one hand and vowel lenition on the other.

Tirax, as is typical of Vanuatu languages, has an unmarked SVO constituent order. At phrase level, Tirax is a head-marking, head-first language, with modifiers generally following the head of the phrase. Four lexical word classes can be distinguished on the basis of distributional and morphological criteria: nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, however many words have multi-category membership. For example, a large number of adjectives and adverbs are also members of the sub-category of intransitive verbs, and a small number of these actually have membership of all three classes. There are also six broad grammatical word classes: prepositions, determiners, numerals, interrogatives, particles, and a category of discourse markers, which includes subordinating and coordinating conjunctions.

There is no case-marking system and the grammatical categories of definiteness, indefiniteness and number are optionally marked. Like many Vanuatu languages, Tirax distinguishes two types of possession: directly marked and indirectly marked, which roughly corresponds to the semantic categories of inalienable and alienable respectively. The distinction is represented with a possessive suffix for direct possession and a free morpheme for indirect possession. The grammar of possession is also sensitive to animacy: the possessive paradigm applies to human possessors only, with non-human possessors using the associative marker *na* to indicate all types of possession.

As for many Oceanic languages, Tirax has obligatory pre-verbal clitics indicating mood and the person and number of the subject. There are two moods distinguished: realis for events that have happened or are happening, and irrealis, for events that are hypothetical or are to take place in the future. A verb is negated with negative suffix *–te*, and there is a separate set of subject-mood proclitics for negative clauses which
can be used in conjunction with the negative suffix in place of realsis or irrealis clitics, to emphasise the negative meaning. There is also a range of pre-verbs and post-verbal modifiers to encode grammatical categories, including aspect and politeness.

The proto-Oceanic (POc) transitivity marker *–i has been reanalysed as a third person object marker in Tirax. The object marker is suffixed onto the verb when the object NP is absent, but it cannot co-occur with the object NP. The object marker is sensitive to animacy in two ways:

- an inanimate object is optionally represented with the object marker, whereas a human or anthropomorphised entity is obligatorily represented if there is no free object NP
- number is obligatorily expressed for animate objects, with markers -i (singular) and -er (plural), however number is optionally expressed for inanimate objects, with the 3s marker typically used for both singular and plural inanimate objects

Numerals in Tirax, as in many other Vanuatu languages, form a distinct grammatical category on the basis of their distribution and morphology. Like verbs, numerals take subject-mood clitics. However there is evidence to suggest that, unlike true verbs, numerals occur within the noun phrase. A separate set of reduplicated numerals do not take the subject-mood clitic, and occur in a different slot within the noun phrase to verbal numerals, closer to the head noun.

Reduplication is a common derivational process that applies to verbs, adjectives and less frequently to other word classes. It has a range of functions depending on the semantics of the stem, including intensification of meaning, iteration of action, and valency-decreasing to derive an intransitive verb from a transitive one. Unlike many Vanuatu languages, there is no productive transitivising suffix in Tirax to derive a transitive verb from an intransitive counterpart, and transitive-intransitive pairs of verbs are generally lexically distinguished from each other, or related by a process of reduplication as just mentioned.

Tirax relative clauses are typical of those of other Vanuatu languages. Relative clauses follow the head noun, and are marked with a general subordinating marker, te. Tirax allows relativisation of NPs right down the Accessibility Hierarchy through to possessives.
Like many Oceanic languages, Tirax does not have a passive voice. An ‘impersonal’ subject-mood clitic is used, $r=$, formally identical to the 3rd person dual realis clitic, to give a passive meaning.

Finally, Tirax is typical of Oceanic languages in having verb complexes, often referred to as nuclear serial verbs in the literature (Crowley 2002:42-3). It also has a range of complex constructions, including complementation, core-layer serial verb constructions, clause-chains, clause-juxtaposition, subordination and coordination, defined and discussed in chapter 6. There are a variety of strategies for giving prominence to participants and managing the flow of information, such as fronting and ‘topicalisation’, in which a NP precedes a clause in which it has no grammatical role. And tail-head linkage, found in many Vanuatu languages, is common in Tirax discourse and one of the major ways of linking sentences to form an oral text.

1.1.3 Previous research
The only known published source for Tirax is two word-lists in Tryon (1976), one under the name of ‘Mae’ and the other under ‘Orap’ (Lynch & Crowley 2001). Lynch and Crowley report that the assignment of Orap to the same language as Mae may be incorrect, as Orap residents speak a variety of the Northeast Malakula language (2001:80). While it is true that most Orap residents speak a variety of Northeast Malakula, there are several families of Tirax-speakers also living in Orap and it appears that it is from one of these that the Orap word-list was taken, as Tryon’s Orap word-list, as well as his Mae data, does appear to be Tirax.

The Tryon word-list corresponds on the whole to my findings, with the following exceptions:

- Tryon uses six vowels in his transcriptions instead of seven: two front vowels, two back vowels and two central vowels. This means that
  - pairs of open and closed vowels, /e/ & /ɛ/, and /o/ & /ɔ/, are conflated.
  - schwas are posited in words where there is evidence from stress assignment rules to suggest that they are actually epenthetic.
- Tryon also distinguishes a voiced and voiceless velar fricative, and there is now evidence that they are allophones of the one phoneme
• With respect to the vocabulary items, there are some items which have been mistranslated. For example the Tirax word for ‘sky’ is *dakran*, the same as the word for ‘cloud’, and this is the word in the Orap list. However ‘sky’ is translated in Tryon’s ‘Mae’ as *linha* (1976:337), which actually means ‘high, up, above’.

The main ethnographic work on Malakula is Bernard Deacon’s *Malakula: A vanishing people*, compiled posthumously from Deacon’s notes in 1931. Much of this work is based on his travels in Southern Malakula and little is recorded of the North interior, where Tirax was located at the time.

1.2 The present research
1.2.1 The data and fieldwork
The data was collected by the author during a three-month field trip to Malakula, conducted in 2004, with a follow-up short fact-checking trip in October-November 2007. During the first field trip, around thirty hours of audio data was collected, including elicitation, personal anecdotes, expository texts, traditional tales, conversations and wordlists. An analogue cassette recorder was used with a good quality external microphone. There is an additional four hours of digital video, using a one-chip Sony digital handicam and around a thousand digital stills, documenting stories, songs, conversation, flora and fauna and traditional customs, such as a traditional baptism, hair braiding and the preparation for a traditional feast. The success of the fieldwork is a tribute to the generosity of the community, who looked after me and opened up their homes, language and culture to me. Most of the data came from Mae village, where I was based, but there were also contributions from the villages of Rori and Bethel. The audio data is digitally archived at PARADISEC, the Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures, as well as the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Vila.²

Both field trips relied heavily on the diligent assistance of the speakers, in particular the local fieldworker, Tamedal Massing, who worked with me for around five hours a day, five days a week during the first field trip, organising community gatherings to

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² This archived data comprises approximately twenty hours of all stories, conversations, song, expository texts and personal histories recorded, and excludes elicitation and wordlist sessions recorded by the author. The PARADISEC website address is http://www.paradisec.org.au/.
explain the research, recruiting storytellers, organising for me to film or photograph cultural events, explaining customs and beliefs, recording wordlists, helping with the transcriptions and translations, as well as recording some of his own stories. The depth and breadth of data collected is a testament to his unwavering dedication to the research. In 2007 I received valuable additional assistance from Marie-Reine Nedis and Rita Dilvanu, who worked long hours trawling through the findings with me on the second fact-checking trip.

The first concrete outcome of the research was a writing system, which has been approved by the community, and which is used for transcriptions in the present work.

1.2.2 Methodology and software
The data was transcribed in the field with the help of Tamedal Massing. Once back in Melbourne the sound files were digitised and archived at PARADESIC, and the digitised material was ‘chunked’ using Transcriber 1.4.6 on an eMac, with OS X. The chunked text and sound files were then linked using Audiamus, a software tool developed by Nick Thieberger for this purpose. The text file was outputted from audiamus with a code for the sound file and audio in and out points for each chunk. The text file was then imported into shoebox for parsing. BBEdit was also used during the course of the analysis for its facility in executing targeted global finds in multiple files using GREP (Global Regular Expression Print), and compiling concordances.

The description of the grammar was based on the data collected by the author. During the analysis, Audiamus was regularly used to refer to the sound file to investigate apparent anomalies and check transcriptions. In this way the analyses were perpetually being checked against the original data and transcriptions were continually refined and improved. Praat was used to perform acoustic analyses on features such as relative pitch and intensity, for example to help distinguish an affix from a clitic by identifying any changes in stress placement in a stem. For the narrative analysis, ten narratives were selected representing a range of speakers. These narratives are listed in Appendix V. The ten narratives were re-transcribed, adding prosodic information, such as intonation contour, pitch, voice quality and

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3 For a review of Audiamus and its application in data analysis see Brotchie (2007).
pause length. They were analysed into intonation units (IUs) using criteria adapted from Chafe (1994) and described in Appendix IV. This corpus of ten narratives was supplemented by examples from other traditional narratives where necessary. Excel was regularly used during the narrative analysis for a cross-comparison of the grammatical features in the texts.

When writing up the thesis, Sound Studio was regularly used in combination with BBEdit to view the soundwave, locate additional examples, and make additional measurements such as length of intonation unit. The audio references points on the text file were used to locate the clip in the sound file. This procedure was used to locate and compile the clips that correspond to the examples in the text. An ear icon 🎧 is placed beside examples in the thesis which have a corresponding sound file.

1.3 Grammar and narrative

Descriptive grammars of a language traditionally present of the rules of morphosyntax in isolation from the discourse context. The underlying assumption is that the extraction of sentences from their context is not going to alter either the facts of the morphosyntax nor the processes of observation and induction to derive the generalised rules of grammar. It is also widely observed that while grammatical rules help determine the patterns of language, the patterns of language use influence the process of grammaticisation. This thesis presents aspects of Tirax grammar in tandem with Tirax narrative in an effort to expose the interaction between the rules of grammar and the functional pressures of storytelling.

1.3.1 Functional approach to grammar

Hopper and Thompson (1980) among others advocate an approach to language description that refers to the discourse ‘motivation’, or functional pressures of discourse.

_In general, then, we suggest that phrasocentric (‘sentence-level’ or sentence-internal) accounts of morphosyntax can have only a provisional and incomplete validity, and that a fully coherent theory of language must begin at (and not merely include) the level of discourse MOTIVATION for individual sentences._

Hopper & Thompson 1980:293
It is well known that there are principles of selection and organisation of linguistic structures in language which operate above the level of the sentence, and that these principles can be discovered when grammar is viewed through the prism of discourse. As Hopper and Thompson (1980) among others observe, the study of discourse can also shed light on grammatical processes which operate at sentence level and below, and which would otherwise be obscured. In the course of this work, it will be shown that some features of traditional clause-level grammar, such as aspect marking and definite marking, are most effectively explained by referring to their function in discourse. This work is therefore situated in the discourse-functional tradition of grammatical analysis. The present work will demonstrate that formulating rules in a descriptive grammar is compromised if the grammatical features are isolated from their discourse context, and that a grammar needs to refer to patterns of distribution of grammatical features in a text in order to adequately describe their ‘meaning’. The genre of discourse used for this study is traditional narrative; traditional narrative is a highly ordered form of discourse, which makes it a suitable entry point for understanding structure and function in discourse for a particular language.

1.3.2 Background on narrative study

Narrative analysis has its roots in Aristotle’s *Poetics*, and has developed in the intervening years through various disciplines, such as literary theory (eg. Bakhtin 1981) and narratology (eg. Prince 1982), cognitive science (eg. Mandler & Johnson 1977), and linguistics (eg. Labov & Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972, Du Bois 1980), including cognitive linguistics (eg. Talmy 1995) and Deictic Centre Theory (eg. Zubin and Hewitt 1995). There are two main influences on the approach to narrative analysis in this work. The first is the work of Labov and Waletzky (1967), who demonstrated a way of applying the techniques of linguistic analysis to narrative through identifying and distinguishing the constituents that combine to make up a text. The second is Deictic Centre Theory, whose premise is that a fundamental structuring principle in discourse can be understood as a moving lens, or window,

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4 See Cumming and Ono (1997) for a brief history and overview of discourse-functional approach to linguistic analysis.
through which the audience is guided by the speaker to view the story (cf. Zubin and Hewitt 1995).

The object of narrative analysis has traditionally been autonomous, single-teller texts, such as novels, traditional tales and uninterrupted personal anecdotes. Since narratives are a genre of discourse that occur universally, they can be studied across languages for comparison and contrast. Labov and Waletzky (1967) eschewed traditional narrative in favour of spontaneous oral texts, on the grounds that spontaneous anecdotes might more simply and transparently reflect the relationship between the formal properties of narrative and their narrative function. From a cognitive point of view, Mandler and Johnson (1977) contend that traditional narrative may shed light on the processes that underpin language, on the grounds that traditional narratives are likely to reflect the structures that most readily yield to remembering and re-telling.

There has been a vast amount of research on narrative structure and the discourse processes involved in narrative, however most of these studies have been on written texts or Indo-European languages or both (eg. Fox 1986, 1987, 1996, Halliday & Hasan 1976, Labov & Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972, 1997, Fleischman 1990, Zwaan 1996, Ji 2002, Ballantyne 2005 and many others). Linguists have pointed out that narratives in oral traditions may have a slightly different structure to those in literate traditions, since they are more heavily reliant on human memory for their transmission (eg. Peabody 1975, Ong 2002, Fleischman 1990). In particular, narratives in oral traditions are less likely to be rigorously sequential, as we will see in chapter 8 is the case for Tirax (see also Brotchie forthcoming.) The present study of Tirax narrative also describes other discourse features which are likely to be associated with orality, such as tail-head linkage and topicalisation, which are vulnerable to being lost as the stories are written down and they no longer serve their purpose.

Narratives in oral traditions can be regarded as performances (cf. Tedlock 1983, Bauman 1986, Facey 1988). These performance events are recorded and transcribed

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5 However in recent years, narrative analysis has had somewhat of a renaissance in linguistics, with an emphasis on spontaneous, co-operative multi-party discourse (eg. Ochs & Capps 2001, Schiffrin 2006, Stirling and Strahan forthcoming).
in the present work in as much detail as practicable to reflect the qualities which are likely to confer linguistic meaning. As Tedlock (1983) notes, leaving out prosodic features of the performance in a transcription can be as misleading as mistranscribing other linguistic features.

‘The apparent flatness of many past translations is not a reflection but a distortion of the originals, caused by the dictation process, the notion that content and form are independent, a pervasive deafness to oral qualities, and a fixed notion of the boundary between poetry and prose. Present conditions, which combine new recording techniques with a growing sensitivity to verbal art as performed ‘event’ rather than as a fixed object on the page, promise removal of previous difficulties.’

Tedlock 1983:54-55

Following researchers such as Tedlock (1983) and Bauman (1986), the approach taken in the present work is to regard storytellers as artists who, consciously or unconsciously, manipulate their material to engage the listener. Storytellers enhance the telling of their stories through means such as the choice of words, linguistic structures and prosody. As we will see, we can demonstrate a link between the functional pressures of storytelling and the pattern of distribution of grammatical, lexical and structural features of narrative. As the performance of the narrative is central to the present research, the lines of transcribed text align with intonation units (IUs) in chapters 7 through to 11, rather than clauses.  

1.3.3 Tirax narratives

It has been observed that narrative works in oral traditions are characterised by such features as simple clauses, redundancies and repetitions, formulaic expressions and regular metres, and further that these features reflect the constraints of human memory (eg. Ong 1982b:37ff & 57ff). These features are also typical of Tirax narratives.

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6 See Appendix IV for a methodology for identifying IUs.
The ten traditional narratives which form the basis of the data for the narrative analysis comprise tales about humans and devils, animal fables, treacherous family members and ill-fated marriages between humans and supernatural beings. They are told by a range of adult speakers, young and old, male and female. While speaker styles can vary, the structural features identified in the present work recur throughout the corpus of traditional tales. The Tirax narratives also tend to have recurring themes: a boy is left alone at home, a ‘devil’ arrives, the boy outwits the devil; a female supernatural being marries a human and is betrayed by the man or his family. Animal fables are typically teleological, explaining such things as ‘how the rat got its tail’, and the enmity between cats and dogs. Some story elements identified by Vladimir Propp (1968) in his Formalist approach to analysing the folktale genre, such as ‘An interdiction is addressed to the hero’ and ‘the interdiction is violated’ are also present in the Tirax narratives.

For many of the Tirax narratives, there are counterparts told throughout Vanuatu. However Tirax speakers are clear about the source of narratives; they are reluctant to tell stories which ‘belong’ to neighbouring groups, and are careful to attribute a story to its original source. All the stories which form the corpus for the narrative analysis section of this work are agreed by the speakers to be Tirax tales.

### 1.4 Phoneme inventory and orthography

The present section gives an overview of the Tirax sounds and processes that are referred to in the body of the thesis. A more detailed account of Tirax phonology is included as an Appendix (II).

#### 1.4.1 Tirax phonemes

Tirax has twenty-three phonemes: sixteen consonants and seven vowels. The Tirax consonant inventory is given in table 1-1. It shows that four places of articulation are contrasted, and that voicing is contrastive only for oral stops.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental-Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless Stops</td>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiced Stops</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is typical of Vanuatu languages, the voiced stops are pre-nasalised, but are analysed in this work as single phonemes on phonotactic grounds, consistent with the analyses of pre-nasalised stops in other Malakula languages (cf. Crowley 2006a, 2006b, Musgrave 2007). Phonemes /x/ and /d/ each have allophones in free variation with each other, and are likely to be in the process of phonological change. The phoneme /x/ has a uvular allophone mainly in the speech of younger speakers, and is likely to be due to the influence of French, which is the language of instruction in primary school. Proto Oceanic (POc) */dɹ/ has merged with /d/ in most environments, except before back vowels, where /dɹ/ is in free variation with /d/. Note too, that Tirax /h/ derives historically from POc */s/, or */t/ via */s/. This correspondence is evident in the Tirax negative subject marking paradigm, discussed in §3.3.2.3, in which most forms have an /h/, while many of Tirax’s neighbours have an /s/ in a negative prefix, such as Naman (Crowley 2006a), Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2007) and Tape (Crowley 2006c).

There are seven vowel phonemes in Resan Tirax, three front vowels, three back and a low central vowel. These are shown in table 1-2. Vowel length is not contrastive in Tirax. Diphthongs are attested and typically involve the maximally contrasting vowels: /a/, /i/ and /u/. Diphthongs with /ɔ/ and /ɛ/ are not encountered, and diphthongs with /o/ are rare. Schwa occurrences are common in Tirax speech, but can be accounted for by rules of epenthesis, whereby a schwa is inserted to break up a consonant cluster, and vowel lenition, whereby a peripheral vowel is centralised in an unstressed syllable.
Table 1-2: Tirax vowel inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Mid</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td></td>
<td>ς</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there is robust evidence for the contrast between each of the phonemes, there is a lexically determined alternation between /a/ and /ε/. Minimal pairs, such as /sal/ ‘be lost’, and /sel/ ‘peel with hands’; /texu/ ‘brother in law’ and /taxu/ ‘back’, show there is a meaningful contrast between /a/ and /ε/. However there are many words in which /a/ and /ε/ appear to be in free variation: /tnah/ and /tneh/ are both encountered meaning ‘old person; devil’, and /nanih/ and /nenih/ both mean ‘bush, grass’, for example. There is further discussion in the phonology section in Appendix II on a /ε/ alternation, and in §3.2.2 we will see that /a/ ~ /ε/ variants within lexemes are sometimes associated with subtle meaning differences.

1.4.2 Orthography

The writing system used in this work has been chosen by the community from a small range of recommendations. Most phonemes have a direct correlate in the Roman alphabet. Of the IPA symbols which have no Roman correlate, β is represented with v, and the others, η, ε and ς, are represented as their IPA form. The community prefer to use η rather than digraph ng. The digraph would create problems of ambiguity for word pairs such as ngar ‘sore’ and njar ‘cry. They also prefer IPA symbols over diacritics for the vowels.

Kh is used to represent the velar fricative in several other Malakula languages, such as Naman, Neve’ei and Tape, however kh is not a viable alternative to x in Tirax, since both k and h phonemes are attested. Recently developed orthographies for Malakula languages are also opting for x, such as Unua (orthography developed by Elizabeth Pearce), Aulua (Martin Pavoir-Smith) and Neverver (Julie Barbour).

For lexemes with /a/~/ε/ vowel alternations, the attested variant is transcribed.
1.4.3 Summary of phonological and morphophonological behaviour

Tirax is phonotactically more complex than many Oceanic languages, which are typically phonologically simple, with (C)V syllable structure. Tirax allows complex syllable onsets, likely due to an historical process of deletion of unstressed vowels. For example the Tirax word for ‘devil’ is /tnah/, while the corresponding word in Tape is /tomes/.\(^7\) Consonant clusters are typically broken up with an epenthetic schwa. Exceptions include clusters comprising voiceless stops and homorganic nasals, and /tn/ clusters are typically co-articulated, with the voicelessness feature bleeding into the nasal:

\[(1) \text{tnah} \quad \text{haxal} \quad i=\text{me} \]
\[
\text{devil} \quad \text{INDEF} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{come}
\]
\[
A \text{ devil came along.}
\]

C,\(C_i\) clusters across morphemes boundaries typically undergo degemination, as in the above example, and also in (2) below:

\[(2) /s+\text{memex}+\text{xini}/ \rightarrow /s+\text{memexini}/ \rightarrow /\text{sme.} \chi \text{.ni}] \quad \text{‘they asked (them)’} \]
\[
\text{aud AB1-001-A.wav \ as 132.501 \ ae 136.653}
\]

An epenthetic /d/ is typically inserted between a word-final /n/ and following /r/:

\[(3) \text{r}=\text{van} \quad \text{ri=} \text{at} \quad \text{sar} \quad \text{len} \quad \text{har} \]
\[
3D:\text{R}=\text{go} \quad 3D:\text{R}=\text{be} \quad \text{IMPF} \quad \text{house} \quad 3P:\text{POSS}
\]
\[
[\text{r.} \beta \text{an.} \text{d.ri.} \text{at} ] \quad \text{…}
\]
\[
\text{Then went (home) and were sitting in the house.}
\]
\[
\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav \ as 962.232 \ ae 966.334}
\]

Epenthetic /b/ and /g/ phonemes do not occur.

---

\(^7\) As observed in the phonology section in Appendix II, Tirax appears to have undergone a phonological change whereby a series of apicolabials, found in V’onen Taut and Vao, have merged with the dental-alveolar series. Lynch (2005) observes that in some related languages this series has also been lost and has merged with bilabials. The divergent fate of the apicolabial series explains the /n/ versus /m/ correspondence in these Tirax and Tape words.
As is common in Vanuatu languages, primary stress is typically assigned to the penultimate syllable, and secondary stress to every second syllable counting backwards from the primary stress.

(4)  beˈtuŋa  'nuə
source  river

*Source of the river.*

Many Tirax words however have syllable-final stress, due to an historical process of word-final vowel deletion, which applied to words with final open syllables. The Tirax word for ‘ten’ is /hŋavil/, from an earlier form /saŋavelo/, which is found in Tirax songs.

(5)  i=ŋaˈvil  dromana  i=lin
3S:R=ten  and  3S:R=five

*Fifteen.*

Word-final unstressed vowels are often elided in Tirax speech when they precede vowel-initial morphemes. For example, the durative particle vɔ is reduced to /v/ before vowels:

/vɔ/+i/ -→ /vi/

(6)  ale  mar  ɳɛ  i=at  vɔ  i=ŋɔ  dax  tɛ  s=me
so  man  DEF  3S:R=be  DUR  3S:R=hear  PERF  SUB  3P:R=come

… /vŋɔ/ …

*Now the boy stayed on until he heard that they were coming.*

As mentioned above, a fuller account of Tirax phonology can be found in Appendix II.

1.5 Thesis overview

Chapters 2 to 6 comprise a grammatical sketch of Resan Tirax, covering the main features of its morphosyntax. Each chapter addresses a more complex level of

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8 Note that stress is defined in this work as the syllable with the highest pitch, as the pitch and intensity often do not coincide in Tirax. The example above, the syllable with the highest intensity is /Na/. A spectrographic analysis for this word is given in Appendix III.
structure, beginning with word classes in chapter 2. Noun and verb phrases are
described in chapters 3 and 4 respectively, clause structure is described in chapter 5,
and complex clauses in chapter 6. As this is the first work on Tirax grammar, I have
aimed to make it detailed enough to be of use to descriptive linguists and typologists.
For readers with an interest in Oceanic linguistics, I have endeavoured to point out
those Tirax features that are common to, or in contrast with, those typical of other
Vanuatu languages.

Chapters 7 to 11 provide a description and discussion of different aspects of Tirax
narrative. Chapter 7 begins with a description of discourse linkages which connect
sentences. It goes on to explore the different kinds of functions clauses can have in
narrative, and develops a taxonomy of Tirax clauses based on their function. The
approach taken in this work is adapted from the techniques of narrative analysis
developed and used by Labov & Waletzky (1967), Labov (1972, 1997), Hopper and
Thompson (1980) and Thompson (1987) and others. There follows a discussion of
higher-level structures in narrative in chapter 8. This chapter examines the prosodic
and morphosyntactic evidence for paragraphs in Tirax narrative, and identifies a
phenomenon referred to here as transition clauses, which lie at the juncture of
prosodic, discourse-functional and morphosyntactic levels of structure. This
phenomenon has not previously been identified in other languages, and its discovery
was made possible by the holistic approach adopted in the present research. The
chapter draws on work on paragraphs and episodes by a range of linguists including
Chapters 9 and 10 deal with reference tracking and the distribution of grammatically
optional NP markers respectively. Chapter 9 looks at the distribution of NP
categories in narrative, with a view to determining their discourse function. The
chapter tests a range of approaches against the data, developed by linguists such as
(1995), and Huang (2000). Chapter 10 deals with optional NP markers, and looks for
evidence of their functions in narrative. The analysis of the distribution of optional
NP markers is influenced by the ‘semiotic’ approach advocated by McGregor (In
press), which points out that both the presence and the absence of an optional marker
may be meaningful in a language. Chapter 11 is a detailed case study of a Tirax
narrative, which describes the poetics of the narrative and draws together many of the
observations that have been made in the previous chapters. It looks at the narrative
line by line, to expose the narrative pressures involved in storytelling, and examine how these are reflected in grammatical patterns. A conclusion, reflecting on the main findings of this work is given in chapter 12.

The accompanying CD contains a PDF version of this work. A Microsoft Word version with linked sound files is also included. The sound files can be independently accessed in a separate folder, organised by chapter.
2 Word classes, derivational processes and grammatical relations

This chapter gives an overview of the major syntactic categories and the basic aspects of Tirax morphosyntax that distinguish them. Reduplication and other derivational processes are discussed in this chapter, as they apply to several word classes. Finally, Tirax grammatical relations are summarised in §2.4.

2.1 Word classes

Tirax distinguishes nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, numerals and prepositions, as well as several smaller categories of function words.

2.1.1 Nouns

Nouns typically refer to entities in the world. A noun heads a noun phrase, which can function as subject (1), object of a transitive verb (2) and object of a preposition (3). Verbs, adjectives and other word classes cannot function as arguments.

(1) \[
\text{tnah haxal i=me} \\
\text{devil INDEF 3S:R=come}
\]

\[A \text{ devil came along.}\]

\(\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 54.911 \textbackslash ae 58.046}\)

(2) \[
\text{tnah i=kreh marbih xe} \\
\text{devil 3S:R=deceive child DEF}
\]

\[(The) \text{ devil tricked the boy.}\]

\(\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 208.737 \textbackslash ae 214.672}\)

(3) \[
\text{tnah xe i=ver xini marbih xe} \\
\text{devil DEF 3S:R=say OBL child DEF}
\]

\[The \text{ devil said to the boy...}\]

\(\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 73.915 \textbackslash ae 78.528}\)

Nouns also contrast with other categories in taking definite and indefinite articles, also demonstrated in the above examples.
Tirax nouns can function as one-place predicates, as is common in Austronesian languages. However they are distinct from intransitive verbs in that they do not take the subject-mood clitic when functioning predicatively:

(4) \[
    \text{mar xar (*i=)mleun}
    \text{DST chief}
\]

This man is a chief.

Nor can they take the negative marker:

(5) \[
    * \text{mar xar mleun-}t
    \text{DST chief-NEG}
\]

Unlike other word classes, nouns can combine with copular verbs to predicate a property of the subject NP:

(6) \[
    \text{mar xar } i=v\varepsilon \text{ mleun}
    \text{DST 3s:R=COP chief}
\]

This man is a chief.

The broad category of nouns includes personal nouns, adverbial nouns and pronouns in addition to the subcategory of common nouns exemplified above. Like many Oceanic languages, common nouns in Tirax can be subcategorised according to whether they are directly or indirectly marked for possession, using either possessive suffixes or possessive pronouns respectively. Tirax is typical of Vanuatu languages, in that the distribution of nominals across the two subcategories is not strictly semantic. Kin terms, for example, are encountered in both subcategories, with no obvious semantic basis for the distinction. However the nomenclature of direct and indirect possession, typical of Vanuatu language grammars, is eschewed here in favour of the more widely used alienable and inalienable.

Nouns phrases are discussed in more detail in chapter 3.
2.1.2 Verbs

Verbs head verb phrases and function as predicates. As is typical of Oceanic languages, Tirax verbs do not inflect for tense, though they can be optionally marked for aspect. Subject-mood markers obligatorily precede Tirax verbs:

(7) tate ᵃﾎk *(i=)nɛh
father 1S:POSS 3S:R=die

*My father is dying / died.*

Tirax verbs can take a range of affixes, including the negative suffix –tɛ, third person object markers –i (singular) and –ɛr (plural), as well as a range of preverbs, such as the NEcessitative marker max-:

(8) nas=max-vol  N sxĩ lelehan xner dxi tate han
1P:R=NEC-pay.for N DAT brother 3S:POSS 3P COM father 3S:POSS

*We had to pay (N’s) brothers and father for N.*

A large subset of stative verbs, such as bih ‘(be) small’, are also members of the adjective class, described in §2.1.3. Others, such as hrakin ‘hurry’ are also members of an adverb class, described in §2.1.5 and exemplified below:

(9) da=hrakin bɔ da=an Lakatoro da=mɛ lxen
1S:1=hurry DIM 1S:1=go Lakatoro 1S:1=come back

*I will hurry to Lakatoro and come back again.*

Ref: AB1-Tape 4

(10) n=vial hrakin
1S:R=walk hurriedly

*I am walking quickly.*

Ref: AB1-Tape 4

Most intransitive verbs however cannot function as adjectives (12) or adverbs (13):
2.1.3 Adjectives
Lynch et al. (2002) observe that if an Oceanic language has an adjective class, it tends to be a small, closed set of forms, which can be used attributively and predicatively (2002:40). This is also true of Tirax. Tirax nouns can be modified by an adjective functioning attributively within the NP. In which case the adjective does not carry any markers:

(14) not=na xori i=vɛ [ lot hat ]
    place=ASSOC LOC:DX2 3S:R=COP place bad

That place there is a sacred place.

Adjectives head adjective phrases, and can be modified by adverbial elements such as intensifier, txun:

(15) [ nɛ [ lad txun ] xan ] i=vɛ ... Mae
    ANA,PRO big INTENS PRX 3S:R=COP ... Mae

This very big one is ... Mae.
Most adjectives are also members of the verb category. They can function predicatively as stative verbs, in which case they head a VP and carry the subject-mood marker:¹

\[(16) \ s=v-va \quad o! \ nas=v\epsilon \quad bo \quad [\ nt\epsilon \ [ te \quad i=hat \quad n\epsilon ] \ ]\]

They said, “Oh! We have just done a really bad thing.”

There are examples of frequently encountered Tirax adjectives in table 2-1. They include words for size, colour and other qualities of the noun, such as value:

### Table 2-1: Examples of Tirax adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Other qualities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bih</td>
<td>net</td>
<td>namnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘small’</td>
<td>‘black’</td>
<td>‘good’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lad</td>
<td>vuh</td>
<td>hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘big’</td>
<td>‘white’</td>
<td>‘bad, sacred’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tra</td>
<td>navih</td>
<td>dro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘big, important’</td>
<td>‘grey’</td>
<td>‘real, true’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mras</td>
<td>nial</td>
<td>dada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘thin’</td>
<td>‘red’</td>
<td>‘silly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brav</td>
<td>xsan</td>
<td>mren mren / mraŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tall, long’</td>
<td>‘green’</td>
<td>‘dry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘raw’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.4 Numerals

Numerals in many Vanuatu languages, such as Araki, Naman, V’ënën Taut and Neve‘ei, are unusual in that they have properties of verbs, as well as noun modifiers. Tirax numerals also exhibit this dual nature, having an adjectival form in addition to a verbal form. Numerals are distinguished from verbs and adjectives however by their patterns of agreement and distribution. In chapter 6, I argue that both the verbal and adjectival numeral occur inside the NP; the adjectival numeral occurs in an adjective slot, and the verbal numeral has its own slot on or near the periphery of the NP.

¹ Some adjectives, such as lad ‘big’, and namnam ‘good’ are related to verbs by a processes of reduplication, as discussed in §2.2.2.
Verbal numerals take the subject marker proclitic. However unlike the subject marker in canonical verbs, the subject marker is invariably third person singular (3S), and does not agree in number with the noun it quantifies:

(17) \[ \begin{array}{llllll}
\text{mr} & \text{*s=} & \text{i=} & \text{s=} & \text{ altoh} \\
\text{people} & 3P{:R=} & 3S{:R=} & \text{five} & 3P{:R=} & \text{go to the sea} \\
\end{array} \]

*Five men, they went to the seaside.*

Numerals functioning adnominally in the adjective slot within the NP are reduplicated, and do not carry a 3S subject marker. The verbal numeral tends to be associated with establishing entities in the discourse, and the adjectival form tends to be used to modify NPs referring to entities already established:

(18) \[ \begin{array}{llllll}
\text{ri} & \text{at} & \text{vovov} & \text{v} & \text{v} & \text{v} & \text{v} \\
3D{:R=} & \text{dwell} & \text{DUP-DUR} \\
\end{array} \]

*They (two) lived together there and eventually*

(19) \[ \begin{array}{llllll}
\text{neti} & \text{ru} & \text{ru} & \text{ru} & \text{svsox} & \text{r} = \text{v} & \text{r} & \text{r} & \text{r} & \text{r} \\
\text{child-3P:POSS} & 3S{:R=} & \text{two} \\
\end{array} \]

*they had two children.*

(20) \[ \begin{array}{llllllllll}
\text{neti} & \text{ru} & \text{ru} & \text{n} & \text{air} & \text{svsox} & \text{r} = \text{v} & \text{r} & \text{r} & \text{r} & \text{r} \\
\text{child-3P:POSS} & \text{DUP-TWO} & \text{DEF} & 3P & \text{both} & 3D{:R=} & \text{COP} & \text{boy} \\
\end{array} \]

*The two children, they both were boys.*

Numerals are discussed in more detail in §3.6.

2.1.5 Adverbs

The broad category of adverbs comprises three distinct classes of words. Generally, all adverbs follow the verb, and give information about aspect or manner, or modify the verb meaning in some other way. Adverbs are morphologically invariable. For example, they cannot take the subject-mood marker, as exemplified by *din* ‘do till death’:
The three classes of adverb are distinguished by their position in the verb phrase or clause, and their interaction with other elements in the verb phrase.

- **Nuclear adverbs**, such as *lxen*, ‘again, back’, occur within the verb complex, preceding any verb suffixes such as the negative marker –*te* or the third person singular object-marker, -*i*:

```
(22) i=nev nas=hul lxen-i
3S:R=finish 1P:R=burn  again-3S
```

*After that we burn it again.*

- **Particles**, such as the PERFective *dax*, DIMinutive *bɔ* and IMPerFective *sar*, comprise a small, closed class of words. They typically follow the verb and its suffixes. Unlike nuclear adverbs however, particles suppress the third person singular O(bject)M(arker):

```
(23) n=leh(*-i) sar
1S:R=see-3S IMPF
```

*I am / was seeing (him).*

```
(24) *n=leh sar-i
1S:R=see IMPF-3S
```

Particles can also follow a noun or NP:

```
(25) “ nɔx sar xan ! x=me x=weɔ sar nato drenen te !”
2S IMPF PRX 2S:R=come 2S:R=eat IMPF chicken PC.FOOD.1PX:POSS INTJ
```

*“It’s been you! You have been coming to eat our chicken!”*

- **Sentential adverbs**, such as *brtet* ‘always’, and *mtetuxan* ‘now’, comprise a small closed class of words which give information about time and place.
They can be clause-initial, or follow any major constituent. When following the VP, sentential adverbs follow any suffixes, and do not suppress the third person singular OM:

(26) n=leh-i brtet Mae
     1S:R=see-3s always Mae

*I always see him in Mae.*

Sentential adverbs can form phrases with particles, such as the diminutive bo:

(27) brtet bo mar xar i=vnaxe bxoh hok
     alwaysDIM man DST 3S:R=steal pig 1S:POSS

*That man is always stealing my pig.*

The patterns of distribution for each class are summarised in table 2-2.

**Table 2-2:** Comparison of patterns of distribution of the three classes of adverbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nuclear adverbs</th>
<th>Adverbial particles</th>
<th>Sentential adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Precede NEGative marker -tɛ</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibit 3S OM, -i</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be clause-initial</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can follow nominals</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.6 Prepositions

Prepositions form a small closed class of words. They typically take NP complements, and encode the role of the NP in the event related by the clause. Most Tirax prepositions can be inflected for person and number as an alternative to a free pronoun complement, and there are three preposition subcategories, according to the pattern of inflection: **nominal, verbal** and **uninflecting**, defined in turn below.
A **nominal preposition**, such as **DATive** sxi, has a noun-like pattern of inflection, taking a possessive suffix:

\[(28)\] s=tux nani, s=to sxi-n, i=we:s sar

\[3P:R=\text{break} \quad \text{coconut} \quad 3P:R=\text{put} \quad \text{DAT-3S:Poss} \quad 3S:R=\text{eat} \quad \text{IMPF}\]

They broke open some coconuts and put them with him and he was eating them.

There is a **verbal preposition**, OBLique xini, which has a verb-like pattern of inflection in that it is able to take an object marker:

\[(29)\] mar ṅe te i=dah xini nalex i=lev xin-er

\[\text{man} \quad \text{DEF} \quad \text{REL} \quad 3S:R=\text{work} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{kava} \quad 3S:R=\text{give} \quad \text{OBL-3P}\]

The kava seller gave (them) to them.

Tirax has a morphophonological rule of degemination of adjacent, like phonemes, which affects the third person singular object marker, -i, following xini:

\[(30)\] ale knen dxı te xu-m nar=latlat sar xini

\[\text{so} \quad 1P \quad \text{COM} \quad \text{bro.in.law-2S:Poss} \quad 1D:R=\text{argue} \quad \text{IMPF} \quad \text{OBL:3S}\]

Me and your brother-in-law were having a small dispute about it, ...

For third person singular complements with no free NP, there is often a shift in stress, whereby xini becomes xi’ni, indicating the presence of the object marker, which has then been deleted by the degemination rule.

The remaining prepositions, such as nelve ‘underneath’, and talxa ‘over’, are **uninflecting**.

Noun-like and verb-like prepositions are widespread in Vanuatu, found in neighbouring languages on Malakula, such as Tape, Naman, and V’ ön en Taut, as well as outside Malakula, in Lolovoli, South Efate and Araki for example. The terms **verbal preposition** and **nominal preposition** used in this work are used by Crowley (eg. 2006a).
2.1.7 Function words

There are three other small closed classes of function words: interrogatives, determiners and discourse markers.

Interrogatives, such as havxa ‘what’ and ade ‘where’, are a small, closed class of uninflecting words which are used to form questions. Their syntax is discussed in chapter 5.

The broad category of determiners can be subcategorised into articles, demonstratives, possessives and quantifiers. Articles, such as the definite article ŋe, reflect the pragmatic status of the entity, encoding information about identifiability or referentiality. Demonstratives encode the relative location of the referent to the speaker. Tirax NPs can have more than one determiner, as exemplified below in (31), so the determiner subcategories are also differentiated by their position in the NP. For example, articles follow possessives:

\begin{verbatim}
(31) txan-vivies har ŋe
    bow 3P.POSS DEF
    N-N POSS.Pro ART

    their bows
\end{verbatim}

Discourse markers are morphemes whose function it is to encode the relationship between clauses within a text. Following Schiffrin (1987), coordinators and complementisers are regarded here as a subset of discourse markers. Coordinators, such as hxa ‘or’, link clauses within a sentence. Discourse markers, such as nate, ‘now then’, link sentences in a text. This class of words are extra-clausal and uninflecting. Co-ordinators are discussed in chapter 6, and discourse markers, such as nate ‘now then’, which play a role in structuring narrative above sentence-level, are discussed in chapter 7.

2.2 Reduplication

As is typical of Oceanic languages, reduplication is pervasive in Tirax morphology, and can involve part or whole of the root. The function of reduplication in Tirax is largely dependent on the category and lexico-semantics of the reduplicated
morpheme, and is usually iconic, such as encoding durative or iterative aspect, or
signifying multiple objects. For example, reduplication in telic verbs, such as xil ‘dig
a hole’ usually signifies repetition of action: xilxil ‘dig many holes’, whereas
reduplication of an atelic verb, such as vial ‘walk’, usually signifies progression or
duration of the action: vivial ‘be in the process of walking’. Reduplication is also a
means of deriving adjectives from stative verbs, as well as adnominal numerals from
verbal numeral roots. It is glossed consistently as DUP, rather than glossing according
to the function, following grammars of other Vanuatu languages, such as Naman,
Lolovoli, Araki and Avava.

2.2.1 Derivation of new lexemes in the same category
For some verbs, such as at ‘be, sit, stay’, tur ‘stand’, nam ‘be good’ and tin ‘cook’,
there is a reduplicated form that has become lexicalised, giving atas ‘rest’, turtur
‘stop’, namnam ‘improve’ and tintin ‘roast’, respectively. For the verb vol ‘buy’, the
reduplicated lexeme has the deictically opposite meaning: volvol ‘sell’:

(32) be	
tue	 r=vol	 bɔ	 vinadr ...
     but(B) before	 IMPS:R=buy \ DIM \ woman

  But before, they just used to buy wives ...

(33) not	 haxal	 te	 r=volvol	 xini	 nalex
     place \ INDEF \ REL \ IMPS:R=sell \ OBL \ kava

  a place where kava was sold

2.2.2 Change category
Full or partial reduplication of roots can create lexemes in different syntactic
categories to the roots. The following pairs of categories are attested:

Verb to adjective:
The verb nam ‘be good’ can be reduplicated to create an adjective ‘good’:

(34) naxda-n	 i=nam
     wings-3S:POSS \ 3S:R=be.good

  Her wings were good.
(35)  i=rɔsrvxɛ  mit  namnam  dran  ²
3S:R=miss.out.on  meat(B)  good  PC.FOOD.3S:POSS

She missed out on some really good meat.

Verb to adverb:
(36)  n=vial  nŋa  nhal  [ moh-mohlax  namnam ]  AP
1S:R=walk  LOC  road  DUP-be.smooth  properly

I walked along a really smooth road.

Adjective to verb:
(37)  s=van  s=delex  nadxan  lad  ³
3P:R=go  3P:R=light  fire  big

They went and lit a big fire.

Adverb to verb:
(39)  r=hlau  xriv  sxi  naxɔ  nain  \  
3D:R=arrive  nearby  DAT  front  house

They (two) arrived nearby the front of the house.

(40)  n=xr-xriv  sxi  nain
1S:R=approach  ALL  house

I am / was approaching (the) house.

² (B) in the gloss indicates that the word in the text is a Bislama word. The Tirax word for ‘meat’ is negor.

³ The word nadxan is likely to have derived from nad ‘fire’ and xan ‘to burn’. There is a cognate naab, ‘fire’, in Naman, and xan ‘burn’ is a Tirax intransitive verb.
2.2.3 Verbal aspect

The most productive function of reduplication is to indicate imperfective or durative aspect in atelic verbs. By contrast, the bare root tends to have a perfective interpretation:

(41) \( n=\text{vial lain} \)
\[
1_S:R=\text{walk home}
\]

\( I\text{ walked home.} \)

(42) \( n=\text{vi-vial lain} \)
\[
1_S:R=\text{DUP-walk home}
\]

\( I\text{ am/was walking home.} \)

The reduplicated form can also represent a phase:

(43) \( K i=\text{vi-vial} \)
\[
K 3_S:R=\text{DUP-walk}
\]

\( K\text{ was a toddler. (Lit: K was walking)} \)

Reduplication can also be used to indicate a general situation or happening:

(44) \( i=\text{nat xini buluk} \)
\[
3_S:R=\text{look.after OBL cow(B)}
\]

\( He\text{ minded the cows.} \)

(45) \( i=\text{nat-nat xini buluk} \)
\[
3_S:R=\text{DUP-look.after OBL cow(B)}
\]

\( He\text{ minds/used to mind cows.} \)

Speakers can use reduplication to iconically elongate a moment for dramatic effect:

(46) \( nas=\text{at-at-at-at-at-at-at} i=\text{sd\text{er mtanial} i=lin} \)
\[
1_P:R=\text{DUP-stay.waiting 3_S:R=reach hour 3_S:R=five}
\]

\( We\text{ waited and waited and waited and waited until five o’clock.} \)
For actions which have an end point, reduplication tends to result in an iterative meaning. For transitive verbs, the resulting expressions are understood to have multiple objects. Examples are given in table 2-3.

**Table 2-3: Reduplication of telic verbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb root (singular object)</th>
<th>Reduplicated Verb (multiple objects)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ev</em> ‘to drag (over)’</td>
<td><em>ev-ev</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vin</em> ‘to shoot’</td>
<td><em>vin-vin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>serex</em> ‘to throw’</td>
<td><em>ser-serex</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(47) i=nev  
3S:R=finish  
3P:R=go  
3P:R=DUP-drag  
3P:I=burn-3S  
*r̈hɔr* coconut.leaf

(48) bar=vin-vin  
vakal mlaxes  
2D: I=DUP-shoot  
lizard green

*Go and shoot (some) green lizards.*

The plural object of reduplicated verbs can be generic. In the example below, *vakal mlaxes* ‘green lizard’ is a generic (plural) object of the reduplicated verb, *vinvin* ‘to shoot’:

Demonstratives can also be reduplicated for a plural meaning. The example below, (50), shows a reduplicated demonstrative, emphasising plural number of subject. Note that *bih* ‘(be) small’ is both an adjective and a verb. The following example (49) shows *bih* functioning as a verb:

After that, they went and dragged over some coconut leaves to burn.

\`aud AB1-002-A.wav \`as 2563.73 \`ae 2568.282

\`aud AB1-009-B.wav \`as 1653.149 \`ae 1657.099
Reduplication in *bih* occurs when modifying or predicing a property onto a plural entity. The demonstrative is also reduplicated:

\[
\text{(50) } \text{xair} \quad \text{xar-xar} \quad s=\text{bi-bih} \quad \text{b} \\text{ɔ}
\]

\[3P \quad \text{DUP-DST} \quad 3P:R=\text{DUP-small} \quad \text{DIM}\]

\text{They (all) were just small (still).}

The reduplicated form of the demonstrative is unacceptable with a singular subject:

\[
\text{(51) } \text{* xain} \quad \text{xar-xar} \quad i=\text{bih} \quad \text{b} \\text{ɔ}
\]

\[3S \quad \text{DUP-DST} \quad 3S:R=\text{small} \quad \text{DIM}\]

\[\text{M} \& \text{R}\]

2.2.4 Valency

For some lexically determined transitive verbs, reduplication derives an intransitive counterpart. Examples are given in table 2-4.

\textbf{Table 2-4: Partial reduplication and transitive–intransitive verb counterparts}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>tin</em></td>
<td>‘to cook’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ti-tin</em></td>
<td>‘to do the cooking’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>melex</em></td>
<td>‘to wash’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mel-melex</em></td>
<td>‘to do the washing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>xil</em></td>
<td>‘to dig (a hole)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>xil-xil</em></td>
<td>‘to do (holes)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For these verbs, the reduplicated counterparts cannot take an object:

\[
\text{(52) } \text{n}=\text{tin} \quad \text{n}=\text{dran}
\]

\[1S:R=\text{cook} \quad \text{food}\]

\text{I cooked / am cooking the food.}
The object is often implied:

(54) n=tebih i=xil nueldrum
child 3S:R=DUP-dig hole

(The) child dug / is digging a hole.

(55) n=tebih i=xil-xil (* nueldrum)
child 3S:R=DUP-dig hole

(The) child was / is digging (lots of) holes.

For verbs with objects which are predictable from or associated with the verb meaning, the reduplicated counterpart can have a tacit (predictable) object, as in the examples in table 2-5.

Table 2-5: Reduplication to form intransitive verbs with predictable objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive with tacit object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vet ‘to weave (s.t.)’</td>
<td>vet-vet ‘to weave a mat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xesri ‘to sweep (s.t.)’</td>
<td>xes-xesir ‘to do the sweeping (of the dirt)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>melex ‘to wash (s.t.)’</td>
<td>melex-mel ‘to do the washing (of clothes)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The example below shows the transitive verb vet, ‘weave’, with object beti, ‘mat’.

(56) i=vet sar dax beti
3S:R=weave IMPF PERF mat

She has been weaving a mat.

4 This sentence illustrates how the imperfective marker sar and the perfective dax can co-occur, to give a meaning of an ongoing action which has now finished taking place. The grammatical function of dax, and the argument for a perfective analysis, is given in 9.2.2.
The object of the reduplicated verb is not expressed but is assumed, and the assumed, or tacit, object is the antecedent for the oblique object in the following clause:

(57) vinadr xar i=vet-vet sar dax
    woman DST 3S:R=DUP-weave IMPF PERF

    This woman would weave (mats)

    i=volvol xini nga maket
    3S:R=sell OBL:3 LOC market(B)

    and then sell them at the market.

2.3 Derivational processes

There is a range of derivational processes which apply to nouns and verbs. Compounding is a common means of forming new nouns, and less commonly verbs. The most productive derivational affix is the nominaliser suffix –an, which derives nouns from verbs. Another productive nominalizing affix is n(V)-, which is likely to be related to the POc article *n(V). There are several derivational process which apply to verbs, including affixing and stem alternation, both associated with changing valency. Finally, many words have multi-category membership, with no derivational processes applying.

2.3.1 Compounding

Compounding is the process whereby two words are joined together, forming a new lexical item, such as mtanial ‘hour’, which originally derives from mta- ‘eye’ and nial ‘sun’.

Some compound expressions, such as tete-tax ‘youngest sibling (literally, ‘child-last’) are used regularly, but retain the stress patterns of the individual words. Instead of te’tetax, with the penultimate syllable carrying stress as is usual in Tirax, the compound is pronounced ‘tete-’tax. Such compounds are analysed as partially lexicalised, and represented as hyphenated words.
Many Tirax words have been derived from combining words from the same or other syntactic categories. The typical formula for *endocentric* compounds, such as in the first two examples below, is *head* followed by *modifier*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N + N} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{vle} & \text{ mta(n)} \quad \text{vle-} \text{mta(n)}^3 \\
\text{hair} & \text{(his/her).eye} \quad \text{his/her eyelash} \\
\text{N + A} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{net} & \text{ vaven} \quad \text{netin-} \text{vaven} \\
\text{child} & \text{ female} \quad \text{daughter} \\
\text{N + Num} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{mal} & \text{ vat} \quad \text{malvat} \\
\text{leg} & \text{ four} \quad \text{car, horse} \\
\text{N + V} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{bet} & \text{ xeiv} \quad \text{betxeiv} \\
\text{head} & \text{(be).strong} \quad \text{wilful person} \\
\text{V + N} & \rightarrow \text{V}: \\
\text{hehe} & \text{ mal} \quad \text{hehemal} \\
\text{rub} & \text{ leg} \quad \text{have legs in the air} \\
\text{Exocentric}: \\
\text{V + V} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{lev} & \text{ vnavx} \quad \text{levnavx} \\
\text{take} & \text{ steal} \quad \text{thief} \\
\text{P + V} & \rightarrow \text{N}: \\
\text{lal} & \text{ drug} \quad \text{laldrug} \\
\text{inside} & \text{ pain} \quad \text{anger}
\end{align*}
\]

In this work, the citation forms of inalienable nouns are written with a bracketed 3S possessive suffix.
Exceptions to the head-modifier ordering in endocentric compounds usually involve those with an ‘inalienable’ noun.\(^6\) For ‘alienable’ common noun compounds which contain an ‘inalienable’ noun, the inalienable noun component tends to precede the companion word. For example, *net-nesil* ‘pocket-knife’, from *net* ‘(someone’s) child’ and *nesil* ‘knife’, is a kind of knife, not a kind of child.

\[(58)\] net-nesil  
child-knife  
pocket-knife

Body parts and kin terms are often N-N compounds, such as *dih-vran*: his / her finger, from *dih* ‘appendage’ and *vra(n)* ‘(his / her) hand’.

2.3.2 Noun to noun: prefix \(r\)- ‘leaf’

The only productive noun-to-noun derivational affix in Tirax is \(r\)- ‘leaf’. It attaches to any plant name to derive the name of the leaf, as indicated in table 2-6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nxa (^7)</th>
<th>r(-)xa</th>
<th>‘leaf’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blat</td>
<td>r(-)blat</td>
<td>‘dried leaf’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natev</td>
<td>r(-)natev</td>
<td>‘sugarcane leaf’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navis</td>
<td>r(-)navis</td>
<td>‘banana leaf’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nani</td>
<td>r(-)nani</td>
<td>‘coconut palm frond’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalik</td>
<td>r(-)kalik</td>
<td>‘banana leaf’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.3 Nouns: \(v\)-initial female terms

Words for females in Tirax typically begin with \(v\), as shown in table 2-7, although there is no evidence of a productive \(v(V)\)- affix in Tirax.

\(^6\) Here and elsewhere, quotes are used for inalienable and alienable nouns to remind the reader that these Tirax noun subcategories are not strictly semantic.

\(^7\) There is no evidence of \(xa\) existing by itself, always with the reflex of the POc article *n*: *nxa* ‘plant, tree’.
In Araki, a North-Central Vanuatu language, there is a prefix ve- which attaches to nouns to derive a female counterpart (François 2002). Araki tends to be more conservative than other Oceanic languages, and so may well preserve an historically productive derivational process.

2.3.4 Verb to noun: suffix -an

Abstract nouns are derived from verbs with addition of a nominaliser suffix –an, likely to be a reflex of the POc derivational suffix, *-an, which functioned as a general and location nominaliser (Lynch et al 2002:70). Examples are given in table 2-8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vxaur</td>
<td>‘laugh’</td>
<td>vxauran ‘laughter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dah</td>
<td>‘work’</td>
<td>dahan ‘work’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>res</td>
<td>‘speak’</td>
<td>resan ‘language, speech’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volvol</td>
<td>‘sell things’</td>
<td>volvolan ‘sale, selling things’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hehere</td>
<td>‘teach’</td>
<td>heherean ‘teaching’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seliv</td>
<td>‘live’</td>
<td>selivan ‘life’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drom</td>
<td>‘think’</td>
<td>dromalan ‘thoughts, thinking’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>res</td>
<td>‘be ill’</td>
<td>resan ‘illness’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huv</td>
<td>‘bathe’</td>
<td>huvan ‘bathing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kul</td>
<td>‘sing’</td>
<td>kulan ‘singing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mkan</td>
<td>‘dance’</td>
<td>mkanan ‘dancing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neh</td>
<td>‘die’</td>
<td>nehan ‘death, funeral’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.5 Verb to noun: prefix $n(V)$
Verbs can also take a $nV$- prefix to form nouns, typically concrete nouns. This prefix is likely to be related to the POc article that appears on almost half the nouns in Tirax. Some examples of verb-noun counterparts are given in table 2-9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>$nV+$stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vol</td>
<td>‘to buy / sell’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uh</td>
<td>‘to rain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drɔvye</td>
<td>‘to measure’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-9: Nouns formed with derivational prefix $nV$-

2.3.6 Valency changing derivational processes in verbs
There are two derivational processes attested in the Tirax data that are associated with valency in verbs. Some intransitive verbs take suffix –e to form a transitive counterpart, as shown in table 2-10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb (intr)</th>
<th>verb (tr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vnax</td>
<td>‘steal’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ded</td>
<td>‘give birth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu</td>
<td>‘vomit’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-10: Derivational suffix –e on a transitive verb

There is also evidence of a / e stem alternation being associated with transitivity in verbs. The a-form is associated with intransitivity and the e-form with transitivity. Examples are given in table 2-11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb (intr)</th>
<th>verb (tr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>krah</td>
<td>‘lie’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trav</td>
<td>‘wait’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-11: a–e alternation and intransitive-transitive verb counterparts
2.3.7 Multi-category membership

Some Tirax words are members of more than one category, without undergoing any modification.

**Noun – Verb**

Several words, such as *kuka* ‘cat’s cradle string’, are members of the noun and the verb class:

Kuka: N

(59)  
kuka  i=rdrɛh  klɛ  
cats.cradle  3S:R=broken  again  

*The cat’s cradle string broke again.*

Kuka: V

(60)  
bas=kuka  
2P:1=cats.cradle  

*Let's do the cat's cradle.*

My consultant offered another example with the word *heŋ*:

(61)  
Ø=heŋ  heŋ  kalik  xar  de=haxal  
IMP:S=harvest  bunch  malel.banana  DST  3S:1=one  

*(Go and) pick a bunch of those malel bananas!*
Table 2-12: Noun and verb counterparts with zero derivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>base</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ted (Vi)</td>
<td>‘sprout’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rev (Vt)</td>
<td>‘make (s.t.) into laplap’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuka (Vi)</td>
<td>‘play cat’s cradle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hey (Vt)</td>
<td>‘put into bunches’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verb – Adjective

As discussed §2.1.3, most adjectives, such as *bih*, ‘small’, are also members of the verb class with no derivational processes applying, while others, such as *lad* ‘big’, are reduplicated in order to derive a verbal counterpart, seen in §2.2.2.

Adjective – Adverb

Some adjectives, such as *lad* ‘big’ and *bih* ‘small’, can also be used adverbially without undergoing any modification, in these cases as to either intensify or soften the verb meaning respectively.

(62)

\[
\text{They went and cooked the chicken.}
\]

2.4 Grammatical relations

Tirax has nominative-accusative syntax and morphology, grouping the A and S functions against the O function in the grammatical relations of subject and object respectively. Morphologically, subjects are marked on the verb with a proclitic, and third person objects are marked on the verb with a suffix if there is no co-referential free NP object. The default word order is S V (O), as in the two examples below:
Subjects cover thematic roles such as experiencer, agent and instrument, and objects cover thematic roles such as patient and theme. The thematic role of each core NP constituent is dictated by the semantics of the verb. For example, *vle* and *tes* both mean ‘to cut’, but the subject of *vle* is an instrument, while the subject of *tes* is an agent, exemplified below:

(65) **nerid**  
knife  
3S:R=cut  
leg-1S:POSS  

*A knife cut my foot. / I cut my foot on a knife.*

(66) **xono**  
1S  
1S:R=cut  
leg-1S:POSS  

*I cut my leg (using something).*

Other Participatory roles are encoded as PPs, typically with the oblique preposition *xini*, so named here because of the range of thematic roles that it can encode, and the fact that it encodes ‘demoted’ objects, as discussed in §5.3.1. The morphosyntactic criteria for distinguishing the various relations in Tirax are summarised in table 2-13. The term *oblique object* is used here for any complement which cannot be marked directly on the verb stem. It is typically marked with the oblique preposition *xini.*
**Table 2-13:** Criteria for distinguishing the range of complements and adjuncts in Tirax

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Criteria (for unmarked clauses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject (S)</td>
<td>Obligatory argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Precedes the VP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Obligatory argument for transitive verbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object (O)</td>
<td>Follows the verb complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can be expressed as suffix on the verb (third person objects only).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oblique</td>
<td>Follows the verb complex and direct object if there is one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Takes preposition, either DATive <strong>s</strong>xi OBLique <strong>xini</strong> or LOCative <strong>nya</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semantically, gives information about participants in the event that are not expressed as subjects or direct objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct</td>
<td>Gives additional information, not required by the predicate, about the setting of the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes adverbial nouns, which give information about time and place, and prepositional phrases, with prepositions, such as COMitative <strong>d</strong>xi, and ILLative <strong>lal</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participatory roles are expressed as S, O or oblique objects, while Circumstantial roles are not subcategorised for by the verb and are expressed syntactically as adjuncts. However in Tirax some adjuncts are marked in the same way as oblique objects, with dative/allative, oblique or locative prepositions, **s**xi, **xini** and **nya** respectively. So for those PPs, the choice of preposition itself does not indicate whether it is a complement or an adjunct. For example, the primary function of **xini** is to mark what appear to be arguments bearing roles such as Recipients and Addressees, as in the following example with **ver** ‘to say (to), to tell’:
However *xini* can also encode Circumstantial roles. For example *hav* is an intransitive verb meaning ‘to dance’. It can also take a *xini* PP, representing the instruments or music that is being danced to:

(68)  
\[ \text{n=hav} \quad \text{xini} \quad \text{nɔxmɔ} \]  
\[ 1S:R=dance \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{slit.drum} \]  
\[ I \text{ was dancing to the slit drums.} \]

Since *xini* appears to mark adjuncts as well as complements, we need to find other evidence to determine the syntactic status of *xini* PPs. The syntactic test of *obligatoriness* does not apply in Tirax, since oblique objects are not always expressed in Tirax clauses. The ditransitive verb *ɛr* ‘to say (to), tell’, for example, occurs 164 times in a broad, random cross-section of the data. The range of constructions with *ɛr* attested in the data is given in table 2-14.⁸

**Table 2-14:** Range of constructions encountered for the verb *ɛr* ‘to say (to), tell’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_ NP</td>
<td>iver tuxxunmaltxun haxal</td>
<td>‘he told a story’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ -i</td>
<td>iveri</td>
<td>‘he told it (ie. the story)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ PP* xini*</td>
<td>iver xini marbih</td>
<td>‘he told (the) boy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ NP PP* xini*</td>
<td>iver tuxxunmaltxun xini marbih</td>
<td>‘he told (a) story to (the) boy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ COMP-S</td>
<td>iver te iat lain</td>
<td>‘he said that he stayed home’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ PP* xini*, COMP-S</td>
<td>iver xini marbih te iat lain</td>
<td>‘he told (the) boy that he stayed home’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ɛr* can take a direct object, representing the thing said, and an oblique object, representing the Addressee. The oblique object is far more prevalent in spontaneous

⁸ Note that *ɛr* can occur with a direct object or a speech complement, but not both, suggesting that the speech complement functions as the syntactic object of the locution verb. The oblique object by contrast can co-occur with either of them.
discourse than the direct object. Of 164 instances of *ver* in the sample, only fifty-five sentences had a direct object, whereas eighty-eight had an oblique object. The distribution of complements following *ver* is given in table 2-15.

Table 2-15: Distribution of constituents following the verb *ver* ‘to tell’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP</th>
<th>PP*&lt;i&gt;xini* (COMP-S)</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>PP*&lt;i&gt;xini*</th>
<th>-i</th>
<th>COMP-S</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that the oblique object is encountered in over half the clauses with *ver*, whereas the direct object is only encountered in about a third. So although the *xini* PP is not obligatory with *ver* ‘to tell’, its high frequency is taken to reflect its status as a complement. Frequency is presently the only syntactic indicator of syntactic status in Tirax for PPs marked with OBLique *xini*, DATIVE / ALLative *sxi* and LOCative *nya*, though future research may reveal other syntactic tests which can distinguish complements from adjuncts.
3 Noun phrases

This chapter gives a summary of the constituents that make up noun phrases, and the relationships that hold between them. Tirax is primarily a head-first language at the level of the phrase, with most of the modifiers following the head within the phrase. This chapter begins with a description of the default constituent order within the phrase. This is followed by a description of the kinds of elements which can function as the head of the phrase, followed by a description of each of the elements that can modify the head.

3.1 Constituent order within the NP

The order of constituents in a basic noun phrase is given in figure 3-1:

![Figure 3-1: Basic constituent order in noun phrase](image)

where A. NUM refers to *adjectival numeral*, and V. NUM refers to *verbal numeral*, both discussed in §3.6.

Adjectives can themselves be modified, for example by intensifier *txun*. Adjectives and adjective phrases are discussed above in §2.1.3.

A possessor must be indicated for inalienable nouns, either through noun juxtaposition or a possessive suffix, representing the possessor. Possession is marked on alienable nouns with possessive prepositions, which follow the possessor noun. The morphosyntax of possession is discussed in §3.4.

We saw in §2.1.7 that there is often more than one determiner in a Tirax NP; two and three determiners in the same NP are attested in the data. The relative order of determiners is fairly fixed, as indicated in figure 3-1, with articles following demonstratives, followed by the plural marker and quantifiers respectively. Determiners are discussed in §3.5.
There are no examples in the corpus of relative clauses and adnominal PPs in the same NP, and so their relative order is not yet determined. Where they occur, they each follow all other constituents in the NP.

There can be deviations from the basic constituent order given in figure 3-1. For example adjectives usually precede the possessive phrase:

(1) vinadr drɔ ham
    woman true 2S:POSS
    N A POSS.Pro

    *your real wife*

However for some NPs the possessive phrase can precede an adjective (2), as it does for directly possessed nouns (3):

(2) xɔnɔ na, n=ve vinadr ham drɔ
    1S now 1S:R=COP woman 2S:POSS true
    N POSS Pro A

    *Me now, I am your real wife.*

(3) net-in vaven bih ɛ [te i=nxav]
    child-3S:POSS female small DEF REL 3S:R=have.sores
    N-POSS A A Det RC

    *There was her young daughter who was covered in sores.*

As seen above in (3) a relative clause usually follows a determiner. Adnominal PPs also follow the determiner:

(4) i=ul [morti lad haxal [nɔ [nali xar]NP ]pp ]NP
    3S:R=shout person big INDEF LOC door DST
    N A ART PP

    *He shouted to a big man on the door.*
The head of a NP is typically filled by a noun or pronoun, discussed in §3.2 and §3.3 respectively.

3.2 Nouns
Like most Oceanic languages, Tirax nouns do not inflect for case or number, and can be categorised in two ways on the basis of their morphosyntactic behaviour:

1. type of possessive marking
2. combination with other NP constituents and with prepositions

Possessive marking gives a two-way contrast for common nouns: directly versus indirectly marked for possession; called here alienable and inalienable respectively. The morphosyntax of possession is discussed further in §3.4.

Categorisation on the basis of syntax gives a three-way contrast: Personal nouns (§3.2.1), Common nouns (§3.2.2) and Adverbial nouns (§3.2.3), similar to the three POc nominal categories (Lynch et al 2002:69). The categories and bases for categorisation are summarised in table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Categories of nouns on basis of morphosyntactic behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Possessive marking</th>
<th>Takes full range of specifiers and modifiers</th>
<th>Combines with which preposition in PP</th>
<th>Typical referents</th>
<th>Can be used as address terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal nouns</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>$sxi$</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common nouns</td>
<td>Yes Inalienable and Alienable sub-categories</td>
<td>Yes (for animate nouns) $nja$ (for inanimate nouns)</td>
<td>$sxi$</td>
<td>People, animals, things, abstract entities</td>
<td>No except mar ‘man’ and kin terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial nouns</td>
<td>No except <em>lot</em> ‘place’ and locative inalienable nouns</td>
<td>No except <em>lot</em> ‘place’</td>
<td>$\emptyset$ except temporal proper names take ren</td>
<td>Time, place</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There is an overlap between the subcategories of noun; prototypical members have properties associated with the category exclusively, and peripheral members also have some features associated with another category. For instance *kin terms* have features of both personal and common nouns. On the other hand, *proper nouns* are distributed across two categories: *names* come under the category of *personal nouns* and *dates* and *places* are classed as *adverbial nouns*. For convenience and cross-linguistic comparison, the broad categories and labels are used here, as shown in table 3-1. The categories and the bases of categorisation are discussed in the following sections.

### 3.2.1 Personal nouns

Personal nouns refer to people, and include proper names and vocative nouns, such as *taver* ‘everyone’. Like all nouns, a personal noun may be the sole occupant of the noun phrase slot in a sentence:

```
(5) R i=van i=sum tate han 1
    R 3S:R=go 3S:R=kiss father 3S:POSS
```

*R went and kissed her father.*

Personal nouns may also function as address terms:

```
(6) “taver nas=tur sar nas=drar”
```

everyone 1P:R=stand IMPF 1P:R=chat

“(Hey) guys, we’ve been standing here chatting, ...”

Personal nouns take preposition *sxi* when functioning as recipients, destinations or locations:

```
(7) n=xr-xriv sxi P.
```

1S:R=approach ALL P

*I’m approaching P.*

---

1 The names of people and sensitive locations in the examples and narratives are suppressed to protect the privacy of the individuals and places named.
Personal nouns do not normally take specifiers or modifiers, although it is possible for one to take a demonstrative:

(8) ale Mista William xar na i=lev skul he gayman i=me
so Mr(B) William DST now 3S:R=take school(B) POSS government(B) 3S:R=come

So now this Mr William brought the government school.

It is considered disrespectful to use proper names to address or refer to people. Although proper names are sometimes used in these contexts, kin terms, such as dne ‘mother’s brother’ and vave ‘father’s sister’, are preferred. Kin terms are discussed in §3.2.2 below.

3.2.2 Common nouns

Common nouns may be the sole occupant of the noun phrase slot in a clause, and can also take the full range of noun modifiers, such as relative clauses, adjectives, numerals, demonstratives, possessives and articles. Common nouns can be further divided into two subcategories alienable versus inalienable, on the basis of whether they are directly or indirectly marked for possession, discussed further in possessives (§3.4).

Common nouns can also be subcategorised into animate versus inanimate on the basis of compatibility with prepositions. Animate nouns functioning as locations or destinations almost always occur with preposition sxi (9), whereas inanimate nouns take nga for those meanings (10).

(9) i=van vɔvɔ-vɔ, i=an i=at sxi mleun
3S:R=go DUP-DUR 3S:R=go 3S:R=be.located ALL chief

She walked on and on, until she went and arrived at the chief. (i.e. his house).

(10) vinadr haxal xain i=at nga nhal dxi net-in vaven bih
woman INDEF 3S 3S:R=be.located LOC road COM child-3S:POS female small

There was a woman was standing on the road with her small daughter.

The subcategory of kin terms has some features of both personal and common nouns. Like personal nouns, kin terms can be used as vocatives. However like common
nouns, they can function as arguments and take the full range of modifiers. Whenever
kin terms function as arguments they occur in possessive constructions. When
functioning vocatively, ‘inalienable’ kin terms always occur with possessive suffix,
eg. *netuk!*, ‘my child!’. Some ‘alienable’ kin terms, such as *numu!* ‘mother!’ are
attested without a possessive morpheme, while others tend to be used vocatively with
a possessive morpheme, as in *dne har!* ‘(everyone’s) uncle!’:

(11) i=va “dne har! xɔɔɔ n=mɛ xan”
    3S:R=say uncle 3P:POSS 1S 1S:R=come PRX

   She said “Uncle! I’ve come here,”

   “n=mɛ vɔr hɛrɛ nɛʔbih haxal”
   1S:R=come EMPH because child INDEF

   “I’ve had to come because of a child.”

The only derivational prefixes associated with noun roots attested in the corpus are *rɔ-*
‘leaf’, discussed in §2.3.2, and locative *si-*. *Si-* is likely to have once been a locative
or spatial preposition. It now only occurs with *taxun* ‘his/her/its back’:

(12) i=mɛ si-tax-un
    3S:R=come LOC-back-3S:POSS

   He came up behind her.

(13) n=hlox si-taxu-k
    1S:R=carry LOC-back-1S:POSS

   I carried (it) on my back.

Over a third of Tirax nouns begin with /n/, a reflex of the POc article *na*, which has
been reanalysed as part of the root (see eg. Crowley 2006a:52). This is common in the
languages of Vanuatu in general and Malakula in particular. Table 3-2 shows the
percentage of nouns which begin with /n/ in Resan Tirax and its neighbours. The
Neve`ei, Naman and Tape statistics are from Crowley’s Tape Grammar (2006b:62).
According to Lynch (2006) and Crowley (2006b), the article appears to have been associated with non-human nouns in proto-Oceanic, and was reanalysed by most Vanuatu languages as part of the noun root, and then for some noun roots, lost altogether. The pattern of retention of the POc article residue for nouns in some Malakula languages appears to be prosodically determined, with n-initial (non-human) nouns whose roots are mono-moraic retaining the nV- residue, while non-human noun roots comprising two or more morae do not (Pearce: 2007a). Tirax also appears to follow this pattern, though there are several exceptions, such as nxariv rat, which retains the article where the Unua cognate, for example, does not.

In Tirax, the unstressed nV- has lost its vowel, creating many nouns which begin with n-initial consonant clusters, such as nmat ‘snake’, ngar ‘sore’ and ntah ‘sea’. For nouns which retain the vowel, such as natev ‘sugarcane’, and nesor ‘belongings’, the nV- syllable is usually stressed.

Number is not marked on nouns, however some nouns have a na– ne– stem alternation, such as nasus and nesus ‘breast(s)’, and the na- form has come to be associated with singular and the ne- with non-singular, triggering non-singular agreement. For example, nenih ‘grass, bush’ is more likely to trigger a plural subject marker, whereas nanih almost always occurs with a singular marker. Nasus and nesus ‘breast’ follow a similar subject marking pattern, with nesus triggering the dual subject marker, while nasus triggers the singular. Likewise naxut ‘louse’ is singular, while nexut ‘lice’ triggers plural agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-2: Percentage of nouns which begin with /n/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neve‘ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3.2.3 Adverbial nouns

Adverbial nouns comprise the broad sub-categories of locative and temporal nouns, and give information about the location or time of the event described by the verb. Locative and temporal nouns can be further categorised, as shown in table 3-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Locative</th>
<th>Temporal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subcategory</strong></td>
<td>Locative free nouns</td>
<td>Locative inalienable noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(includes locative proper nouns and locative alienable nouns)</td>
<td>Directional or relational nouns, including locative demonstratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>Lakatoro lain ‘home’ lot ‘garden, place’</td>
<td>linha ‘up, above’ salin ‘outside’ otan ‘here’ xɔtan ‘LOC, here’ amu ‘front’*2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Niala ‘Sunday’</td>
<td>nevix ‘tomorrow’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adverbial nouns do not generally take specifiers, modifiers or possessive marking, with the exception of the locative alienable noun lot ‘place, home’ and locative inalienable noun, lalen, ‘his/her insides’ which is always marked for possession.

3.2.3.1 Locative nouns

Unlike other nouns, locative nouns do not take prepositions. Compare example (14), which has a common noun, with examples (15) and (16):

(14) lidax haxal i=at nga (/ * O) naut
    dog INDEF 3:S:R=be.located LOC place

    A dog is in the garden.

---

2 Amu also means ‘first’, and is likely to be cognate with the V’enen Taut word i-amɔk, ‘one’.
(15) mlakel haxal i=at (*nŋa) lanih
   teenager INDEF 3S:R= be.located LOC bush

   A young man lived in the bush.

(16) ni=at (*nŋa) Uripiv
   1S:R= be.located LOC Uripiv

   I was staying on Uripiv (Island).

Adverbial nouns can function as core arguments for some verbs, and it is on these grounds that they are classified as nouns. In example (17) below, lain ‘home’ is the object of the transitive verb sder ‘to reach’.

(17) na i=lev malvat r=van r=sder lain
   now 3S:R=take car 3D:R=go 3D:R=reach home

   Then he took the wheel of the car and drove them home.

However, adverbial nouns have more restrictions on their distribution than common nouns, and cannot function as core arguments for most verbs:

(18) n=lxa nua
   1S:R=cross river

   I crossed the river.

(19) *n=lxa lual
   1S:R=cross LOC.river

And unlike other nouns, many adverbial nouns cannot functions as subjects of one-place predicates:
Adverbial nouns are distinct from other common nouns in that they can also function as adjuncts, for example with intransitive verbs:

(21) $\text{lidax i=hge lain}$
$\text{dog 3S=R=not.be home}$

*There are no dogs at home.*

Common nouns cannot follow intransitive verbs:

(22) $\text{lidax i=hge (*nain)}$
$\text{dog 3S=R=not.be (house)}$

*There are no dogs (*houses).*

Conversely, adverbial nouns cannot be complements of locative prepositions:

(23) *$n\eta$ lain*
$\text{LOC LOC.home}$

Note that $n\eta nain$ is not a paraphrase of $lain$, as the locative preposition here has a strictly spatial meaning of ‘on (top of)’:

(24) $\text{lidax i=hge n\eta nain}$
$\text{dog 3S=R=not.be LOC house}$

*There are no dogs on top of the house.*

A locative noun, such as $xnal$ ‘men’s house (locative)’ or locative PP can follow a directional verb, but a common noun cannot:
(25) n=van xnal
1S:R=go LOC.men’s.house

*I went to the men’s house.*

(26) n=van nŋa naxnal
1S:R=go LOC men’s.house

*I went to the men’s house.*

(27) *n=van naxnal
1S:R=go men’s.house

The default position for locative NPs is clause-final.

(28) nodran i=nehix-te lain , de=van xnal
food 3S:R=prepared-NEG LOC.home 3S:I=go LOC.men’s.house

*Food should not be prepared at home and brought to the men's house.*

Locative adverbial nouns can follow one another in order of decreasing specificity:

(29) ale xɔnɔ n=telul sar , n=van [lain] [ lot he knen] [M]
so 1S 1S:R=go.to.garden IMPF 1S:R=go home place POSS 1PX M

*So I was going the garden, going home to our place in M (ie. where the garden was).*

Locative nouns do not have a fixed order in the clause relative to sentential adverbs, such as mtetuxan ‘now’:

(30) da=an mtetuxan Lakatoro
1S:1=go now Lakatoro

*I am going now to Lakatoro.*
I am going to Lakatoro now.

All locative nouns have common noun counterparts, which do not function adverbially, and which usually begin with a reflex of the POc article *nV-. Most locative nouns begin with l(i)-, which is likely to be a reflex of a locative preposition that has been reanalysed as part of the word. Lolovoli, for example, has a locative article lo (Hyslop 2001:118). Table 3-4 has a list of common nouns with locative counterparts.

Table 3-4: Common nouns and locative counterparts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common noun</th>
<th>English translation</th>
<th>Locative counterpart</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nain</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
<td>lain</td>
<td>‘(to/at) home’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nua</td>
<td>‘river’</td>
<td>lual</td>
<td>‘(to/at) river’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nanih</td>
<td>‘bush’</td>
<td>lanih</td>
<td>‘(to/at) the bush’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naut / not</td>
<td>‘place’</td>
<td>lot</td>
<td>‘(to/at) the place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ntan</td>
<td>‘ground’</td>
<td>litan</td>
<td>‘on the ground, below’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ntah</td>
<td>‘sea’</td>
<td>laltah</td>
<td>(to/at) the sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nvamu</td>
<td>‘village’</td>
<td>lalvanu</td>
<td>‘inside (the house / village)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naxnal</td>
<td>‘men’s house’</td>
<td>xnal</td>
<td>(to/at) men’s ‘house’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malakula languages Naman, Avava and Neve’ei all attest a similar pattern of n- / l-counterparts of common versus locational nouns (Crowley 2006a:69), although there appears to be a larger number of n- / l-counterparts in Tirax compared with those languages. Note that the only locational noun in Tirax which does not begin with l(V)- is xnal ‘(to/at) men’s house’. This word is likely to have been a phonologically heavier word than the other locational nouns, and the retention of the locative l(V)- could be related to the number of syllables or morae in the noun root, similar to the pattern of retention of the POc *nV- article discussed above in §3.2.2. Ntah ‘sea’ and nvamu ‘village’ follow a different pattern, having locative counterparts with lal, which
also occurs independently in Tirax as a locative pronoun *lal* ‘in(side)’ (see §5.3.2.4). *Laltah* means ‘at/to the sea’ while *lal ntah* is a PP, meaning ‘in(to) the sea’.

*Lot* ‘place, home’ is exceptional, in that it is an adverbial noun that can take a range of specifiers and modifiers, including possessive morphemes (32) and relative clauses (33):

(32) \[ s=van \quad si=at \quad \text{lot} \quad \text{har} \]
\[ 3P:R=go \quad 3P:R=be.located \quad \text{place} \quad 3P:POSS \]

*They went back to their place ...*

\( \text{\texttt{\textbackslash audi AB1-018-A.wav as 1071.888 ae 1075.591}} \)

(33) \[ ale \quad i=\text{leh} \quad tɛ \quad ntɛ \quad haxal \quad i=\text{ted} \quad \text{lot} \quad tɛ \quad r=\text{bul} \quad \text{ŋɛ} \]
\[ \text{so} \quad 3S:R=\text{see} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{INDEF} \quad 3S:R=\text{grow} \quad \text{place} \quad \text{REL} \quad \text{IMPS:R=}\text{burn} \quad \text{DEF} \]

*Then she saw that something was growing at the place where (her mother) was burnt.*

\( \text{\texttt{\textbackslash audi AB1-018-A.wav as 2203.648 ae 2207.724}} \)

The locative relational nouns, such as *ɔtan* ‘here’ and *salin* ‘outside’, have the same pattern of distribution as other locative nouns, being able to follow, for example, the directional verb *mɛ* ‘come’ (34) and locative existential *at* (35):

(34) \[ i=\text{mɛ} \quad \text{salin} \]
\[ 3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{outside} \]

*She came outside.*

\( \text{\texttt{\textbackslash audi AB1-018-B.wav as 100.824 ae 103.56}} \)

(35) \[ i=\text{va-va} \quad \text{" a’æ: , da=at} \quad \text{bo ɔtan} \quad !\]
\[ 3S:R=\text{DUP}=\text{say} \quad \text{yes} \quad 1S:1=\text{be} \quad \text{DIM} \quad \text{here} \]

*He said “OK, I'll just stay here.”*

\( \text{\texttt{\textbackslash audi AB1-018-B.wav as 100.824 ae 103.56}} \)

**Locative demonstratives**

There are three *locative demonstratives*, transparently derived from locative relational nouns by prefixing /x/. The velar fricative is a recurring feature associated with demonstratives. The locative demonstratives are contrasted on the basis of person: 1, 2 and 3, as shown in table 3-5.
### Table 3-5: Tirax relational nouns and their locative demonstrative counterparts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational noun</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>Locative demonstrative</th>
<th>English meaning</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṣtan</td>
<td>‘here’</td>
<td>x tốtan</td>
<td>‘here (near me)’</td>
<td>LOC:DX1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weri</td>
<td>‘there’</td>
<td>xuweri ~ xori</td>
<td>‘here (near you)’</td>
<td>LOC:DX2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ue</td>
<td>‘over there’</td>
<td>xue</td>
<td>‘there (near him)’</td>
<td>LOC:DX3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Locative demonstratives have the same pattern of distribution as other locative relational nouns:

(36)  

\[ \text{ale tete amu i=ve} \text{-i i=va} \]  
so child first 3S:R=say-3S 3S:R=say

*Then the oldest brother spoke (it), saying*

```
“bas=ve de=vihxa xin-xer xţan”
2P:1=make 3S:1=do,what OBL-3P LOC:DX1
```

“What will we do about them here?”

Locative demonstratives can also function as predicates (37), and as possessor nouns, following the associative na (38):

(37)  

\[ \text{lalhlahvuxvux tra haxal } xţan \]  
devil big INDEF LOC:DX1

*There’s a big devil here.*

(38)  

\[ \text{resan=na kastom=na}^3 \text{ xţan} \]  
language=ASSOC tradition(B)=ASSOC LOC:DX1

*(the) traditional language of (this place)*

\[ \text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 2452.317 \textbackslash ae 2454.907} \]

\[ \text{\textbackslash aud AB1-019-A.wav \textbackslash as 1216.211 \textbackslash ae 1220.508} \]

---

^3 The Tirax word for Bislama ‘kastom’ is *mtanxa* ‘traditional culture’.
### 3.2.3.2 Temporal nouns

Unlike locative nouns, temporal nouns can either be clause–initial (39) or clause-final (40):

(39) **nevix** da=me lxen

    tomorrow 1S:1=come back

    *Tomorrow I'll come back.*

(40) da=me lxen **nevix**

    1S:1=come back tomorrow

    *I'll come back tomorrow.*

Temporal proper nouns take the time preposition *ren* when functioning as adjuncts to the verb, whereas temporal common nouns cannot:

(41) **ren** Tuste knen nas=at bo c'tan Mae

    time Tuesday(B) 1PX 1P:R=be DIM here Mae

    *On Tuesday, we were here at Mae,* ...

(42) * **ren** nanov knen nas=at bo c'tan Mae

    time yesterday 1PX 1P:R=be DIM here Mae

    *Yesterday, we were here at Mae,* ...

Temporal nouns can occasionally take specifiers or modifiers. Example (43) below, is from a story about a boy who has been fending off the advances of a devil for five days while his brothers were away. When the devil asks on the fifth day when the brothers are coming back, the boy says “**neliŋ xan**”, literally ‘today this’. The proximal demonstrative underlines the immediacy of their return:

(43) i=va “ **des=me** **neliŋ xan** ”

    3S:R=say 3P:1=come today PRX

    *(The boy) said ‘They are coming back today!’*
The temporal noun *nevix*, ‘tomorrow’, can take the associative marker to form a new time expression meaning ‘the next day’:

(44) \textit{nevix=nan} \quad i=lixdre \quad nvanu
\textit{tomorrow=ASSOC.3S:POSS} \quad 3S:R=leave \quad \textit{village}

*The next day she left the village.*

Temporal common nouns are used in greetings, such as ‘good afternoon’:

(45) \textit{i=nam} \quad \textit{lelna} \quad \textit{Amanda}
\textit{3S:R=good} \quad \textit{midday} \quad \textit{Amanda}

*Good afternoon, Amanda.*

Some examples of temporal common nouns are listed in table 3-6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal noun</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>nevihxa</em></td>
<td>‘morning’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lelna</em></td>
<td>‘midday’ (11am-1pm approx)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>revrev</em></td>
<td>‘afternoon’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>labuŋ</em></td>
<td>‘evening, night, night-time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nanɔv</em></td>
<td>‘yesterday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>neliy</em></td>
<td>‘today’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>laran</em></td>
<td>‘daytime’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nevix</em></td>
<td>‘tomorrow’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Pronouns and pronominal markers

As is common in Vanuatu languages, there is a set of \textit{free pronouns} in Tirax, as well as \textit{person markers}: bound pronominal morphemes that attach to the predicate. There is a set of person markers for subject, which cliticise to the beginning of the predicate, and a pair of person markers for third person object, which are suffixed to the end of the predicate. First and second person objects have no bound pronominal forms. Pronominal markers are part of the verb phrase, and their morphosyntax is discussed in chapter 4.
Possession can also be expressed using a person marker: a possessive suffix, which can attach to inalienable nouns, possessive prepositions such as *he*, and nominal prepositions such as *sxi*.

Free pronouns and person markers in Tirax make different distinctions within their paradigms. There are eight free pronouns, including an inclusive and exclusive form for first person plural. Subject markers do not distinguish inclusive and exclusive first person plural markers, but have three numbers: singular, dual and plural, giving nine forms for each mood. As is typical of Oceanic languages, gender is not distinguished in the pronominal system.

3.3.1 Free pronouns

The contrasts in the free pronoun system are typical of those of Oceanic languages, and are given in table 3–7. There is an eight-way distinction: first, second and third person are distinguished, and singular and plural, with an inclusive-exclusive distinction in first person plural. There is also a form for first person inclusive dual that is used by some older speakers, although there is no evidence of dual forms for other categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EXCL</td>
<td>xɔɔɔ</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>knen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INCL</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>nekidr</td>
<td>nekiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>nɔɔx</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>keni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>xain</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>xair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one set of free pronoun forms, which can function as subject (62), object (63) and object of a preposition (64).  

(46) **xɔɔɔ**

n=mtaxit

1s

1s::r=be.afraid

*I'm afraid.*

---

4 There is also a set of possessive forms, comprising a possessive classifier and possessive suffix, as discussed in §3.4.2.
(47) \textit{i=tevni} \quad \textit{xανο} \\
3S:R=bury \quad 1S

\textit{She buried me.}

\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-007-wav \textbackslash as 519.162 \textbackslash ae 523.138}

(48) \textit{i=ver} \quad \textit{kλε xινι xανο} \\
3S:R=say \quad \text{too} \quad \text{OBL} \quad 1S

\textit{She spoke to me too.}

\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-001-wav \textbackslash as 978.35 \textbackslash ae 983.733}

Free pronouns are also used reflexively (49) and as topic, in topicalisation constructions (50):

(49) \textit{n=kοσ-kοs} \quad \textit{xανο} \\
1S:R=DUP-scratch \quad 1S

\textit{I'm scratching myself.}

\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-007-wav \textbackslash as 333.994 \textbackslash ae 335.113}

(50) \textit{xανο, mρɛ hɔk xνɛr, mρɛ B, s=lev ten paun} \\
1S \quad \text{people 1S:POSS} \quad P \quad \text{people B} \quad 3P:R=take \quad \text{ten(B) pound(B)}

\textit{i=mɛ sxi mρɛ N} \\
3S:R=come \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{people N}

\textit{Me, my people, the B people, received ten pounds from the N people.}

\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-wav \textbackslash as 777.142 \textbackslash ae 783.029}

Unlike some other Oceanic languages, Tirax free pronouns are rarely found in possessive constructions. Personal possessive suffixes are used instead.

Pronouns form a closed class and can be the sole occupant of any noun phrase slot in a sentence. Pronouns do not generally combine with adjectives or most other nominal modifiers and specifiers, with the exception of the plural pronouns, which often combine with numerals and quantifiers, such as \textit{druľ} ‘all’:

(51) \textit{xαιρ} \quad \textit{druľ} \\
3p \quad \text{all} \quad 3P:R=carry \quad \text{stone}

\textit{They all brought rocks.}

\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-wav \textbackslash as 295.731 \textbackslash ae 301.107}
The third person singular pronoun in Tirax appears to have two forms: *xain* (53), and *xan* (54), which is homophonous with the Tirax proximal demonstrative (*xan*):

(52)  anxlde
where
Amanda?

*Where’s Amanda*

(53)  *xain*
i=at
Lakatoro
(54)  *xan*
i=at
3S
Lakatoro
3S:R=be.located
Lakatoro

*She’s in Lakatoro.*

However the two forms have different patterns of distribution. *Xain* can follow an interrogative pronoun in a verbless interrogative clause (55), whereas *xan* cannot (56):

(55)  anxlde
where
*xain?*

*Where is she?*

And *xan* can form a verbless locative sentence (57), whereas *xain* cannot (58):

(57)  *xan*
Lakatoro.
(58)  *xain*
3S
Lakatoro

*She’s at Lakatoro.*

The distribution of *xain* is the same as that for other free pronouns:

(59)  anxlde
where
2S

*Where are you?*

(60)  xɔɔɔ
*n=at*
Lakatoro
1S
1S:R=be.located
Lakatoro

*I’m at Lakatoro.*
A pronoun can occur in a verbless locative sentence if it is followed by a demonstrative:

\[(61) \text{xa}ir \quad * (\text{xar} \quad \text{dax} \quad \text{Santo})\]

\(3S \quad \text{DST} \quad \text{PERF} \quad \text{Santo}\)

They are already in Santo.

It has been observed that third person pronouns can historically derive from demonstratives (Himmelmann 1996). In languages such as Tirax, it can be difficult to distinguish between the two. \textit{Xan} in the above examples is unlikely to be an allomorph of \textit{xain}, since it has a different distribution. However, \textit{xan} also has a different distribution to the distal demonstrative \textit{xar}, which does not occur in these positions in any of the texts. The \textit{xan} that occurs in the above sentences appears to have an intermediate status between pronoun and demonstrative, and is perhaps on its way towards becoming an emphatic pronoun.

Other free pronouns in Tirax include interrogative pronouns, discussed in §5.6, and an anaphoric pronoun \textit{nye}, which occurs frequently in discourse, and is exemplified below:

\[(62) \text{mr}e \quad \text{i=}\text{lin} \quad \text{s=}\text{ve} \quad \text{des=}\text{an} \quad \text{laltah}^5\]

\(\text{people} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{five} \quad 3P:\text{R}=\text{want} \quad 3P:\text{I}=\text{go} \quad \text{to.the.sea}\)

Five men want to go to the sea.

\(\text{na} \quad \text{s=}\text{lixd}\text{re} \quad \text{nye} \quad \text{haxal} \quad \text{i=}\text{at} \quad \text{b}\text{o} \quad \text{lain}\)

\(\text{now} \quad 3P:\text{R}=\text{leave} \quad \text{ANA.PRO} \quad \text{one} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{be} \quad \text{DIM} \quad \text{home}\)

Now they leave one of them behind at home.

The anaphoric pronoun, \textit{nye}, may be derived from the POc article \(*n(V)\)-, and definite marker \textit{ny}, itself likely to have historically been an anaphoric demonstrative, as discussed in §3.5.2.

\(^5\text{Van ‘go’ has an allomorph an which almost always occurs in the irrealis mode, and often occurs following the third person singular realis i=}.\)
3.3.2 Subject markers

Subject pronominal markers are obligatory. They occur with and without co-referential free NPs:

(63) (ntɛbih ɛi=ŋar na)
child DEF 3S:R=cry now

(The child cried now.)
(S)he  cried now.

There is a question as to whether bound person markers are agreement markers, and non-referential, or whether they are pronominal, and referential. Where there is no free NP subject to function as the argument of the verb, the S(ubject) M(arker) must be referential. This assumes there is no zero co-referential argument present, and the requirement of the predicate is met, that its obligatory argument slot is filled. This reasoning compares with that of Bresnan and Mchombo (1987) for Chichewa, who base their argument on the requirements of the completeness condition in Lexical Functional Grammar.

Bresnan and Mchombo (1987) give evidence to show that the agreement and pronominal functions of the O(bject) M(arker) in the Bantu language, Chichewa, are actually distinct, counter to a claim made by Givón (1976) that pronominalisation and agreement are fundamentally the same process. There is also evidence of a morphosyntactic distinction between agreement and pronominal functions of the Tirax S(ubject) M(arker). For example in Tirax, most one-place predicates form complete clauses with the subject marker alone:

(64) naut i=nam
    place 3S:R=be.good

The place is good.

(65) i=nam
    3S:R=be.good

It is good.
However, weather and ‘atmosphere’ verbs, such as *xbah* ‘be hot’ and *nelik* ‘be dark’, and many verbs of sensation or emotion, require a free NP subject. Weather and atmosphere verbs typically require *naut* ‘place’:

(66) *(naut) i=xbah place* 3S:R=be.hot

*It’s hot.*

Verbs of sensation and emotion typically require *nedε(n)* ‘(his/her) body’:

(67) *(nedε-n) i=tɔŋ body-ss* 3S:R=be.hot

*He’s hot.*

This phenomenon can be accounted for if we understand agreement markers and pronominal markers as having a complementary distribution, due to the requirements of a predicate to have its core argument slots filled, and each by no more than one argument. I suggest that the subject marker on such weather and emotion verbs cannot be referential, that is, it is always an agreement marker. Agreement markers cannot function as arguments, whereas pronominal markers can. Therefore when a canonical intransitive verb such as *inan* occurs without a free NP subject, the subject marker *i=*, is pronominal, and the expression satisfies the requirements of a Tirax clause. However when a weather verb such as *ixbah* occurs without a free NP subject it is ungrammatical, as the subject marker *i=*_cannot be pronominal and so the core argument slot is unfilled. This explanation is predicated on the assumption that the Tirax subject marker has dual functions, and that there is a morphosyntactic distinction between its agreement and pronominal functions. Without such an assumption, the behaviour of weather verbs compared with canonical intransitives is difficult to account for.

Evidence from prosody and morphophonemic processes such as vowel elision further supports the analysis of the dual functioning of Tirax subject markers. For clauses with no free NP, evidence from prosody suggests that there is generally no ellipsis:
there are generally no pauses in the slot where a free NP would occur, and the intonation contour is smooth.⁶

In fluent speech, word-final unstressed vowels are elided when they precede vowel-initial morphemes. Vowel ellision occurs in the above example, suggesting there is no ‘zero NP’ intervening between the discourse marker and the subject marker:

vowel ellision
/ale/ + /ive/ -> /alive/

Where there is a co-referential NP, the marker has a grammatical agreement function if the free NP is in the same clause as the predicate, or a pronominal function if the free NP is an extra-clausal topic. The reasoning follows from the principle that there can be only one argument per argument slot in a predicate, referred to as the Uniqueness Condition by Bresnan and Mchombo (1987). The example below from The Story of the Little White Flying Fox shows the subject marker functioning as an agreement marker, reflecting the person and number of the NP argument. The smooth, rising intonation contour covering the free NP and predicate shows the two constituents are in the same clause.

... and he saw that the little white one was there now.

⁶ The intonation contours are a reflection of the relative pitch of the utterances as heard by the author.
However Tirax permits a thematic construction with fronted NP, in which case the person marker has a pronominal function. The example below shows the free NP netir ru ru ye ‘the two children’, functioning as topic, with a co-referential free pronoun within the clause functioning as subject. The topic NP is in its own I(ntonation) U(nit):

(70) (0.4) neti-r ru-ru ye …(0.2) xair svsvx r=ve yerer
child-3P.Poss Dup-Two Def 3p both 3D:R=Cop boy

The two children, they both were boys.

Mithun (1986) also argues that grammatical agreement markers and pronominal markers exhibit morphosyntactically distinct behaviour. One piece of evidence she uses is the range of functions of free pronouns in languages with bound pronouns compared with that of languages with agreement markers. Mithun finds that while free pronouns have several functions in agreement languages, such as marking contrastive focus, shift in topic and foreground prominence, free pronouns are only used for marking contrastive focus in languages where the person markers are referential. However free pronouns appear to be associated with a range of functions in Tirax narrative, as discussed in §9.5.3, while it is clear that person markers in Tirax are not solely agreement markers, and can be referential. There is no sense that a clause without a free NP subject is incomplete for a Tirax speaker. Often the third person subject marker i= is translated with the Bislama free pronoun hem, for example. This finding then contrasts with that of Mithun (1986).

Because of this dual function of the bound pronominal markers for subject, they are referred to here as person markers, specifically subject markers, rather than either bound pronouns or agreement markers.

Subject markers cliticise to the beginning of all predicates except nominal predicates. There are three subject marker paradigms in Tirax, one for realis mood, one for irrealis and one for negative realis. Like most Oceanic languages, three numbers are distinguished in the system of subject markers: singular, dual and plural, with the dual form likely to be historically related to the number two, ru.
Subject markers in nearby Vanuatu languages have been variously analysed as prefixes (Naman, Avava, Nese) and clitics (Lolovoli, South Efate, Araki). Phonologically, Tirax subject markers have an intermediate status between affix and word. Assuming one of the criteria for phonological word status is that the segment(s) be or contain a syllable nucleus, then the first and second person singular and third person plural subject markers generally do not meet this basic requirement, as they are expressed as non-syllabic /n/, /x/ and /s/ respectively. Subject markers also tend not to carry stress, and, unlike affixes, do not influence the stress patterns of the host word. Subject markers tend to behave more like affixes for some common verbs, in that they are counted as part of the word for the purposes of stress assignment. It is possible that they are in a process of grammaticisation, becoming more affix-like in their phonological behaviour. For some speakers, subject markers can also carry stress when preceding certain words.

Like many Vanuatu languages, Tirax words typically have primary stress on the penultimate syllable, and secondary stress on every second syllable counting backwards. Example (71) shows that the penultimate syllable of the verb has primary stress (the final syllable contains a diphthong). Example (72) shows that without the reduplicated syllable, the stress falls on the final syllable, rather than the subject marker:

(71) n=vi-vial n=me erwa
1S:R=DUP-walk 1S:R=walk downhill

I was walking downhill.

(72) n=vial nŋa nhal te i=mohmohlax namnam
1S:R=walk LOC road SUB 3S:R=smooth properly

I walked along the really smooth road.

Word-level affixes tend to influence the stress patterns of the word to which they attach. Therefore Tirax subject markers are analysed as clitics.

---

7 Subject markers tend to behave more like affixes for some common verbs, in that they are counted as part of the word for the purposes of stress assignment. It is possible that they are in a process of grammaticisation, becoming more affix-like in their phonological behaviour. For some speakers, subject markers can also carry stress when preceding certain words.

8 There are exceptions to this general rule, due to an historic process of final-vowel loss, resulting in consonant-final words with stress on the final syllable.
3.3.2.1 Realis subject markers

Table 3-8 shows the morphemes used to mark subjects for realis mood, primarily present or past tense declarative sentences. They are glossed as portmanteau morphemes, though the person and number are segmentable for first and second person forms.

Table 3-8: Realis subject markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>n(i)=</td>
<td>nar=</td>
<td>nas= (tas=)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>x(i)=</td>
<td>xar=</td>
<td>xas=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>i=</td>
<td>r(i)=</td>
<td>s(i)=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPS</td>
<td>r(i)=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impersonal morpheme is used to suppress the identity of the agent, similarly to the impersonal constructions of neighbouring languages, such as Naman and Neve’e (see 6.7.3 for discussion and examples). Like in Naman and Neve’e, the impersonal realis form is homophonous with the third person dual form.

For first and second person singular markers, and third person non-singular, the full forms occur before vowels:

(73) xɔnɔ ni=ak nŋa navil=na Jun
     1S 1S:R=be.born LOC moon=ASSOC June

[ni\ˈβak ...]

*I was born in the month of June.*

The vowel is typically reduced to schwa before consonants (74), and deleted before a root beginning with a homorganic consonant (75):

(74) n=vle neŋa i=mal we i=mal
     1S:R=gather native.almond 1S:R=be.lots so 1S:R=be.lots

[n\ˈβle.....]

*I collected lots of native almonds.*

9 Some speakers use tas= for first person plural realis.
Example (75) also shows how a morphophonological rule of consonant degemination typically applies with roots beginning with the homorganic nasal:

(75) \( n = \text{netur} \quad n = \text{tehix} \quad n = \text{xesxesir} \)

\( 1S:R=\text{sleep} \quad 1S:R=\text{get.up} \quad 1S:R=\text{do.the.sweeping} \)

[\text{ne‘tur} \quad \text{nte‘hix} \quad n^{2}\text{xes‘xes(e)r}]^{10}

I go to sleep, I get up, I do the sweeping.

The distribution of the allomorphs for the realis subject markers could reflect possible historical forms: \( ni, xi, ri \) and \( si \), in which the vowel has been reduced to schwa before consonants over time, and then deleted altogether in the environments given above. Some older speakers sometimes use \( ni \) before consonant-initial verb stems.

3.3.2.2 Irrealis subject markers

The subject markers in table 3-9 are used in clauses describing events which have not yet, or might not happen, such as future declaratives, conditionals, purpose clauses and desideratives.

Table 3-9: Irrealis subject markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>da=</td>
<td>dar=</td>
<td>das=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ba=</td>
<td>bar=</td>
<td>bas=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>de=</td>
<td>der=</td>
<td>des=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPS</td>
<td>der=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irrealis subject markers are used routinely for clauses relating future events, however it is clear that the marker encodes irrealis mood and not future tense, as it also encodes hypothetical or other events that were to have taken place in the past but were somehow thwarted. In the example below, the storyteller relates the circumstances surrounding the death of his 10-year old niece. Although the events described took place in the past, the irrealis subject marker is used to encode \( \text{netur} \), ‘sleep’ as the intended action did not take place:

\[10\] The final vowel is lowered due to the influence of the preceding vowels.
After that she went back to go to sleep but


e=ncdha ev-xa-ru bo nlaŋ han i=nev
3S:R=gasp 3S:R=MULT-TWO DIM wind 3S:POSs 3S:R=finish

she just gasped twice and her breathing stopped.

Irrealis subject markers are cleanly segmentable into person and number: singular –Ø, dual –r and plural –s. However they are glossed here as portmanteaux, following the convention for realis markers.

First person inclusive is semantically an overlap between first person and second person. In Tirax this meaning is expressed in different ways for different person marker paradigms. In the case of free pronouns and possessive suffixes, first person inclusive has a distinct form. In the case of subject markers, there is no distinct form for first person inclusive. In realis mood, first person inclusive is always expressed with a first person non-singular marker:

(77) nner bih ǝe i=va “nunu
boy small DEF 3S:R=say mother

The little boy said “Mother,

“nar=at i=dlǝ xo=tan vɔ-vɔ “
1D:R=stay 3S:R=be.thus LOC.DX1 DUP-DUR

“You and I have been here like this for a while ...”

However for irrealis mood, the first person inclusive meaning is expressed with either second person non-singular (78b), or first person non-singular (78 c &d).

(78) (a) vinadr ǝe i=v-va “e’e
woman DEF 3S:R=DUP-say yes

The woman said “Ok.
(b)“bar=van na lain
2D:1=go now home

“Let’s go home.

(c)“ ve ve-ve dar=an lain,
but DUP-if 1D:1=go home

“But if we go home

(d)“ dar=at ve-ve-ve neti-dr i=tx ”
1D:1=stay DUP-DUR child-1D.POSS 3S:R=be

“and we live there and after a while we have a child ...”

When first person inclusive is expressed with second person irrealis subject markers, there is a hortative meaning, discussed further in §5.5.2.

Free pronouns can be used to disambiguate the first person inclusive meaning (79) from the second person irrealis meaning (80):

(79) “ nekir bas=telul bas=an lanih ”
1Pt 2P:1=do.the.gardening 2P:1=go bush

“We will go and work in the bush garden.”

(80) “ keni nevix bas=an Lakatoro ”
2P tomorrow 2P:1=go Lakatoro

Tomorrow you (all) will go to Lakatoro.

3.3.2.3 Negative subject markers
There is a set of subject markers that are optionally used for negative clauses instead of realis or irrealis markers, shown in table 3-10.

11 The existential tox is in realis mood, despite the proposition being a future conditional. It is not uncommon for speakers to use realis mood where irrealis mood would be expected, particularly for common verbs in the third person singular. The irrealis form detox could also occur in this expression, and is considered by my consultant to be ‘correct’.
Table 3-10: Negative subject markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nah=</td>
<td>nar=</td>
<td>nas=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(x)ah=</td>
<td>(h)ar=</td>
<td>(h)as=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(h)e=/h=/ (h)a=</td>
<td>(h)er=</td>
<td>(h)es=</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that first person dual and plural markers are the same as for the realis subject markers.

Examples (81) and (82) below are from an elicitation session:

(81) nah=tur-te
     1S:NEG=stand–NEG

     I’m not standing up.

The second person (non-singular) forms can also express the first person plural inclusive meaning, similar to the irrealis pattern:

(82) has=tur-te
     2P:NEG=stand-NEG

     You (all) aren't standing up. We (incl) aren't standing up.

The phoneme /h/ is common to nearly all the negative forms and is likely to be a reflex of an old negative marker which no longer exists in Tirax. Many of Tirax’s neighbours have a circumfix for negative marking, which includes a prefix s(V)-. POc */s/ is reflected as /h/ in Resan Tirax. So the /h/ in the contemporary Tirax negative subject marker is likely to have derived from a prior negative prefix or circumfix.

The negative subject markers are glossed as portmanteau clitics, following the convention established for the other subject markers.

3.3.3 Object markers
As seen in §3.3.1, a pronominal object can be represented by a free pronoun:
(83) \(D\ \text{i=kueh} \ \text{xan} \)
\(D\ \text{3S:R=gesture} \ \text{1S}\)

*\(D\) gestured to me.*

(84) \(i=\text{ev} \ \text{xain}\)
\(3\text{S:R=pull} \ \text{3S}\)

*She (the snake) pulls herself along.*

Alternatively, third person non-reflexive objects can be represented by an object marker which is suffixed to the verb stem, \(-i\) for singular O (85), and \(-er\) for plural (86):

(85) \(n=\text{leh-i}\)
\(1\text{S:R=see-3S}\)

*I saw him / her / it.*

(86) \(n=\text{leh-er}\)
\(1\text{S:R=see-3P}\)

*I saw them.*

The object marker cannot appear where there is a full NP object, suggesting it is always referential:

(87) \(n=\text{leh(*-i)} \ \text{ntebih} \ \text{xar}\)
\(1\text{S:R=see} \ \text{child} \ \text{DST}\)

*I saw the child.*

The object marker is analysed as an affix because it behaves as part of the word for the purposes of stress assignment. Example (88) shows the verb *serex* ‘throw’ with the stress on the penultimate syllable of the word:

(88) \(i=\text{dre} \ \text{nxariv-deknali} \ \text{vvvvvvv-v} \),
\(3\text{S:R=hunt} \ \text{rat} \ \text{DUP-DUR}\)

*He hunted rats on and on and on and on*
and he went and found one.

In (89), the stress has shifted along one syllable; stress is still assigned to the penultimate syllable of the verb if the object marker is analysed as part of the word.

(89) ri=an lain , 
3D:R=go home 
They went home.

be i=ve-r-vih-te xini nunu han tata han but(B) 3S:R=say-reveal-NEG OBL mother3S:POSS father 3S:POSS
and he didn't reveal to his mother or father

tɛ i=teˈbex-i
SUB 3S:R=find-3S
that he found them.

The plural object marker is likely to have derived from, or be otherwise related to the third person plural pronoun xair.

The singular object marker is likely to be a reflex of the POc transitivity marker *–i, reanalysed in Tirax as a bound third person singular pronoun. The pattern of distribution of the 3s object marker differs from that of the 3p marker. Firstly, the 3s object marker only occurs in affirmative clauses (90) and not in negative clauses (91), whereas the 3p object marker –ɛr can occur in both (92-93):

(90) n=wes-i
1S:R=eat-3S

I ate it.

(91) n=wes(*-i)-te
1S:R=eat(*-3S)-NEG

I didn’t eat it.
I saw them in Mae.

I didn’t see them.

We saw in §2.1.5, that the 3s object marker is also suppressed by particles, such as the IMPerfective marker *sar:

I was seeing him.

There are no such restrictions on the plural object marker:

I was seeing them.

The Tirax object marker is sensitive to animacy of the O function:

1. number tends not to be distinguished for inanimate Os; the singular form is used for plural inanimate objects (example 96)
2. the marker is optional for inanimate Os (example 97)

The singular object marker is typically used for plural inanimate objects:

She cut down (the) two fruit and carried them.

Inanimate objects can also be represented by a zero:
The fellow asked the devil:

"be\ bɛ\ bar=tin\ nmab\ xan\ ade?\"

But whereabouts are we going to cook these chestnuts?

The devil replied "We'll cook (them) at my place."

3.3.4 Possessive suffixes

Possessors can be either represented by nouns (98), or pronominal markers (99):

She tried to say the names of the two small children.

My name is T. M.

The possessive suffix paradigm is given in table 3-11.

Table 3-11: Tirax possessive suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>-k, -g</td>
<td>-nen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>-dr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First person singular possessive has lexically determined allomorphs –/k/ and –/g/:
The possessive markers are analysed as suffixes because of their influence on stress assignment. The disyllabic word *male*- ‘leg’ has stress on the first syllable, but with the addition of the syllabic suffix *-ni*, stress is shifted to the following syllable:

\[(102) \text{male-} n \quad \text{ma'le-} n! \text{ni} \quad \text{leg-3S:POSS} \quad \text{leg-2P:POSS} \]

*His/her leg.*

*Your legs.*

The syntax of possession in Tirax is discussed below in §3.4.

### 3.4 Possession

Tirax nouns can be subcategorised according to how they are marked for possession: directly with a suffix, or indirectly with a possessive classifier. As seen above in (98) and (99), nouns which take possessive suffixes can alternatively take free NP possessors, which are juxtaposed. As discussed in chapter 2, the indirect-direct dichotomy roughly corresponds to the semantic distinction of alienable versus inalienable possession. The distinction between directly-marked and indirectly-marked nouns is a common feature of possession marking in Oceanic languages (Lynch et al. 2002:37).

#### 3.4.1 Direct (‘inalienable’) possession

Directly-marked nouns are marked with possessive suffixes which encode the person and number of the possessor. Directly-marked nouns are referred to here as *inalienable* nouns, since the prototypical members of this subcategory are inalienably possessed nouns such as body parts. Inalienable nouns also include body products and kin terms. However several kin terms, such as *nunu* ‘mother’ and body terms, such as *dromanan* ‘mind, thinking’, are indirectly marked for possession, so the subcategories
are not rigorously semantically-based. Table 3-12 below shows a range of inalienable nouns and some examples in each category.

Table 3-12: Examples of inalienable nouns (taking possessive suffix)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body parts</th>
<th>Body products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nɛɗ ‘body’</td>
<td>nevti ‘odour, fragrance’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vra ‘arm, hand’</td>
<td>nelki ‘shadow, picture’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dih-vra / -male ‘finger’ / ‘toe’</td>
<td>nemu(-g) ‘ghost, spirit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kor-vra / -male ‘fingers’ / ‘toes’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bus-vra / -male ‘elbow’ / ‘knee’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male ‘leg, foot’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saki ‘upper thigh’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drale ‘back of neck’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bet ‘head (of person)’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khu ‘nose’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lvo ‘tooth’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sŋɔ(-g) ‘mouth’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mta ‘eye’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>klii ‘rib’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ncne ‘tongue’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nadi ‘backside, bottom’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rma(-g) ‘heart’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tbax ‘belly’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxu ‘back’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhe ‘chin’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drlŋa ‘ear’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lale ‘inside(s)’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kin terms</th>
<th>Human Cultural items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vivni(-g) ‘sister’</td>
<td>nahxe ‘name’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>texu ‘brother-in-law’</td>
<td>(ne)buŋ ihjavil ‘ten day ceremony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hbo ‘family, people’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>net ‘child’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belxa ‘father-in-law’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reva ‘sister-in-law’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table of possessive suffixes was given above in §3.3.4. *Male*– ‘leg, foot’ has a regular possessive paradigm, given in table 3-13.

Table 3-13: Possessive paradigm for *male* ‘leg’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1x</td>
<td>male-k</td>
<td>male-nen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>male-dr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>male-m</td>
<td>male-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>male-n</td>
<td>male-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several commonly used nouns have irregular paradigms. *Bet(i) ‘head’* has an *a / e* alternation in its stem, which appears to be associated with the phonological weight of
the suffix, such that the heavier, n-initial suffixes trigger the e-stem, as shown in table 3-14.

Table 3-14: Possessive paradigm for *bet* ‘head’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1x</td>
<td>bati-k</td>
<td>bet-nɛn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>bati-dr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>bati-m</td>
<td>bet-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>bati-n</td>
<td>bati-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Net* ‘child’ has an u / i / Ø alternation in the root-final vowel, as shown in table 3-15.

Table 3-15: Possessive paradigm for *net* ‘child’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1x</td>
<td>netu-k</td>
<td>net-nɛn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>neti-dr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>netu-m</td>
<td>neti-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>neti-n</td>
<td>neti-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For non-human possessors, possession is marked on an inalienable noun with the ASSOCIative *na*. The e-form of *bet* ‘head’ is used with the associative marker:

(103) bet=nan

heap=ASSOC.3S:POSS

‘*its head*’ (referring to a snake)

Some frequently occurring nouns, such as *bet* ‘head’ and *net* ‘child’, also tend to use the associative marker to mark third person human possessors:

(104) net=nan

child=ASSOC.3S:POSS

A   ...   de=van   xnel   daxɔ

A   ...   3S:1=go   nakamal   circumcision

*Her child A ... will go into a men’s circumcision house.*

Inalienable nouns can be directly followed by possessor nouns, in which case they do not take the possessive suffix, whether the possessor is human, as in (105), or an animal, as in (106):
Possessive marking is obligatory for inalienable nouns, by either suffix or free NP, even if the possessum does not exist:

(107) ve nɔx naxda-m i=hge …
but 2S wings-2S:POSS 3S:it=be.not …

*But you don't have any wings ... (literally: But you, your wings do not exist)*

3.4.2 Indirect ('alienable') possession

Alienable nouns are indirectly marked for possession with a possessive classifier. There are four possessive classifiers in Tirax, *he*, *dre*, *nma* and *hle*, and an associative marker, *na*, so called because it used more broadly to encode other types of relationships between two entities, such as locative relationships, in addition to possession. The possessive classifiers encountered in Tirax are summarised in table 3-16.

**Table 3-16: Tirax possessive classifiers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Possessive classifier</th>
<th>Functional range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td><em>he</em></td>
<td>General possession, with human possessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC:FOOD</td>
<td><em>dre</em></td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC:DRINK</td>
<td><em>nma</em></td>
<td>Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC:TRACK</td>
<td><em>hle</em></td>
<td>Tracks, paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSOC</td>
<td><em>na</em></td>
<td>Possession with non-human possessor, other kinds of relationships between entities (including humans)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tirax, like other Vanuatu languages, has the following constituent structure within the NP possessive phrase:

\[
[N_{\text{possessum}} \ [\text{possessive marker} \ N_{\text{possessor}}] \ ]_{\text{NP}}
\]

(108) \([\text{nen} \ [\text{he} \ T ] ]_{\text{NP}}\)  \(T's \ house\)

Possessive (human possessor): he

The possessive classifier \(he\) is used to mark possession for those nouns which are closely related to human beings and human life, including kin terms and terms to do with health, culture and man-made products. It is the most frequently encountered possessive marker and has the broadest semantic range of nouns it can mark. It is glossed \(\text{POSS}\), for possessive marker. Table 3-17 shows examples of nouns which can be marked with \(he\). You may recall from §2.1.1, that, although indirectly marked nouns tend to be semantically alienable from the possessor, many are not.

Table 3-17: Examples of ‘alienable’ nouns that can take the \(he\) possessive marker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kin Terms</th>
<th>Human Life and Health</th>
<th>Human Culture</th>
<th>Human domestic culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dede ‘mother, maternal aunt’</td>
<td>drodroman ‘mind, thinking’</td>
<td>dakdakan ‘fine’</td>
<td>bxɔh ‘pig’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dne ‘uncle’</td>
<td>kaka ‘year (age)’</td>
<td>mta(n)a ‘custom’</td>
<td>lidax ‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lele ‘brother’</td>
<td>nehan ‘funeral, death’</td>
<td>nɛrɛŋ, rɛŋrɛŋ</td>
<td>lɔt ‘place’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lex ‘husband’</td>
<td>nǥar ‘sore’</td>
<td></td>
<td>nain ‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lexter ‘mother-in-law’</td>
<td>nlay ‘breath’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mre ‘people, family’</td>
<td>rɔs(a)n ‘illness’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nunu ‘mother’</td>
<td>selivan ‘life’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tate ‘father’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vave ‘aunt’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinadr ‘wife, woman’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vilex ‘bride’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Body Parts

| | |
|nasus ‘breast’ | nia\(r\) ‘fence, yard’ |
| | n\(t\)ay ‘basket’ |
‘Inalienable’ nouns, such as nadṛ, ‘blood’, cannot take the possessive morpheme he:

(109) nadṛ  (*he) N N’s blood

blood (*POSS) N

The possessive suffix can attach to a possessive classifier, to form a possessive pronoun:

(110) nain  henī

house  POSS.2P:POSS

Your (pl) house / house of yours (pl)

Possessive pronouns have an irregular paradigm, with an o / a / e vowel alternation in the stem. For this reason possessive pronouns are analysed and glossed as portmanteaux. The paradigm for he is given in table 3-18.

**Table 3-18: Possessive pronouns – the he paradigm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>hōk</td>
<td>henēn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>hadr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ham</td>
<td>henī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>han</td>
<td>har</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Possessive classifier (food): dre**

If the possessed entity is some kind of food or edible substance, the possessive morpheme dre is used. Any edible noun can be marked with the dre possessive classifier to encode it as food for the possessor. The sentence below is spoken by a cat in an animal fable:

(111) “n=leh nxariv-deknali drōk haxal”

1S:R=see rat PC:FOOD.1S:POSS INDEF

“I saw a rat (for me to eat)!”
The *dre* possessive pronoun paradigm is irregular, similarly to the *he* paradigm, and the *dre* possessive pronouns are also analysed as portmanteaux, as shown in table 3-19.

**Table 3-19**: Paradigm for possessive pronouns formed from *dre*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>drɔk</td>
<td>drenɛn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>dradr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>dram</td>
<td>dreni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>dran</td>
<td>drar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Possessive classifier (drink): nme**

Tirax also has a possessive classifier for drinks, *nme*, conjugated in table 3-20.

**Table 3-20**: Paradigm for possessive pronouns formed from *nme*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>nmag</td>
<td>nmenɛn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>nmadr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>nmam</td>
<td>nmeni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>nman</td>
<td>nmar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nouns which can be possessions, as well as sources of food or drink can be classified accordingly:

(112) nani hɔk nani drɔk nani nmag  
*coconut* POSS.1S:POSS *coconut* PC:FOOD.1S:POSS *coconut* PC:DRINK.1S:POSS  
*my coconut*  *my coconut (to eat)*  *my coconut milk*

**Possessive classifier (track): hle**

*Hle* marks nouns which are some kind of path or road:

(113) nhal hle mleun  
*road* PC:TRACK *chief*  
*the chief's track*
The possessive pronoun paradigm for *hle* is given in table 3-21. *Hle* possessive pronouns are also glossed as portmanteaux.

Table 3-21: Paradigm for possessive pronouns formed with *hle*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>hlak</td>
<td>hlenen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>hladr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>hlam</td>
<td>hleni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>hlan</td>
<td>hlar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possibly due to the specialized meaning of *hle*, the morpheme can stand alone to represent ‘path’:

(114) \( r=sr \) ɛ hle mleun

3D:R=follow PC:TRACK chief

*They (two) took the chief’s track.*

The possessor of the path can also be an animal, such as for a ‘pig track’, or a vehicle:

(115) \( ba=sr \) bɔ hle malvat xar

2S:1=follow DIM PC:TRACK car DST

*You just take that road (for cars) ...*

3.4.3 The associative *na*

The marker, *na*, has a range of functions, generally signifying an association between two entities. It forms possessive pronouns for inalienable nouns with non-human possessors:

(116) net natɔ

child chicken

net=nan

child=ASSOC.3S:POSS

*(the) chick (ie. baby chicken) its child*

(117) bet nmat

head snake

bet=nan

head=ASSOC.3S:POSS

*(the) snake’s head its head*
(118) rneh    nawita    rneh=nan
tentacle    octopus    tentacle=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(118) rneh    nawita    rneh=nan
tentacle    octopus    tentacle=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(118) rneh    nawita    rneh=nan
tentacle    octopus    tentacle=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

(119) lba nxa    lba=nan
root    tree    root=ASSOC.3S:POSS

The associative marker has pronominal forms, given in table 3-22.

Table 3-22: Paradigm of pronominal of na

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 excl</td>
<td>nag</td>
<td>nen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 incl</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>nadr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>neni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>nan</td>
<td>nar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the possessive markers, associative na often forms a phonological unit with the element that precedes it in the NP, as demonstrated by the example below, where stress shifts from the first syllable (120) to the second syllable (121) of the disyllabic word male- ‘leg’ with the addition of the marker.

(120) 'male-n    xar    i=hol    xar 12
     leg-3S:POSS    DST    3S:R=swell    DST

That leg of hers really swelled up.

\aud AB1-009-A.wav \as 554.198 \ae 554.985

(121) nevin    i=tox    nŋa    ma’le=nan
     bullet    3S:R=be    LOC    leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

There was a bullet in its (ie. a dog’s) leg.

\aud AB1-009-A.wav \as 805.515 \ae 814.219

\footnote{12 This is an example of the demonstrative having an emphatic function, as discussed in 12.6.}
Na can attach to a noun, as in the examples above, a numeral, as in (122) below, or an adjective, as in (123). Since affixes by definition attach to a single word class, the Tirax associative marker is glossed as a clitic, although its actual status appears to be part way between a clitic and affix.

(122) i=rub xini nŋɛ xewel=nan na
3S:R=hit OBL ANA.PRO eight=ASSOC.3S:POSS now

_She whipped her eighth one then._

(123) i=an i=tur xoɔ nali v-vhɔ=na nvat
3S:R=go 3S:R=stand block door DUP-precise=ASSOC stone

_He went and stood right in the stone doorway._

Na is generally used to encode possession where the possessor is not human, as in example (120-123) above. However, the morpheme also encodes a range of other relationships. For this reason it is analysed and glossed as an _associative marker_, as are markers with similar functions in Australian languages, and other Oceanic languages, such as the Vanuatu language, Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001:186ff).

For the expression $N_1 na N_2$, the range of relationships between the two nouns that are encoded by _na_ include:

- to identify or narrow down the referent from a range of referents given by $N_1$:

(124) navil=na Oktoba _the month of October_

\_aud AB1-002-A.wav \_as 2101.378 \_ae 2104.777

- to indicate the purpose or function of $N_1$:

(125) meresin=na malaria _Malaria medicine_

|medicine=ASSOC malaria
• to indicate membership or affiliation with an institution or place:

(126) tija=na  SDA  misin  
teacher at the SDA mission
    teacher(B)=ASSOC  SDA(B)  mission(B)

(127) mᵢᵣᵩ=nan  
its people (ie. the village’s people)
    people=ASSOC.3S:POSS

• to indicate a locative relationship between N₁ and N₂:

(128) amu=na  nali  
in front of the door
    front=ASSOC  door

• to indicate a relationship with a human NP, which is not one of possession:

(129) nvat=na  vleːɛx  
bride money
    money=ASSOC  bride

(130) nexut=na  nʈɛbɪh  
(the) child’s lice
    lice=ASSOC  child

As mentioned above, nouns in an inalienable relationship do not take na when the full NP possessor is present:

(131) dral(≈na)  net-nesil  
(the) noise made by the utensils
    noise  utensils

(132) dral=nar  
their (the utensils’) noise
    noise=ASSOC.3P:POSS

For other pairs of nouns which take na to indicate association, the na is obligatory:
For some inalienable nouns, such as *bet ‘head’ and *net ‘child’, *na is often used for human possessors instead of the possessive suffixes.

Other Malakula languages, such as Naman and Avava (Crowley 2006a and 2006c) have similar possessive patterns, where directly-marked, or ‘inalienable’, nouns can also take an associative marker with human possessors. This pattern is not attested in Tirax for alienable nouns.

The possessor can be ellipsed where the reference is clear:

(135) morti haxal, net=na Ø haxal
    person INDEF     child=ASSOC INDEF

*There was a man who had a son.*

3.5 Grammatical morphemes within the NP

Tirax NPs can have one or more determiners, which encode information about the referentiality or identifiability of the entity. We have just looked at possessives above in §3.4. The present section looks at demonstratives, articles, quantifiers and the plural marker. Each of these categories is distinguished by its position in the NP.

3.5.1 Demonstratives

We saw in §3.2.3 that there is a three-way contrast in Tirax locative demonstratives based on person. There is a two-way contrast in the deictic demonstrative determiners, and it is based on relative distance, given in table 3-23.
Table 3-23: Tirax demonstrative determiners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proximal</th>
<th>distal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRX</td>
<td>DST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xan</td>
<td>xar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demonstratives follow possessive morphemes in the NP:

(136) “i=we-s-nenev nato dradr xan”
3S:R=eat-COMPL chicken PC:FOOD:1PL.POSS PRX

“He has eaten all our chicken!”

A demonstrative can be followed by an article or focus marker, in which case the two determiners give discourse prominence to the NP, as in the example below. In this story, the grandmother has just cooked a yam, and unbeknownst to her, her grandson fed it to his fish. He comes back and asks for another yam:

(137) “n=ma-x-tin kaka xar nẹ”
1S:R=REC-cook yam DST DEF

“I just cooked that yam!”

The discourse function of demonstratives is discussed in chapter 10.

Demonstratives are not specified for number and can be followed by the plural marker, xner for plural referents:

(138) nas=hul bot-nxa xar xner vo s=xan mumux
1P:R=burn base-wood DST P DUR 3P:R=burn properly

*We burn those tree-bases until they are properly burnt.*

Himmelmann (1996) notes the difficulty in some languages of distinguishing demonstratives from third person pronouns (mentioned in §3.3.1 above), and from definite articles (§3.5.2) and of distinguishing pronominal and adnominal uses of
demonstratives. All these are also grey areas in Tirax. Additionally, locative
demonstratives and demonstrative determiners have overlapping patterns of
distribution. For example, while most demonstrative uses are adnominal, they can
also function as a locatives:

(139) i=v-va   “e  be  dar=at  xan  nəx”
3S:R=DUP-say e  but(B) 1D:1=be  PRX  2S

(The boy) said “Hey! We’ll stop here!”

And while most locative demonstratives are pronominal, they can also function
adnominally:

(140) nelŋ  here  bo  sana  xori  xan  i=me  i=leh  xono
perhaps  because  DIM  matter  LOC:DX2  PRX  3S:R=come  3S:R=see  1S

Now, it is perhaps because of this matter there that she came to see me.
(That is, it is perhaps because of the matter of the circumcision, which I have
just been talking about, that she came to see me.)

The distal demonstrative xar is the most common deictic demonstrative, with 564
instances in the entire corpus of narratives, how-to texts and elicitations. It is perhaps
the least deictically marked, as it occurs in elicited sentences to translate NPs marked
in English or Bislama for definiteness, with ‘the’ and ‘ia’ respectively. It can also
function as a resumptive pronoun for relative clause objects, as in (141) below. In this
example, the storyteller breaks out of the storytelling, because she realises that the
song she was singing is not the one which belongs to the story, and she tries to
remember the correct song:

(141) nŋɛ   [te  n=vər  xar ]RC  i=hge  vər
ANA:PRO  REL 1S:R=say DST 3S:R=be.not  EMPH

That one I was singing is definitely not it.

While there are 564 instances of xar in the data, by comparison, there are only 212
instances of xan, as seen in table 3-24.
Table 3-24: Comparison of frequency of Tirax demonstrative determiners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLOSS</th>
<th>no. of instances</th>
<th>spontaneous instances</th>
<th>instances (elicitation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xan</td>
<td>PRX</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xar</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ross (2004) notes that the demonstratives of Oceanic languages do not readily form cognate sets (Ross 2004:177). The Tirax system is no exception, bearing little formal resemblance to many of its neighbours. Note however, the phoneme /x/ is common to all Tirax demonstratives, and the plural marker xner, as well as to the numerals 6 to 9, discussed below in §3.6.

3.5.2 Articles
The articles encountered in the Tirax data are the definite marker, ye, and indefinite marker, haxal. The focus marker ri is also discussed in this section.

Definite: ye
As noted in §3.2.2, the reflex of the pre-posed POc article, *nV-, has fused with nominal roots in most Vanuatu languages, including Tirax. In Tirax there is a post-posed marker, ye, which encodes definite, referential entities:

(142) tnah ye i=ver xini marbih ye ...

The devil said to the boy ...

The marker is only encountered in spontaneous discourse; in elicitation, the demonstrative xar is used to translate English ‘the’ and Bislama ‘ia’, and so Ne appears to function as a discourse deictic demonstrative. However, like the English definite article, the Tirax definite marker marks NPs whose referents the speaker assumes the hearer can identify, whether or not they have already been mentioned in discourse. This includes referents that have been evoked by a frame or situation, such as cooking or hunting. The NP in bold in the example below has not been previously established in the discourse. The referent, four-pronged spear, is inferable from the activity of spearing fish, which has already been established.
(143) i=nev, xain nes dran, xain, 3S:R=finish 3S fish PC.FOOD.3S:POSS 3S

After that, as for him, his fish,

i=hxal bih bo nŋa netur negvat han ŋe 3S:R=one small DIM LOC prong 4.prong.spear 3S:POSS DEF

there was just one small one on the prong of his four-pronged spear.

The marker ŋe can form a phrase with the verbal discourse marker dla, ‘(be) like’ which has an anaphoric function, demonstrated in the example below. Here, idla ŋe refers back to the clause relating the event where the speaker’s cousin told the speaker about the death of their niece. The marker is glossed ANA, for anaphoric marker, to distinguish it from the definite marker, which follows NPs:

(144) na n=ŋə i=dla ŋe n=ŋədər-te nte te da=ve-i now 1S=R=hear 3S=R=be.thus ANA 1S=R=know-NEG thing REL 1S=R=make-3S

Now I heard (it) like that, and I didn’t know what to do.

There are several instances in the data of ŋe functioning as an anaphoric marker, marking a VP. This is exemplified below, where ŋe points back to the VP in the previous clause, drel nəto ‘hunting chickens’. Nəto ‘chicken’ is generic, neither referential nor identifiable, so the marker ŋe which follows it cannot be the definite marker. The narrator later explained that ŋe here is ‘short for idla ŋe’:

(145) i=at sar, i=trev lidax 3S:R=sit IMPF 3S:R=wait dog

He (Cat) sat waiting for Dog.

lidax xain i=van, i=drel nəto dog 3S 3S:R=go 3S:R=hunt chicken

As for Dog, he went and hunted chickens.

i=drel nəto ŋe ̃VṼVṼVṼ-Ṽ 3S:R=hunt chicken ANA DUP-DUR

He hunted chickens like that on and on,
he killed one by biting it,

The marker ye therefore has a dual function, of marking definiteness, as well as having an anaphoric function exemplified above, where it can modify VPs.

There appear to be cognates to the Tirax definite marker in other Malakula languages, such as Neverver (aŋ), and Neve‘ei (ŋe). These markers have an anaphoric demonstrative function, as reported in Barbour (2006) and Musgrave (2001) respectively. It is clear that the Tirax definite marker has derived historically from a deictically unmarked demonstrative determiner, as per Lyons’ observation about the historical development of definite markers (Lyons 1999:116), and this anaphoric function now co-exists with the more recent development of marking definiteness.

There is mixed evidence on the phonological status of ye. There are several instances of ye clearly forming a phonological unit with the word it marks, and at other times it behaves as a separate phonological word. It is represented in the current work as a separate word.

Unlike English articles, the Tirax definite marker is not obligatory, but tends to be associated with discourse-prominent NPs, including animate NPs and NPs which are salient to the plot at the time of mention. The function and distribution of the definite marker is explored in chapter 10 on reference-tracking.

**Indefinite: haxal**

Like other Vanuatu languages, such as Araki (Francois 2002), Neverver (Barbour 2006) and South Efate (Thieberger 2004), the Tirax numeral ‘one’, haxal, encodes indefiniteness for specific, singular entities. It is an optional marker, and tends to be used only to mark NPs referring to human and / or plot-salient referents:
There was a young man who lived in the bush.

Haxal (INDEFinite marker) can be used with mass nouns (147) and abstract nouns (148).

(147) “n=tebex dax tɔdradr haxal”

“I have found some food for us!”

(148) kulan haxal vɔr xan i=me xar

Some singing was coming (towards them)!

Haxal follows a possessive morpheme when introducing a possessed entity into a discourse:

(149) n=ve da=vɛr tuxtxunmaltxun ɔk haxal

I want to tell my story.

Focus marker: ri

Ri occurs in the same slot in the NP as the definite and indefinite markers. It is used primarily to mark focus, as in the two examples below, where the constituent in focus is in subject and object relations respectively. In the first example, the focussed constituent is only one clause away from the previous mention:

(150) n=tur i=vax brav tɔbɔ

I waited for a very long time

(and) a car came.
This car was the one belonging to G from Vao.

In the second example, the focussed constituent is six clauses away from the previous mention. The clause below is one in a sequence of clauses describing the actions of a she-devil after she has disposed of the wife of a chief. The chief’s wife had been digging up a yam when a she-devil found her. The use of ri highlights the role of the yam in the story. It is a cohesive device, reminding us that the yam in the hands of the she-devil is the same one that the chief’s wife was digging up:

\(151\) i=drxɛ kaka ri
\[3S{:R}={break.off} yam FOC\]

She (the she-devil) broke off that yam, ...

Unlike other articles, ri can follow pronouns. The following line of dialogue is from a story about a group of brothers, hunting at night. One by one their torch goes out, and they each in turn go back home:

\(152\) xɔnɔ ri nxa-nevir hɔk i=nev na
\[1S FOC wood-flame 1S:POSS 3S{:R}={finish} now\]

“Now me, my torch has gone out now.”

Like the marker ȵɛ, ri forms an anaphoric expression with the verb dla ‘be thus’. The syntactic behaviour of dla is discussed in §6.5.5.

3.5.3 Quantifiers and plural marking
There are two adnominal quantifiers in Tirax; drul ‘all’ and a partitive ȵɛ ‘some’.

**Drul ‘all’**
Drul ‘all’ quantifies nouns and pronouns, as in the following two examples respectively:
(153) nevix mlakel drul des=van Lakotoro des=dro-drovix
tomorrow youth all 3P:1=go Lakotoro 3P:1=DUP-play

Tomorrow all the young people will go to Lakotoro to play.

(154) xair drul s=dram xini
3P all 3P:R=agree OBL:3S

They all agreed with him.

Drul can also quantify mass nouns, as in notren drul ‘all day’.

For non-pronominal subject NPs, drul tends to follow the verb, and has scope over the subject. The following two sentences are equivalent in meaning:

(155) kaset xner des=tɔx drul nŋa kaljoral senta Vila
cassette(B) P 3P:1=be.located all LOC cultural(B) centre(B) Vila

The cassettes will all be kept at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Vila

(156) kaset xner drul des=tɔx nŋa kaljoral senta Vila
cassette(B) P all 3P:1=be.located LOC cultural(B) centre(B) Vila

The cassettes will all be kept at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Vila

If there is no free NP subject, drul follows the verb, having scope over the subject:

(157) s=vla drul
3P:R=leave all

They (the devils) all fled.

Drul can head a complex NP with a xini PP:

(158) s=ser-serex [drul [xini [nte tɛ s=hlox-i ] ] ]
3P:R=DUP-throw all OBL thing SUB 3P:R=carry-3S

They threw away all (the) things (ie.weapons) that they were carrying.

The above NP is equivalent in meaning to:
(159) ntɛ drul [ te s=hlo]+
thing all SUB 3P=R=carry-3S

all the weapons they were carrying.

PARTitive: nŋɛ

Nŋɛ like drul can quantify mass nouns, as well as count nouns:

(160) mrɛ nŋɛ, people PART

There were some men,

s=ve-ve des=ɔs naxtabɔl, Wëremis
3P:R=DUP-want 3P:I=eat dragon.plum Weremis

they wanted to eat some dragon plums in Weremis.

(161) nas=hloɔ nvat i=van, nŋɛ i=van
1P:R=carry money 3S:R=go
1P:R=eat food PART 3S:R=go

We took money, we took some food.

Nŋɛ can also modify a verb, functioning as an emphatic marker, as in the following two examples:

(162) i=mɛ salin, ve i=vla nŋɛ
3S:R=come outside but 3S:R=go.away EMPH

He came outside (of the devil’s cave) and got right away from there.

(163) s=v-va u: das=ve bo ntɛ te i=hat nŋɛ
3P:R=say oh 1P:R=make DIM thing SUB 3S:R=bad EMPH

They said; “Oh! We have just done something that is really bad!”

Plural marker: xnɛr

Plural number is optionally marked with the free morpheme xnɛr. It is used to clarify or emphasise plural number, and is typically used with kin terms:
I went to see (her) papas and uncles.\(^\text{13}\)

The plural marker precedes any quantifiers, and follows demonstratives and articles:

\begin{Verbatim}
(165) lidax hɔk \textit{i=wes} \texttt{druł} \texttt{xe} \texttt{xner} \texttt{ŋe}
dog \textit{POSS:1S.POSS 3S:R=eat} egg DST P PART
\end{Verbatim}

\textit{My dog ate some of those eggs.}

Like the demonstrative determiners, \textit{xner} can follow proper nouns, in which case it refers to a group of people associated with the person identified by the name:

\begin{Verbatim}
(166) nar=tab \texttt{xini} \texttt{M} \texttt{xner}, \texttt{Y}
1D:R=\textit{surprise} OBL \textit{M} P \textit{Y}
\end{Verbatim}

\textit{You and I were surprised (to see) M, Y and everyone.}

As mentioned above, plural number is only optionally marked. This also applies to inherently plural nouns. For example, \textit{mrɛ} ‘people’ can appear with or without \textit{xner}, as in (167) and (168) respectively.

\begin{Verbatim}
(167) \texttt{mrɛ} \textit{s=mkan} \texttt{dxı} \texttt{noxmo}
people \textit{3P:R=dance} COM slit.drum
\end{Verbatim}

\textit{The people danced to the slit drum}

\begin{Verbatim}
(168) da=sre \texttt{kłe \texttt{mrɛ} \texttt{ŋe} \texttt{xner}}
1S:1=\textit{follow} too people DEF P
\end{Verbatim}

\textit{I too will follow the other people.}

The distribution and narrative function of the plural marker is discussed in chapter 10.

\(^{13}\)The word \textit{papa} here is taken from Bislama translation, and refers to the \textit{biological father} and the \textit{father’s brothers} of the speaker’s bride. \textit{Dnɛ} refers to the \textit{maternal uncle(s)}. Note this is the only instance in the corpus of these kin terms occurring without a possessive pronoun.
3.6 Numerals

This section looks at the morphology of numerals and their position within the noun phrase. The syntax of numeral phrases is discussed in chapter 6.

3.6.1 Citation forms

Proto-Oceanic had a decimal counting system. However quinary numeral systems are widespread in Oceanic languages, leading Lynch et al (2002) to observe that the numerals 6-9 may have dropped out of use relatively early on. Vanuatu languages with quinary systems include the Malakula language Tape (Crowley 2006:131), Merei, spoken on Espirito Santo (Chung 2005:17), and South Efate (Thieberger 2004:84). Tirax appears to have retained the Proto-Oceanic decimal system for counting; the numerals 6 to 9 are disyllabic and all begin with x(V), however each of the numerals 1 to 10 are clearly related to the corresponding POc forms, as listed in Lynch et al (2002:72) and given in table 3-25.¹⁴ The citation form of the numeral includes the third person singular realis marker i=, with the exception of haxal, ‘one’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-25: Tirax numerals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tirax</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹⁴ Nese, a Northwest Malakula language, has a similar pattern with numerals 6-9 derived from POc forms with prefix x(V)- (Crowley, and Lynch footnote, in Crowley 2006d:64-5).
Multiples of ten are formed with *hŋovl* plus the numeral root, as shown in the table above. For numbers eleven to ninety-nine, *dromana(n)* ‘plus’ is used to link tens and units.\(^{15}\)

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{(169) ale} & n=\text{skul} & n=\text{skul} & v\text{v}v-v\text{v} \\
\text{so} & 1\text{s}:r=\text{school}(\text{B}) & 1\text{s}:r=\text{school}(\text{B}) & \text{DUP-DUR} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
kaka & i=\text{hŋavil} & \text{dromana-n} & i=x\text{edit} \\
yam & 3\text{s}:r=\text{ten} & \text{plus-3}s:\text{POSS} & 3\text{s}:r=\text{seven} \\
\end{array}
\]

*So I went to school until I was seventeen.*

\[\text{\texttt{\textbackslash a ud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 505.36 \textbackslash ae 515.806}}\]

The word *blin* is used in conjunction with *dromana(n)* to build numbers greater than a hundred.\(^{16}\) The numerals that follow both *blin* and *dromana(n)* are expressed as units, but *blin* indicates that the following number is multiplied by ten, while the numeral following *dromana(n)* retains its unit value: \(^{17}\)

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
i=\text{ŋosŋavil} & \text{blin} & i=\text{lin} & \text{dromana} & i=\text{til} \\
3\text{s}:r=\text{hundred} & \text{plus.10X} & 3\text{s}:r=\text{five} & \text{plus} & 3\text{s}:r=\text{three} \\
\end{array}
\]

*One hundred and fifty-three.*

\[\text{\texttt{\textbackslash a ud AB1-007-A.wav \textbackslash as 1284.033 \textbackslash ae 1289.784}}\]

*Blin* is only used with numerals.

\[\text{\texttt{\textbackslash a ud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 505.36 \textbackslash ae 515.806}}\]

\[\text{\texttt{\textbackslash a ud AB1-007-A.wav \textbackslash as 1284.033 \textbackslash ae 1289.784}}\]

\[\text{\texttt{\textbackslash a ud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 505.36 \textbackslash ae 515.806}}\]

---

\(^{15}\) *Dromanan* is also a noun, meaning ‘mind, brain’. There are cognates in other Malakula languages, however the word for number formation in those languages tends to be polysemous with the word for ‘body’ in those languages, rather than ‘mind’. In Avava, for example, the word *druman* is used for linking hundreds, tens and units, and is identical in shape to the Avava word for ‘his / her body’ (Crowley 2006c:60). In Naman, the cognate is *daman*, which is used exclusively for building numbers (Crowley 2006a:82), whereas in Neve’ei, the cognate is *nedremwen* ‘his/her body’ also used to build numbers (Musgrave 2001:51). In Tirax the word for ‘his/her body’ is *neden*. Interestingly, the Neve’ei word, *nedremwen*, is formally similar to both Tirax words, *dromanan* and *neden*, suggesting the two Tirax word perhaps have a common origin.

\(^{16}\) Lolovoli also has separate words for linking hundreds and tens, (*avigi*), versus *domwagi*, which links tens and units (Hyslop 2001:94).

\(^{17}\) My informant later suggested *blin ihŋovllin* (‘plus fifty’) is acceptable.
3.6.2 Multiplicative numerals: vxa

Numeral roots can take prefix \(v(x)a\) to form multiplicative numerals, as in ivaru ‘twice’ and ivatil ‘three times’:

\[(171) \text{She just gasped twice.} \]

This prefix may be related to the verb root, vax, which refers to the passing of time:

\[(172) \text{It wasn’t long before she spoke to me too.} \]

Vxa- has an allomorph va- before h-initial numeral roots:

\[(173) \text{I just want to talk about a thing that} \]

\[(174) \text{Ivahaxal, ‘one time’, is the conventional way to begin a story, as in the opening of the personal anecdote below:} \]
3.6.3 Verbal numerals

In the various Vanuatu languages which have inflecting numerals, the subject marker is bleached to a greater or lesser extent of its referential value. In Tirax, the subject marker is part of the citation form, suggesting it has been reanalysed as part of the numeral root. The third person marker does not agree in number with the noun it quantifies, not even when it appears in a relative clause, as in the example below, where the subject marker functions as a resumptive pronoun:

(175) na i=leh net vemex ri te i=ŋavil
    now 3S:R=see child dove FOC REL 3S:R=ten

*Now then he saw those ground dove chicks, who numbered ten.*

However, when numerals quantify first and second person free pronouns, the subject marker agrees in person and number with the pronoun:

(176) magɔ i=vin knen nas=vat
    warrior 3S:R=shoot 1PL 1P:R=four

*(The) warrior shot us four.*

The following example is structurally ambiguous, depending on whether the expression forms a clause or a NP:

(177) keni xas=til
    2P 2P:R=three

*There are three of you.* / *You three.*

Table 3-26 shows there is a split in the paradigm between first and second person versus third person, which has an invariable third person singular subject marker.

---

18 There is a verbal quantifier *mal* ‘be many’, and verbal interrogative quantifier *vih* ‘be how many / much’ which have a similar behaviour pattern to verbal numerals.
Table 3-26: Free pronouns with number specified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 incl.</td>
<td>nekir</td>
<td>nekir nar=ru</td>
<td>nekir nas=til</td>
<td>nekir nas=vat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 excl.</td>
<td>knen</td>
<td>knen nar=ru</td>
<td>knen nas=til</td>
<td>knen nas=vat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>keni</td>
<td>keni xar=ru</td>
<td>keni xas=til</td>
<td>keni xas=vat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>xair</td>
<td>xair i=ru</td>
<td>xair i=til</td>
<td>xair i=vat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like numerals in many other Vanuatu languages, such as South Efate (Thieberger 2004:84), and Tape (Crowley 2002:133), the numeral subject marker is sensitive to mood, as shown below, where nelį, ‘perhaps’, triggers irrealis mood:

\[(178) \text{nelį te de=vial mtainial de=lin hxa de=xɔwɛn} \]

\[
\text{Perhaps she will have to walk five or six hours.}
\]

In neighbouring Naman, the subject marker is not sensitive to mood when the numeral is modifying the subject NP, although it is sensitive to mood when modifying the object NP. In Tirax, the third person marker generally agrees in mood with the mood of the main verb regardless of grammatical relation. The following was given in an elicitation session, and the realis subject marker was considered ungrammatical:

\[(179) \text{mrɛ (*i= / ) de=lin des=van laltah} \]

\[
\text{Five men will go to the sea.}
\]

However for second person, the numeral modifying the subject NP does not have to agree with the mood of the clause:

\[(180) \text{keni xas=lin bas=an laltah} \]

\[
\text{You five will go to the sea.}
\]
Perhaps the key difference between the above two examples is that in the first sentence the subject NP can be interpreted as non-specific, and in the second it is specific. It is likely that in Tirax, the mood of the subject marker on a numeral which modifies the subject NP is dependent on text or context as well as the mood of the clause, such that, for clearly specified subject NPs which are quantified by number, the numeral subject marker must always be realis, reflecting the fact the entities exist and are identifiable at the time of the utterance.¹⁹

A summary of the distribution of features across the subject markers for numerals quantifying the different categories of NP is given in table 3-27.

**Table 3-27**: Sensitivity of numeral subject marker to grammatical categories for quantified free pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mood of main verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1ˢᵗ &amp; 2ⁿᵈ person (subject)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1ˢᵗ &amp; 2ⁿᵈ person (non-subject)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3ʳᵈ person</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inflected form of the numeral, that is, the V(ernal) NUM(eral), can follow a quantifier in the NP, in which case it has scope over the quantified NP:

(181) notrɛn drul i=ru
day all 3S:R=two
N QUANT V.NUM
two whole days

¹⁹ The patterns of agreement of quantified free pronouns requires further investigation, as the patterns may be more complex, with different speakers having different rules. Another speaker, for example, suggested that for the first person plural (excl) that *knen daslin* and *knen delin*, both meaning ‘we five’, were also acceptable as subjects of irrealis clauses. In these cases the numeral carries an irrealis marker, but does not have to agree in person. So when the third person marker combines with 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ person pronouns, it can inflect for mood but not number.
The inflected form of the numeral can function as head of an NP where the identity of the referent is recoverable from the text or context. In *The Story of the White Flying Fox*, ten flying foxes remove their wings and go swimming together. The following sentence is considered complete and grammatical, with the numeral functioning as a subject NP:

(182) $i=\text{ŋavil}$ $s=\text{van}$ $s=\text{huv}$  
3S:R=ten 3P:R=go 3P:R=swim  

*Ten (flying foxes) went swimming.*

3.6.4 Adjectival numerals

As mentioned above, Tirax numerals also function adnominally, quantifying common nouns and pronouns. When functioning adnominally, numerals do not take subject-mood markers, and the first syllable is reduplicated, as shown below, where the numeral ‘eight’ quantifies the first person plural exclusive pronoun. A(dnominal) NUM(eral)s precede all determiners slots:

(183) $\text{kñ} \text{ñ} \text{ñew-xewel xan}$ das=vla
1PX DUP-eight PRX 1P:J=go.away EMPH

*The eight of us have to go on.*

(184) $\text{nt} \text{bibi} \text{h}$ $\text{ru-ru}$ $\eta$ $r=\text{v-va}$
children DUP-two DEF 3D:R=DUP-say

*the two children, they said …*

The inflected numeral cannot occur in the adnominal numeral slot. The sentences below show the different patterns of distribution for the verbal and adjectival numeral:

(185) $\text{nato}$ $\text{hok}$ $i=\text{lin}$ $s=\text{nes-nenev}$ $\text{nani}$
chicken POSS:1S 3S:R=five 3P:R=eat-COMPL coconut

*My five chickens ate up all the coconut.*
3.6.5 Ordinal numerals

The bare numeral has an ordinal meaning, as in the following example, where it forms a phrase with the associative marker, *na*:

(189) *natɔ i=lin hɔk *
chicken 3S:R=five POSS:1S

*My five chickens ...

(187) natɔ lin=lin hɔk *
chicken DUP=five POSS:1S

*My five chickens ...

(188) *natɔ hɔk lin=lin *
chicken POSS:1S DUP=five

*My five chickens ...

Now she whipped her eighth one (her eighth child).

Reduplication of numeral roots is therefore iconic with plural number of entities referred to by the NP.

Like Avava, Tirax has two sets of expressions for counting days: *(ne)buŋ* NUMERAL ROOT is for counting days in general, and *te+NUMERAL ROOT* is used for counting days into the future, as indicated respectively in the examples below:

(190) nebuŋ lin te lele he marbih nɛ des=lxɛx lxen laltah mɛ
day five SUB brother POSS child DEF 3P:1=return back to.the.sea come

*On the fifth day, when the boy's brothers were returning again from the sea, ...

In the example below, *haxal* functions as an anaphoric noun, referring to one of a set of entities, specifically *planks*, established earlier in the text. Despite having a
nominal function, *haxal* is inflected for irrealis mood, triggered by *teru* ‘on the second day (into the future)’:

(191) ale teru de=tɛs lue de=haxal
    so second.day 3s:i=cut away 3s:i=one

    *On the second day, he would cut another one away.*

3.6.6 Two: *iru*

The syntax of the numeral two, *iru*, differs from other numerals. The inflected form can occur inside the NP, as in the sentence below, from a traditional tale:

(192) ntebibih i=ru xan tate har si=at si=at xɔ-vɔ-xɔ-vɔ-vɔ
    children 3s:r=two PRX father 3p:poss 3p:r=be 3p:r=be DUP-DUR

    *These two children and their father lived (together) on and on ...*

The pair of equational sentences below, from an elicitation session, provide further evidence that the verbal numeral *iru* ‘two’, is syntactically more versatile than the other numerals:

(193) resan ru-ru xar i=ver bɔ nte haxal\(^{20}\)
    sentence DUP-two DST 3s:r=say DIM thing one

    *These two sentences mean the same thing.*

(194) resan i=ru xar i=ver bɔ nte haxal
    sentence 3s:r=two DST 3s:r=say DIM thing one

    *These two sentences mean the same thing.*

The reduplicated form cannot occur in the V.NUM slot, as for other numerals:

\(^{20}\) Note, the subject marker of the verb *ver* ‘say’, does not agree in number in this elicited sentence with the dual number of the subject NP. Number agreement in object marking is sensitive to animacy, such that the object marker does not agree in number with the number of entities it refers to if the entities are inanimate. This example suggests that the subject marker may be similarly sensitive to the animacy, or even the semantic concreteness, of the subject NP.
Although adnominal numerals can co-occur with demonstratives (197), there is a restriction on the co-occurrence of verbal numerals and demonstratives (198).

Although adnominal numerals can co-occur with demonstratives (197), there is a restriction on the co-occurrence of verbal numerals and demonstratives (198).

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Although adnominal numerals can co-occur with demonstratives (197), there is a restriction on the co-occurrence of verbal numerals and demonstratives (198).
Tirax, the effect of this loss on the pattern of behaviour of the number two is the reverse of that in Unua: it has less restriction on its pattern of distribution than other numerals.

3.6.7 One: haxal

We have seen that haxal ‘one’ is the only number which does not have a subject marker in its citation form. When haxal is functioning as a numeral, as opposed to an indefinite marker, it still does not take the subject marker in realis mood:

(200) nevix=nan
    tomorrow=POSS-3S:POSS i=lixdre nvanu dxi ntaŋ i=ru ...

    The following day she left the village with two bags ...

    \aud AB1-001-A.wav \as 192.578 \ae 201.959

    ntaŋ haxal i=ve nŋɛ=na nvanu haxal
    basket one 3S:R=COP ANA.PRO=ASSOC village one

    One bag was from one village,

    ntaŋ tuenan i=ve nŋɛ=na nvanu tuenan
    basket one.of.them 3S:R=COP ANA=ASSOC village one.of.them

    the other bag was from the other village.

    \aud AB1-001-A.wav \as 204.236 \ae 210.344

Haxal is also used to isolate a referent from a range of referents. It can often occur with plural pronouns, as in keni haxal ‘one of you (pl)’. It is frequently encountered following the anaphoric pronoun nŋɛ:

(201) i=drel natɔ ŋɛ vvvvvvvvv-ʋɔ
    3S:R=hunt chicken DEF DUP-DUR

    He hunted the chickens on and on until

    \aud AB1-018-B.wav \as 108.467 \ae 114.215

    i=xɛh-din nŋɛ haxal
    3S:R=bite-dead ANA.PRO one

    he bit one of them dead.
*Haxal* takes the subject marker when the clause is marked for irrealis mood, in which case it inflects for irrealis mood. As suggested by one of the language consultants, the irrealis marker captures the meaning that the entity does not (yet) exist:

(202) `bar=vɛ net nεn bih han de=haxal`

`2D:1=make child house small 3S:POSS 3S:1=INDEF`

*You two will build a small hut for the child.*

\`\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-001-A.wav as 1056.741 \textbackslash ae 1061.127}\`

*Haxal* can also function as a main clause verb, in which case it is inflected for person and number and means 'alone; by one’s self':

(203) `“ o bɛ xɔnɔ na n=haxal ”`

`oh but(B) 1S now 1S:R=be.one`

*‘O! Now it’s just me!’*

\`\texttt{\textbackslash aud ABV1-002-RoySamuel.wav as 206.46 \textbackslash ae 208.375}\`

The inflected numeral can also function as the head of an NP, as for other numerals:

(204) `ale i=haxal na i=srɛ nua`

`so 3S:R=one now 3S:R=follow water`

*So by himself now he followed the river.*

\`\texttt{\textbackslash aud ABV1-002-RoySamuel.wav as 220.841 \textbackslash ae 222.695}\`

(205) `i=va de=haxal de=an kɛ de=leh-i ”`

`3S:R=say 3S:1=one 3S:1=go again 3S:1=see-3S`

*He said ‘(Some)one go back and have another look!’*

\`\texttt{\textbackslash aud AB1-018-A.wav as 1101.567 \textbackslash ae 1104.282}\`

3.6.8 Summary

Tirax numerals have complex morphosyntactic behaviour. The patterns of morphology and distribution are summarised in table 3-28, where DET stands for the various determiner slots.
Table 3-28: Morphosyntactic behaviour of numerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerals (except haxal ‘one’ &amp; iru ‘two’)</th>
<th>Constituent order within NP</th>
<th>Categories the subject marker inflects for:</th>
<th>Other idiosyncratic behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N – A.num – DET</td>
<td>• mood</td>
<td>• Can quantify mass and abstract nouns, whereas other numerals cannot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* N – DET – A.num</td>
<td>• person</td>
<td>• Can head NP with and without subject marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* N – V.NUM – DET</td>
<td>• number (1\textsuperscript{st} &amp; 2\textsuperscript{nd} person only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N – DET – V.NUM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iru ‘two’</td>
<td>N – ruru – DET</td>
<td>• mood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* N – DET – ruru</td>
<td>• person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N – iru – DET</td>
<td>• number (1\textsuperscript{st} &amp; 2\textsuperscript{nd} person only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N – DET – iru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haxal ‘one’</td>
<td>N – (de)haxal – DET</td>
<td>• mood (irrealis mood triggers irrealis marker)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N – DET – (de)haxal</td>
<td>• person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 Complex noun phrases

Tirax has five main kinds of complex NPs:

- non-lexicalised compound NPs
- complex possessives
- co-ordinated NPs
- inclusory constructions
- double reference expressions (NP apposition)

These are exemplified in turn.

3.7.1 Non-lexicalised compound NPs

We saw above in §2.3.1, that nouns can be juxtaposed to form compound nouns. These N N combinations are wholly or partially lexicalised. Free nouns can also be juxtaposed to form complex NPs where there is no evidence of lexicalisation. Like compound nouns, the first noun in the complex NP is usually the head and the second noun has a modifying function:
This is exemplified by the complex NPs below:

(206) nes nxariv
faeces rat

\aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 1677.841 \ae 1686.156

(207) bɔ nvet
hole stone

cave

\aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 208.737 \ae 212.668

Adverbal nouns can also be juxtaposed in a head-modifier relationship, similar to other types of nouns:

(208) nanɔ labuŋ nas=at sar nŋa nen=na nɔdran
yesterday night 1P:R=sit IMPF LOC house=ASSOC food

Last night we were sitting in the kitchen,

\aud AB1-001-A.wav \as 936.541 \ae 944.06

3.7.2 Complex possessives
Complex possessives are also formed by juxtaposing possessed NPs. The example below shows a possessive NP with an alienable noun, tata, ‘father’, embedded in a possessive NP with an inalienable noun, vivni, ‘sister’.

(209) ale … vivni [ tata he [M xnɛr] ]
so … sister father POSS M P

Then … [(the) sister of [(the) father of [M and everyone]]]

i=van sxı lele hɔk
3S:R=go all brother 1S:POSS

went to see my brother.

\aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 738.006 \ae 745.053
3.7.3 Co-ordinated NPs

NPs can be co-ordinated in two ways. They can be juxtaposed, as in (210) below, or they can be linked using the Comitative dxi (211):

\[(210)\] ni=ak xini [sista hɔk i=til ]NP [brata hɔk i=lin ]NP
\[1s:\text{R}=\text{have} \quad \text{OBL sister(B)} \quad 1s:\text{S}=\text{three} \quad \text{brother(B)} \quad 3s:\text{R}=\text{five}\]

I have three sisters and five brothers.

\[(211)\] n=leh [ tate xner ]NP dxi [ dne xner ]NP
\[1s:\text{R}=\text{see} \quad \text{father} \quad 3p \quad \text{COM uncle} \quad 3p\]

I went to see the fathers and uncles.

3.7.4 Inclusory constructions

Tirax has an inclusory construction, whereby the plural form of a pronoun is used in [pronoun + NP] conjunctions, so that the scope of the pronoun reference includes that of the free NP:

\[(212)\] i=va-haxal [ knen [dxi mxodi-k haxal ]NP ]NP nar=telul
\[3s:\text{R}=\text{MULT-one} \quad 1p \quad \text{COM grandchild-1s:poss one} \quad 1d:\text{R}=\text{go.to.garden}\]

One time, me and one of my grandchildren went out to the garden, ...

Inclusory constructions are widespread in Vanuatu languages and also occur in the national language, Bislama.

3.7.5 Double reference expressions

A fifth type of complex NP comprises apposite NPs, whereby two co-referential NPs with the same relationship to the verb are juxtaposed. This type of construction is referred to as double reference in Stirling (2008), and that terminology is followed here. There are two types of double reference expressions. One involves two free NPs:

---

\(^{21}\) *Sista* and *brata* are Bislama borrowings. *Sista hɔk* is *tesuk vaven* and *brata hɔk* is *lele hɔk* in Resan Tirax.
His son wanted (to go with) them.

The second type involves a free NP followed by a co-referential pronoun:

Now as for the boy, while he was doing this, ...

The syntax and discourse function of double reference is discussed in chapter 9.

3.8 Relative clauses

Relative clause syntax in Tirax is typical of that of Oceanic languages. Relative clauses are postposed to the nominal pivot and preceded by relativiser, te, which is a general marker of subordinate clauses. Relativisation is allowed right down the Accessibility Hierarchy, from subjects through to possessor NPs. Relative clauses have a resumptive pronoun at the site of the relativised NP within the relative clause.

When the pivot is the relative clause subject, the subject marker on the relative clause verb functions as a resumptive pronoun:

"What kind of man are you afraid of?"

"A white man or a black man?" (Literally: A man who is white or a man who is black?)

When the pivot is the relative clause object, the object marker functions as a resumptive pronoun:
He snatched the two bags that she was carrying.22

The distal demonstrative xar can also function as a resumptive pronoun for relative clause objects instead of the object marker:

I very much appreciate that you (help) the (research) I have been talking about.

The pivot can also be an object of a preposition in the relative clause. For nominal prepositions, that is, prepositions which take possessive suffixes like inalienable nouns, the possessive marker functions as a resumptive pronoun:

N is the place where I come from.

When the pivot is object of a verbal preposition, the preposition takes the object marker as a resumptive pronoun:

You know the children I gave the chicken to.

The pivot can also be a possessor in the relative clause, whereby the possessive morpheme functions as a resumptive pronoun:

22 This story is an elicitation story, and one of the first recorded. The speaker was slow and careful in his speech, suggesting that this may represent a more formal register. The plural object marker is representing a plural inanimate object, which is relatively unusual, as discussed in §3.3.3. It is more common for inanimate objects to be represented by singular object marker, even within relative clauses.
I went and saw a tree whose base was already rotten.

For relative clauses which purely express possession, the clause is expressed as a verbless clause:

Now the man whose dam (it was) came by.
4 Verb phrases

In chapter 3 we looked at the morphosyntax of the NP and its constituents. We now turn to the morphology and syntax of the Tirax verb phrase.

4.1 Constituent order within the VP

We saw in §3.3.2 that mood in the Tirax verb phrase is obligatorily expressed with bound subject markers, a set of forms for realis mood and another for irrealis. These bound markers can co-occur with co-referential free NP subjects, in which case they function as non-pronominal agreement markers. There is a third set of subject markers which are optionally used in negative clauses instead of realis or irrealis markers. There are several preverbs, which prefix onto the verb stem following the subject marker, and there are suffixes for completive aspect, negative and object marking.

The basic internal structure of the verb complex is given in figure 4-1, where brackets indicate optionality and an asterisk represents the potential for multiple items to fill that slot. Hyphens between constituents reflect their phonological status as being part of the word. There is no hyphen preceding the V$_2$ or N(uclear) A(dverb)$_2$ slots, as constituents that fill these slots are typically not phonologically part of the verb, although there are lexically determined exceptions which do form part of the phonological unit. Note that the 3s object marker cannot co-occur with the negative marker and is suppressed in negated clauses.

**Figure 4-1: Internal structure of the verb complex**

\[ SM = (\text{PREVERB}) - V (V_2) - (\text{N. Adv}_1)* - (\text{COMPL}) (\text{N. Adv}_2)* - (\text{OM}) - (\text{NEG}) \]

Verbs can form V$_1$ V$_2$ complexes with other verbs, which can be phonologically two words, but which act grammatically as a unit. The second verb (V2) has no subject marker, but shares its subject with the first verb. This V2 occupies the V$_2$ slot in the verb structure diagram given in Figure 4-1. In the grammars of many Oceanic languages, including Naman (Crowley 2006a), Saliba (Margetts 1999), Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001), Lewo (Early 1994) and Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2001), these V V constructions have been analysed as *nuclear serial verb constructions*, following
Foley and Van Valin’s analysis of clause structure (Foley and Van Valin 1984: 77-79). In other grammars they have been referred to variously as verb serialisation (François 2002:147-8), verb compounds (Fox 1979:71-2) and compound verbs (Thieberger 2004:229). This phenomenon is discussed in §4.5.1. Following Foley and Valin’s terminology, the adverb slot is filled by nuclear adverbs. Nuclear adverbs form grammatical units with verbs, but are often phonologically separate words. They are discussed in §4.5.2. The extent to which nuclear V2s and nuclear adverbs form phonological units with the main verb appears to be lexically determined.

### 4.2 Verbs

Tirax verbs can be subcategorised according to the number and type of arguments they require, giving degree of grammatical transitivity, as shown in table 4-1. Oblique objects, defined here as PP core arguments, are represented as Obl in the table. Note that for some ditransitives, often only one of the arguments is expressed.

**Table 4-1: Verb subcategories according to grammatical transitivity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic behaviour</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S V</td>
<td>Intransitive</td>
<td>One-place predicate; cannot take an object or object marker</td>
<td>xebu ‘be burnt by roasting’ hav ‘dance’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V (Obl)</td>
<td>Semi-transitive</td>
<td>Subcategorises for a PP argument, which is optionally expressed</td>
<td>hέx (xini NP) ‘climb’ drlgær (xini NP) ‘listen (to)’ volvol (xini NP) ‘sell’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V (O)</td>
<td>Ambi-transitive</td>
<td>Subcategorises for an object NP, and can also occur without an object</td>
<td>trev ‘wait (for)’ lav ‘plant, sow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V O</td>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>Subcategorises for an object NP</td>
<td>drlom ‘swallow whole’ her ‘spear, tear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V O Obl</td>
<td>Ditransitive</td>
<td>Subcategorises for NP and PP arguments</td>
<td>hbc NP xini NP ‘tell s.t. to s.o.’ vol NP (xsi/xini NP) ‘buy (from) / pay for (with)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V (O / Obl) (COMP) S</td>
<td>Sentential complement</td>
<td>Subcategorises for a sentential complement, often taking a complementiser, typically te</td>
<td>vrax ‘promise’ va ‘say’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 Foley and Van Valin distinguish three levels of structure within the clause: the nucleus, which contains the predicate(s), the core, which contains the core arguments of the predicate(s), and the periphery, which contains time-place adjuncts and secondary participants in the event, such as the beneficiary (Foley and Van Valin 1984:77-79).
Additionally there are copula, existentials and verbal possessive constructions, which are outlined in chapter 5.

There is a broad range of verbs which subcategorise for a sentential complement, such as the transitive verb *leh* ‘to see’, the ambi-transitive verb *rŋɔ* ‘to want’, and the semi-transitive verb *mtaxiti* ‘be afraid (of)’. Verbs with sentential complements are discussed in chapter 6.

**U-type and A-type verbs**

Intransitive, semi-transitive and ambi-transitive verbs can be further categorised by the broad semantic role of the S function in intransitive clauses. The grammatical consequences are discussed below. This latter means of categorisation yields A- and U-type verbs, where A stands for Actor and U for Undergoer.² POc verbs appear to have had this pattern of categorisation (Lynch et al 2002:81), and this has filtered through to the lexical semantics of contemporary Tirax verbs. Table 4-2 gives examples of A-type and U-type verbs encountered in the Tirax corpus.

**Table 4-2: Verb sub-categories according to semantic role of S function**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>A-type</th>
<th>U-type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive</td>
<td><em>hab</em> ‘hurry (along)’</td>
<td><em>bal</em> ‘be beaten up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>mkan</em> ‘dance’</td>
<td><em>sal</em> ‘be lost’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ded</em> ‘give birth’</td>
<td><em>dlas</em> ‘be closed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitive</td>
<td><em>das</em> (xini NP) ‘search (for)’</td>
<td><em>drax</em> (xini NP) ‘get a fright (from)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>dram</em> (xini NP) ‘agree (to / on / about)’</td>
<td><em>kor</em> (xini NP) ‘feel grateful (for)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambi-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitive</td>
<td><em>tev</em> ‘call (out)’</td>
<td><em>lilis</em> ‘close, be closed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>lixdre</em> ‘leave’</td>
<td><em>vahex</em> ‘clear (away), be clear’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² This pattern of categorisation has counterparts in other Oceanic languages, and has been referred to variously as A-type versus P-type (for Patient), and A-type versus O-type (Object). I am following the convention given by Ross (1998:21) and followed by Thieberger (2004), as the macro-role term *Undergoer* can include the thematic roles of patient, theme and experiencer, each of which can be expressed by the S-function of U-type verbs.
U-type ambi-transitive verbs are lexically ergative, with Undergoer role being represented by S and O functions, in intransitive and transitive sentences respectively:

(1) nali i=lilis.  
door  3s:r=shut  
(The) door is shut.

(2) n=lilis xɔrɔ nali  
1s:r=shut  block  door  
I shut (the) door.

Some intransitive U-type verbs, such as sal ‘be lost’, can add an A argument with a valency-increasing prefix, typically CAUSative rɔ-:

(3) nvat i=sal  
money  3s:r=be.lost  
The money is lost.

(4) n=sal  (* nvat)  
1s:r=be.lost  money  
I am lost ( *money).

(5) n=rɔ-sal nvat  
1s:r=CAUS-be.lost  money  
I lost (the) money.

4.2.1 Intransitive verbs  
Intransitive verbs cannot take an object NP or object marker. They include:

- verbs of motion, such as vial ‘walk’
- actions such as mkan ‘dance’
- states, such as seliv ‘be alive’
- emotions, such as drdrax ‘be fearful’
- weather, such as uh, ‘rain’.
Most stative verbs can refer both to states and changes of state. Examples of stative-inchoative verbs include *tehix* ‘be awake; wake up, get up’, *nɛh* ‘be dead, die’, *mraŋ* ‘be dry, dry’, *nelik* ‘be dark, become dark’ and *bih* ‘be small, become small(er)’. In example (6), *nɛh* is in a basic realis clause, and refers to a change of state:

(6) $i=rɔs$ wik bo haxal, ale $i=nɛh$.

3S:$R=$be.sick week(B) DIM one then 3S:$R=$die

*He was only sick for a week and then he died.*

Whereas in (7), *nɛh* has a stative meaning:

(7) $nar=rɔs$servxe netin vave-ṇen, R, i=$nɛh$

1D:$R=$mourn child female-1PX:POSS R 3S:$R=$be.dead

*We are mourning our daughter, R, she is dead.*

The stative meaning can be enforced by using the perfective aspect marker:

(8) tate$hɔk$ i=$nɛh$ dax

father 1S:POSS 3S:$R=$be.dead PERF

*My father is dead.*

In §3.3.2 we saw that some types of verbs, such as weather verbs, require a free NP subject, and that this is analysed as a restriction on those verbs, such that the subject marker must be non-pronominal. Like weather verbs, verbs of emotional states or experiences require a free NP subject. Emotion states are typically expressed with the noun *lale(n)* ‘(his) insides’, followed by the verb of emotion. The subject marker is invariably third person singular, with number marking registering on the inalienable noun via the possessive suffix:

(9) texu-k O dxi W lale-r i=dr-drax

bro.in.law-1S:POSS O COM W inside-3P 3S:$R=$DUP-be.frightened

*My brother-in-law, O, and W were frightened.*
4.2.2 Semi-transitive verbs

A sub-class of verbs, such as *natnat* ‘look after’ and *dah* ‘work’, subcategorise for a prepositional phrase with the OBLique preposition *xini*. For some verbs, such as *mtaxit* ‘be(come) afraid’, the prepositional phrase is optional:

(10) n=mtaxit xini lidax
    1S:R=be.afraid OBL dog

    *I’m afraid of dogs.*

(11) buluk, xair s=mtaxit , s=vla we s=vla xin-er
    bullock(B) 3p 3p:R=be.afraid 3p:R=go.away so 3p:R=go.away OBL-3p

    *As for the cattle, they were frightened and ran away from them (ie. the running children).*

Verbs which subcategorise for destinations, sources or locations use the LOCative preposition *nya*, discussed in §5.3.2.2:

(12) i=dis nga balbal bx:h
    3S:R=land LOC post pig

    *It landed on the pig-post.*

4.2.3 Transitive verbs

Transitive verbs subcategorise for a direct object:

(13) n=hehre ntebibih
    1S:R=teach children

    *I teach children.*

Transitive verbs must take an object suffix if there is no free NP object:

(14) n=hehre-er
    1S:R=teach-3p

    *I teach them.*
If there is no separate Undergoer entity, transitive verbs obligatorily take an object marker, co-referential with the subject, giving a reflexive meaning:

(16) mrc xar  s=lomdor-rr,  s=me  lxen
people DST 3P=R=turn.around-3P 3P=R=come  back

Those people turned (themselves) around and came back.

4.2.4 Ambi-transitive verbs
Ambi-transitive verbs, such as *trev* ‘wait (for)’, optionally take a direct object. Most ambi-transitive verbs in Tirax are A-type, whereby the S and A functions are both agentive:

(17) n=trev
1S:R=wait

I waited / was waiting / am waiting.

(18) nas=trev  vivni-nen  haxal  Vila
1P:R=wait.for  sister-1PX:POSS  INDEF  Vila

We waited for a sister of ours from Vila.

4.2.5 Ditransitive verbs
There are several ditransitive verbs, such as *lev* ‘give, take’ and *to* ‘put’, which have NP and PP arguments:

(19) i=va  “ Ø=lev  [nlah  de=ru ]  [xini knen ] ”
3S:R=say  IMP:S=take  shell  3S:1=two  OBL  1PX

He said “Give us two shells (of kava)!“
4.3 Verbal prefixes and proclitics

The majority of Tirax verbs in the texts are morphologically simple, taking only the subject proclitic. Some verbs also have a morpheme intervening between the subject proclitic and verb root. These morphemes are called here *preverbs*. Subject markers and preverbs are discussed below.

4.3.1 Subject-mood markers

You will recall from §3.3.2, that mood is marked on the verb with a proclitic, which also functions as a subject marker. There are three sets of subject markers, one for realis mood, one for irrealis mood, and one for negative clauses. The subject-mood clitics distinguish three persons: 1, 2 and 3, and three numbers: singular, dual and plural. There is also a clitic to encode *impersonal constructions*, where the agent of the verb is suppressed.

4.3.1.1 Realis mood

Realis mood is used in a declarative sentence which expresses an event which has taken place or is taking place. A simple realis verb is not specified for tense or aspect:

(20) \text{nua}=\text{k}=\text{ol}\\
\text{water 3S R}=\text{flow}\\
(The) water flowed / was flowing / flows / is flowing.

Realis mood can also be used to encode habitual action. The example below is from a text about the speaker’s daily routine.

(21) \text{n}=\text{netur} , \text{n}=\text{tehix} , \text{n}=\text{xes-xesir} ...\\
\text{1S R}=\text{sleep} \quad \text{1S R}=\text{get up} \quad \text{1S R}=\text{DUP-sweep}\\
\text{I sleep, I get up, I do the sweeping} ...

A realis event can be located in time using a temporal expression, and an aspect marker can be used to specify aspect, both exemplified below:
Typically, realis clauses are under-specified for tense and aspect. They form the backbone of all forms of discourse including narrative, conversation and expository texts.

4.3.1.2 Irrealis mood

Irrealis clitics are used to encode all kinds of non-real events. They can encode events which have not (yet) happened, but will happen sometime in the future:

(23) xan lobo Santo
    3S still Santo

    She is still in Santo.

    de=sbul ren mtanial de=til xan nga plen³
    3S:1=climb.down time hour 3S:1=three DST LOC plane(B)

    She will come in at 3 o'clock by plane.

As discussed in chapter 6, irrealis is often triggered in subordinate clauses in complex constructions, such as with desiderative main verbs, and in purpose clauses. It is also triggered by a preceding negative realis verb:

(24) nas=an-te das=to nvat de=mtetu
    1P:R=go-NEG 1P:1=put stone 3S:1=go.quickly

    We didn't go and pay the money right away,
habitual event. The example below relates the customary action that used to be taken by a man who wanted to marry:

(25) \[\text{de}=\text{lev} \quad \text{bo} \quad \text{vivni-n} \quad \text{xar} \quad \text{na} \quad \text{de}=\text{kl} \quad \text{xini} \quad \text{vinadr} \quad \text{han}\]

\[351=\text{take} \quad \text{DIM} \quad \text{sister}-35:2 \text{POSS:DST} \quad \text{now} \quad 351=\text{swap} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{woman} \quad 351=\text{POSS}\]

He would give his sister in exchange for the woman.

\(\text{aud AB1-002-A.wav} \ \text{as} \ 643.028 \ \text{ae} \ 647.749\)

4.3.1.3 Negative subject markers

There is a set of subject markers that are optionally used in negative clauses. Realis and irrealis subject markers also occur in negated clauses, and are in fact more frequently encountered in negative clauses than are negative clitics. The rare occasions that negative subject markers are used in the corpus include formal speech and to emphasise the negative meaning, as in example (26) below, where the partitive \(n\etae\) is also used emphatically, as discussed above in §3.5.3.

(26) \[\text{na} \quad \text{xan} \quad \text{nah}=\text{sre}\text{-te}\text{-n}\etae \quad \text{x} \quad \text{n}\etae\]

\[\text{now} \quad 15 \quad 15=\text{NEG}=\text{follow}-\text{NEG-PART} \quad 25 \quad \text{PART}\]

Now as for me, I cannot follow you at all.

\(\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav} \ \text{as} \ 1988.516 \ \text{ae} \ 1992.242\)

Negative clitics can be used instead of realis and irrealis clitics, as in the following two examples respectively:

**Realis event:** (present):

(27) \[\text{i}=\text{va} \quad "\text{o} \quad \text{xox} \quad \text{mtetuxan} \quad \text{ah}=\text{skul-temul} "\]

\[351=\text{R}=\text{say} \quad \text{oh} \quad 25 \quad \text{now} \quad 25=\text{NEG}=\text{school(B)}=\text{no more}\]

He said “Oh! Now you can’t go to school anymore!”

\(\text{aud AB1-002-A.wav} \ \text{as} \ 602.407 \ \text{ae} \ 611.374\)
**Irrealis event (future):**

(28) \( i=v-va \) "Oh!

3s:R=say  oh

* (The daughter) said: “Oh!

“ dede  hɔk  de=mɛ  xar  bas=leh-i  bas=mtaxit  ia ”

mother  1s:POSS  3s:1=come  DST  2p:1=see-3s  2p:1=be.afraid  there(B)

“My mother is coming, and you will see her and you will be frightened!”

\( i=v-va \) “ i=hɡɛ  nɛɛ!  as=mtaxit-ɛɛ  nɛɛ!”

3s:R=say  3s:R=not.be  PART  1p:NEG=be.afraid-NEG  PART

He replied “Not at all! We won’t be frightened at all!”

4.3.2 Preverbs

*Preverbs* are a closed class of morphemes which precede the lexical verb and give modal and other information. The following three preverbs are attested in the corpus.

- **NEcessitative max-**
- **CAUSative rɔ-**
- **ATtemptive / POLiteness marker te-**

4.3.2.1 **NEcessitative / REcently completed max-**

*Max-* is the most frequently attested of the preverbs. It can encode obligation or recent past relative to the current temporal reference point. In these roles it is translated into Bislama with either the necessitative ‘mas’ or the recent past marker ‘jes’ respectively.

The example below, from a text about the preparations for the speaker’s marriage, *max-* is used to indicate obligation:

\( i=v-va \) “ dede  hɔk  de=mɛ  xar  bas=leh-i  bas=mtaxit  ia ”

mother  1s:POSS  3s:1=come  DST  2p:1=see-3s  2p:1=be.afraid  there(B)

“My mother is coming, and you will see her and you will be frightened!”

\( i=v-va \) “ i=hɡɛ  nɛɛ!  as=mtaxit-ɛɛ  nɛɛ!”

3s:R=say  3s:R=not.be  PART  1p:NEG=be.afraid-NEG  PART

He replied “Not at all! We won’t be frightened at all!”

\( ^{4} \) The negative existential *hɡɛ* tends to be inflected for realis mood regardless of the mood of the clause, suggesting that the subject marker is in the process of being reanalysed as part of the root. However *dehɡɛ* is also possible here, with the 3s irrealis marker *de-*. 
(29) \( \text{nas=\text{max}} \cdot \text{vol} \)  
\( \text{N sxi lele han xner dxixi tate han} \)  
\( 1P:\text{R=REC-buy} \)  
\( \text{N DAT brother 3S:POSS P COM father 3S:POSS} \)  

\textit{We had to (give money) for N to her brothers and papas.}

\( \text{aud AB1-001-A.wav \ as 901.663 \ ae 908.815} \)

\textit{Max- also functions as a marker of recently completed action:}

(30) \( \text{mar xar i=\text{max}-mɛ} \)  
\( \text{man DST 3S:R=REC-come} \)  

\textit{This man has just come.}

\( \text{aud AB1-010-A.wav \ as 315.317 \ ae 316.524} \)

(31) \( i=\text{max}-mɛ \)  
\( \text{nanɔnɔv 3S:R=REC-come yesterday} \)  

\textit{He just arrived yesterday.}

\( \text{aud AB1-010-A.wav \ as 319.666 \ ae 320.696} \)

\textit{Max- can function as an inceptive and as marker of subsequent future, similarly to the Bislama recent past marker \textit{jes} (Crowley 1995: 103). For stative-inchoative verbs, such as, \textit{nelik}, ‘be / become dark’, \textit{max-} can encode either recent past or inceptive aspect, similar to the dual functioning of the Bislama marker:}

(32) \( \text{nar=mɛ vɔ-vɔ lain} \)  
\( 1D:\text{R=come DUP-DUR home} \)  

\textit{We came (all the way) home.}

\( \text{aud AB1-018-A.wav \ as 717.345 \ ae 719.161} \)

\( \text{naut i=\text{max}-nelik bɔ} \)  
\( \text{place 3S:R=REC-be.dark DIM} \)  

\textit{It had only just got dark / It was just beginning to get dark.}

\( \text{aud AB1-018-A.wav \ as 717.345 \ ae 719.161} \)

The information is represented in Figure 4-2.
**Figure 4-2:** Setting sun between 6pm to 7.30pm

The following sentences describe the situation at points A, B, C and D:

Points A and B, where the sun is still in the sky:

(33) \[ \text{naut de=nelik place} \]
\[3S:1=be.dark\]

*It is / was (still light but) getting dark.*

Point C, where the sun sets:

(34) \[ \text{naut i=max-nelik place} \]
\[3S:R=REC-be.dark\]

*It has / had only just got dark. OR It is / was just beginning to get dark.*

At point D and beyond, after the sun has set:

(35) \[ \text{naut i=nelik place} \]
\[3S:R=be.dark\]

*It is / was dark.*

In irrealis clauses, \textit{max-} is interpreted as ‘subsequently’, or ‘immediately following’, similar to Bislama \textit{jes}. It is glossed \textit{SUBS}, for \textit{SUBsequent}: 
“Let’s go back and hunt another
tə bar=max-me bar=ɔɔ-i ”
so that we can then just come (back) and eat it!”

4.3.2.2 CAUSATIVE rɔ-
We will see in §6.4.4, that the causative is usually expressed with the verb ve ‘to make’. However some lexemes form causatives with the preverb rɔ-. Rɔ- increases the valency of the verb it attaches to, by creating a slot for an additional agentive argument:

(37) i=smɛ natev vvv-ʋɔ na
3S:R=chew.on sugarcane DUP-DUR now

Now he chewed and chewed on the sugarcane until

i=rɔ-vɛs-ʋɛs nasama=na kenu
3S:R=CAUS-DUP-break outrigger(B)=ASSOC canoe(B)

he caused the outrigger to break off.

For U-type intransitives, such as rdreh ‘to be broken’, causative rɔ- changes the macro-role of the S function from Undergoer to Actor. The Undergoer is demoted to object position:

(38) narit xar i=rdreh
rope DST 3S:R=be.broken

That rope is broken.

(39) n=rɔ-rdreh
narit xar
1S:R=CAUS-be.broken rope DST

I broke the rope.
For some U-type verbs, such as *drax* ‘to get a fright’, and *sal* ‘be lost’, the Undergoer is demoted to an oblique phrase, with preposition *xini*:

(40) nesɔr  hɔk  i=sal
    belongings  1S:POSS  3S:R=be.lost

*I am lost.*

(41) n=ɾɔ-sal  xini  nesɔr  hɔk
    1S:R=CAUS-be.lost  OBL  belongings  1S:POSS

*I lost my belongings.*

*ɾɔ-* is also prefixed to the numeral *haxal* ‘one’, to form the expression *irɔhaxal*, variant *irɔrhaxal*, ‘it’s all the same; it’s the same thing; it makes everything straight’.

4.3.2.3 ATTEMPTIVE / POLiteness marker *te-*

The third preverb encountered in the data is *te-*, translated with the Bislama *traem* ‘try, attempt (to)’.

(42) i=vr  i=lev  nebe  xar,  i=vr  i=dla  nɛ
    3S:R=say  3S:R=take  song  DST  3S:R=say  3S:R=be.thus  DEF

*She sang this song, she sang like that,*

i=te-avr  nahxe  net=na  bi-bih  ru-ru  nɛ
    3S:R=ATMP-say  name  child=ASSOC  DUP-small  DUP-two  DEF

*trying to say the names of the two small children.*

Like *traem*, *te-* is used as a marker of politeness, to soften imperatives:

(43) ale  i=va  “bar=te-van  bar=leh-i “
    so  3S:R=say  2D:1=POL-go  2D:1=see-3S

*So she said “You two go to see if you can see them.”*
4.4 Verbal suffixes

Post-verbal morphemes are analysed as affixes if they form a phonological and grammatical unit with the verb. Affixes attested in the Tirax data are the third person object markers –ᵢ and –ᵌ, COMpletive marker –nenev, and negative marker –te.

4.4.1 Object marking

We saw in §3.3.3 that object markers are always referential and that they are phonologically part of the verb, and therefore analysed as suffixes. We also saw that only third person object markers are attested, singular –ᵢ and plural –ᵌ:

(44) i=rub   di-din-ᵌ
     3S:R=hit  DUP-dead-3p

*He killed them (the ground dove chicks) dead.*

You may recall from §3.3.3 that the plural marker can co-occur with a negative suffix and particles, but the singular marker cannot:

(45) n=leh(*ᵢ) -ᵌ   n=leh-ᵌ (*ᵢ)
     1S:R=see(-3S) -neg  1S:R=see-Neg (-3S)

*I didn’t see it.*

4.4.2 Completive -nenev

The morpheme -nenev is used to indicate that the action described by the VP has been exhausted or somehow come to a conclusion. -Nenev intervenes between the verb root and the object marker, and the complex tends to behave as a phonological unit.

For telic VPs, -nenev indicates that the endpoint has been reached:

(46) i=wësᵢ  ,   i=wës-nenevᵢ  ,   i=lev-lue   navoh=nan
     3S:R=eat-3S  3S:R=eat-COMPL-3S  3S:R=take-away  seed=ASSOC.3S:POSS

*He ate it (the dragon plum). He ate it up and removed the seed.*
-Nenev can also occur in irrealis clauses, to encode the completion of a future or hypothetical event:

(47) nevix da=tes-nenev nxa , da=van Lakatoro
tomorrow 1S:1=cut-COMPL wood 1S:1=go Lakatoro

Tomorrow I will cut up all the wood and go to Lakatoro.

The completive -nenev and the perfective dax have different functions and can occur in the same VP. –Nenev encodes information about the semantics of the event, and dax encodes information about aspect. The completive marker encodes that the event reached its endpoint, whereas the perfective marker indicates that the event has taken place relative to the viewpoint given by the speaker, but without necessarily reaching its conclusion. The excerpt below is from a traditional story about a leaf-spirit woman, who does the chores in the garden of a man while he is sleeping. It shows the completive and perfective markers occurring in the same clause, indicating that the event has already taken place and has been completed:

(48) nevix=nan i=van klε
tomorrow=ASSOC.3S:POSS 3S:R=go again

The next day he returned,

ve ren-te vinadr nηε xain i=van dax
but time-SUB woman DEF 3S 3S:R=go PERF

but the woman, she had already gone

i=vhә-nenev dax naut
3S:R=plant-COMPL PERF place

and already finished sowing the garden.

There are three main markers of ‘perfective aspect’ in Tirax. In addition to suffix -nenev and particle dax, there is a verbal discourse marker, inev, which indicates a temporal juncture between consecutive events. The three are contrasted in Table 4-3, exemplified with the verb wes nato ‘to eat (the) chicken’.
Table 4-3: Three markers of perfective aspect in Resan Tirax

| n=\text{wes} dax nat\text{o} | ‘I have (already) eaten the chicken (but not necessarily finished it)’ |
| n=\text{wes-nenev} nat\text{o} | ‘I ate the chicken up’ (I ate all of the chicken) |
| n=\text{wes} nat\text{o} \text{i=nev} | ‘I ate the chicken, then (it finished / after that … )’ |

\textit{Nenev} and \textit{inev} can also co-occur in the one sentence:

(49) nas=\text{hul} naut  \\
1P:R=burn garden

\textit{We burn the garden,}

nas=\text{hul-nenev-i} \text{ i=nev}  \\
1P:R=burn-COMPL-3S 3S:R=finish

\textit{we burn it completely and after that}

i=\text{tox} lxen notren haxal \text{i=ru} \text{i=dla} \text{ ri}  \\
3S:R=be back daylight one 3S:R=two 3S:R=be.thus FOC

\textit{it remains for a day or two like that. (ie. we leave it again for a day or two).}

4.4.3 Negative marking

Verbs take suffix \textit{–te} to encode negative polarity:

(50) i=\text{ve-}\text{te} nhal=\text{na} mtanxa he nekir  \\
3S:R=COP-NEG way=POSS custom POSS 1PI

\textit{It is not the way of our custom.}

The negative marker is suffixed to the end of the verb stem, following, for example, nuclear adverbs, discussed in §4.5.2. The nuclear adverb \textit{txun}, an intensifier, tends to form a phonological unit with \textit{uh} ‘hold’, represented in the example with a hyphen:

(51) narit xar \text{i=uh-}\text{txun-}\text{te} bx\text{\text{o}h} \\
rope DST 3S:R=hold-INTENS-NEG pig

\textit{The rope isn’t holding the pig tight.}
We saw in §3.3.3 above that the negative marker cannot co-occur with the 3s object marker. However it can co-occur with the 3p object marker. The unmarked order is for the negative marker to follow the object marker:

\[ (52) \text{nah=lixdre-er-tɛ} \]
\[ \text{1S:neg=leave-3P-NEG} \]

*I didn’t / won’t leave them.*

However the reverse order of suffixes is also permitted:

\[ (53) \text{nah=lixdre-tɛ-er} \]
\[ \text{1S:NEG=leave-NEG-3p} \]

*I didn’t / won’t leave them.*

Like the object marker, the negative marker is analysed and glossed as a suffix on the grounds that it forms a phonological unit with the word it attaches to.

4.4.4 Complex negative marking

The negative marker itself can form complexes, shown in Table 4-4. The complexes often behave as phonologically independent words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>צה</th>
<th>PARTitive</th>
<th>-tɛ ש</th>
<th>‘not a bit’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>צל</td>
<td>‘no more’</td>
<td>temul</td>
<td>‘no longer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>גו</td>
<td>EMPHatic</td>
<td>te-גו / тево</td>
<td>‘not yet’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>גד</td>
<td>DIMinutive</td>
<td>тбо / тбо</td>
<td>‘not very’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative marker can be followed by the PARTitive ש to indicate that negative meaning is exhaustive. The partitive is typically phonologically independent of the negative marker:
(54)  i=ˈrɔs-te  nə=q
    3S:R=be.sick-NEG  PART

He wasn’t a bit sick.

Mul ‘more’ follows words or morphemes with negative meanings, including the negative marker, exemplified below, as well as the negative existential *ihge* ‘not be’ and *denreh* ‘not want’. It forms a phonological unit with the negative marker:

(55)  n=lav  tɛmul  bet
    1S:R=sow  no.more  taro

I don’t grow taro any more.

The emphatic *vɔr* has an idiosyncratic meaning when coupled with the negative marker: ‘not yet’. *Tɛvɔr* and *tɛvɔr* occur equally frequently:

(56)  a=lev  tɛvɔr  vinadr
    3S:NEG=take  not.yet  woman

You can’t take (ie. marry) a woman.

*Tɛbo*, ‘not much’, almost always encountered as *tobɔ*. It often follows time expressions:

(57)  i=vax-brav  tɔbo
    3S:R=pass.time-be.long  not.much

It wasn’t for very long, ...

*Tɛmul, tɛvɔr* and *tɛbo* tend to be phonologically independent from the verb, and have the same pattern of distribution as particles, discussed below in §4.7.

4.5 Nuclear verb constructions
The basic verb morphology was given in figure 4-1 above, and is repeated below:
This section looks at the slots following the verb root, which can be filled by a second verb root and one or more nuclear adverbs respectively.

4.5.1 Nuclear serial verb constructions

There is a small set of verbs which can follow the main verb within the VP, forming a compound verb, called here a nuclear S(erial) V(erb) C(onstruction), illustrated below. In the following discussion, a verb which occupies the second verb slot in the verb complex is referred to as V2, and the first verb as V1.

Exemplified below is *luɛ*, a U-type verb meaning ‘be removed, remove’. In (58) it functions as a main verb, and in (59) as a V2 in a nuclear SVC:

(58) i=haɬ temul, bxo nmat ɣɛ i=luɛ
  3S:R=swell no.more colour snake DEF 3S:R=be.removed

*The swelling went down and the snake pattern went away.*

(59) lex han i=van i=to-tɔ vɾa=na ŋŋa bet=nan
  husband 3S:POSS 3S:R=go 3S:R=DUP-put hand=ASSOC LOC head=ASSOC.3S:POSS

*Her husband went and put his hands on her head,*

i=ve de=ev-luɛ-i
  3S:R=try 3S:i=pull-remove-3S

*and tried to pull her out.*

Nuclear serial verbs precede the negative marker *te*:

---

5 My informant later offered a preferred form to the attested one: *ivla luɛ*, suggesting for him *luɛ* is not a true verb.
(60) nar=teltax-nalxah-tɛ
    1D:R=trail.behind-do.slowly-NEG

    We didn’t slowly trail behind.

(61) * nar=teltax- tɛ nalxah
    1D:R=trail.behind-NEG do.slowly

The maximum number of verbs attested in a nuclear SVC in the corpus is two.

**Grammatical transitivity**

The grammatical transitivity of the nuclear SVC is determined by the grammatical transitivity of V2. Intransitive verbs which fill the V2 slot following a transitive V1 have the effect of ‘demoting’ the object to an oblique phrase. *Bar* ‘(be) raw’ can take a subject marker to form a one-place predicate, as in (63) below, as well as function as an adjective within the NP:

(62) n=ws nas bar
    1S:R=eat fish raw

    *I ate (the) raw fish.*

(63) nas i=bar
    fish 3S:R=be.raw

    The fish is raw.

When *bar* occupies the V2 slot, the Patient is encoded as an oblique object:

(64) n=ws-bar xini nas
    1S:R=eat-raw OBL fish

    I ate (the) fish raw.

These examples above are comparable with Crowley’s illustration of the same phenomenon in Naman (2006a:134-5).
Table 4-5 shows how the grammatical transitivity of the constituent verbs determines the grammatical transitivity of the resulting nuclear SVC. All combinations of transitive and intransitive verbs are attested.

**Table 4-5: Grammatical transitivity of nuclear SVCs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V1</th>
<th>V2</th>
<th>Nuclear SVC</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>drey-lue NP ‘to remove NP by pulling it out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrans</td>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>vla-lixdre NP ‘to go away leaving NP’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Intrans</td>
<td>Semi-transitive</td>
<td>trev-druŋ xini NP ‘to wait silently for NP’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrans</td>
<td>Intrans</td>
<td>Intransitive</td>
<td>tur-mavɔh ‘to stand up straight’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-9 shows that the argument structure of a Tirax nuclear SVC can be different to that of one or both of its constituent verbs. Bril (2007) analyses the morphosyntax of multi-predicate constructions in a range of Oceanic languages, and defines nuclear SVCs as either co-ranking or hierarchical depending on the argument structure of the constituent verbs: verbs in co-ranking SVCs have shared arguments, and those in hierarchical constructions have fused argument structure. By that analysis, the V₁ V₂ nuclear SVCs in Tirax are hierarchized constructions: the nuclear SVC has a different argument structure to both its constituent verbs, being semi-transitive, and the intransitive V₂ is understood as modifying the V₁(cf. Bril 2007:284). Further research is needed to test whether this is true for these Tirax constructions, that the V₂ is actually in a head-modifier relationship with V₁.

A variety of verbs are attested as V₂s in nuclear SVCs, and it may be a wholly productive process. There do not appear to be any lexical restrictions on V₁. Tables 4-6 and 4-7 show intransitive and transitive verbs respectively, which can participate in these constructions as V₂s:
### Table 4-6: Intransitive verbs attested in V2 slot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb (intr)</th>
<th>English gloss</th>
<th>as V₂</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>van</td>
<td>‘go’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ thither’</td>
<td>ri-van ‘look thither’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>‘come’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ hither’</td>
<td>vla-me ‘leave hither’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lxax / lxex</td>
<td>‘turn’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ backwards’</td>
<td>tur-lxax / tur-lxex ‘stand back, hold oneself back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mavɔh</td>
<td>‘be straight’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ straight or properly’</td>
<td>tur-mavɔh ‘to stand straight’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nalxah</td>
<td>‘be slow’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ slowly’</td>
<td>vial-nalxah ‘walk slowly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brav</td>
<td>‘be long’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ very much’</td>
<td>vax-brav ‘be a long time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>krah</td>
<td>‘deceive’</td>
<td>‘to pretend to V₁’</td>
<td>neh-kr-krah ‘pretend to be dead’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vahaxal</td>
<td>‘one time’</td>
<td>‘to do V₁ at once’</td>
<td>ve-vahaxal ‘make at once’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drug</td>
<td>‘be in pain’</td>
<td>‘to do V₁ silently’</td>
<td>trev-drug ‘wait silently’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hrakin</td>
<td>‘be in a hurry’</td>
<td>‘to do V₁ quickly’</td>
<td>vial-hrakin ‘walk quickly’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Krah is always reduplicated as a nuclear V₂.
Table 4-7: Transitive verbs attested in V2 slot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb (tr)</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>As V₂</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lixdre</td>
<td>‘leave’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ leaving (s.t.)’</td>
<td>vla-lixdre ‘go away and leave (s.t.)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lalaxe</td>
<td>‘spoil’</td>
<td>‘to spoil (s.t) by V₁’</td>
<td>vreh-lalaxe ‘spoil by treading on’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drel</td>
<td>‘hunt’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ around (s.t.)’</td>
<td>xaxad-drel ‘to fly around (s.t.)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kokortox</td>
<td>‘put together’</td>
<td>‘to V₁ into a heap’</td>
<td>vle-kokortox ‘to pile up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreh</td>
<td>‘shout’</td>
<td>‘to do shouting’</td>
<td>ra-dreh (dxi NP) ‘to shout angrily’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kle</td>
<td>‘replace’</td>
<td>‘to replace by doing V₁’</td>
<td>tξ-kle ‘replace (object) by putting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luc</td>
<td>‘go away, remove, be removed’</td>
<td>‘to remove by doing V₁’</td>
<td>drev-luc ‘pull out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tutxun</td>
<td>‘grip’</td>
<td>‘do V₁ tightly’</td>
<td>dles-tutxun ‘stuck fast’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vahex</td>
<td>‘(be) clear’</td>
<td>‘do V₁ till clear’</td>
<td>bxe-tutxun ‘tie (with rope) tightly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drɔ</td>
<td>‘be true, make a direct hit on (NP)’</td>
<td>‘do to become conscious (of)’</td>
<td>rɲdrɔ ‘know’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>leh-drɔ ‘know through sight, recognise’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rub-drɔ ‘hit (and get the target)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vnes-drɔ ‘hit (s.t.) (with object)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A common pattern for verbs participating in a nuclear SVC, is that the V2 is a telic verb giving the result of the action of V1; or put another way, V1 is the means by which the action described by V2 is executed:

(65) i=lalaxɛ lalmale-k⁷
3s:r=spoil-3 shoe-1s:poss

He spoiled my shoes.

(66) i=vreh-lalaxɛ lalmale-k
3s:r=tread.on-spoil shoe-1s:poss

He spoiled my shoes by wearing them. (Lit: He wore-spoiled my shoes.)

⁷ From: lal=male – inside+leg/foot
Some nuclear SVCs have become partially lexicalised, with idiosyncratic meanings, as listed in Table 4-8.

**Table 4-8**: Nuclear serial constructions which may have become lexicalised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V1</th>
<th>V2</th>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>at</em> ‘be, sit, stay’</td>
<td><em>drug</em> ‘pain, silent’</td>
<td><em>at-drug</em></td>
<td>‘hide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>mlas</em> ‘crack’</td>
<td><em>at-mlas</em></td>
<td>‘be confined’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>mis</em> ‘tie’</td>
<td><em>at-mis</em></td>
<td>‘be confined’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ver</em> ‘tell’</td>
<td><em>vih</em> ‘be how much, how many’</td>
<td><em>ver-vih</em></td>
<td>‘reveal, confess, declare’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tɔ</em> ‘put’</td>
<td><em>tebex</em> ‘encounter, find’</td>
<td><em>to-tebex</em></td>
<td>‘begin’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The morphosyntax of Tirax nuclear SVCs is comparable to that in other North-central Vanuatu languages. Table 4-9 shows the comparable categories different languages.

**Table 4-9**: Nuclear serial constructions in other Vanuatu languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Word-class label of V2</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neve'ei</td>
<td>Restricted nuclear serial verbs</td>
<td>Nuclear serial verb</td>
<td>Musgrave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neve'ei</td>
<td>Nuclear serial verbs</td>
<td>Nuclear serial verb</td>
<td>Crowley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V'anan</td>
<td>Suffixes, Adverbs</td>
<td>Compound verb</td>
<td>Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Araki</td>
<td>Adjunct</td>
<td>Complex verb</td>
<td>François</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lolovoli</td>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Hyslop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directional V2s: me ‘come’ and van ‘go’**

The directional verbs *me* ‘come’ and *van* ‘go’ can participate as V2s in nuclear SVCs, in which case they mean ‘hither’ and ‘thither’ respectively. Like all nuclear V2s, the directional V2 precedes particles, such as imperfective *sar*.
Unlike other nuclear verbs, \textit{van} and \textit{me} can also follow adverbial nouns:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(69)]\[i=m\text{\textepsilon}s\text{alin} m\text{\textepsilon}\]
  3S:R=come outside hither

  \textit{(The small fish) came outside (the sea). (ie. it came to the shore).}
\end{itemize}

When a directional V2 follows an adverbial noun, the complex can precede or follow an aspect particle:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(70)]\[nar=an\text{\textepsilon}rmar\texttext{\textepsilon}v\text{\textepsilon}van\]
  1D:R=go IMPF uphill thither

  \textit{We were going up (there).}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(71)]\[nar=an\text{\textepsilon}rmar\texttext{\textepsilon}v\text{\textepsilon}s\text{ar}\]
  1D:R=go uphill thither IMPF

  \textit{We were going up (there).}
\end{itemize}

It is well known that directional prepositions are likely to derive historically from directional verbs in serialising languages (cf. Lord 1993). The behaviour of \textit{van} ‘go’ and \textit{me} ‘come’ could be regarded as reflecting various stages in the process of semantic bleaching and grammaticisation, from fully fledged verb through to directional ‘particle’, defined and discussed in §4.7.
4.5.2 Nuclear adverbs

Nuclear adverbs are a small closed class of words, which form grammatical units with the verb they modify. They do not tolerate intervening material between themselves and the verb root, and they can accept the object and negative markers. They do not function as verbs on their own, as they cannot take the subject marker. There are two types of nuclear adverbs, distinguished on the basis of phonological relationship to the verb stem. Some nuclear adverbs, such as *din* ‘do to death’ *ves*, ‘do till (s.t.) breaks’, form a phonological unit with the verb, while others, such as *rad* ‘do in vain’ and *lxen* ‘again, back’ tend to be pronounced as separate words. The first type are written with a hyphen, and the second type are written as separate words, exemplified respectively below:

(72) \[i=x\varepsilon-h-din \quad nxa riv \quad \eta e, \quad i=n\varepsilon h\]
3S:\(R=bite-dead\) cat DEF 3S:\(R=die\)

*He bit the cat to death, and he was dead.*

(73) \[r=tre\varepsilon v, \quad r=tre\varepsilon v, \quad r=tr-tre\varepsilon v \quad \textbf{rad}\]
3D:\(R=wait\) 3D:\(R=wait\) 3D:\(R=D\)\text{UP} wait-in.vain

*They (two) waited and waited, but they waited in vain.*

The nuclear adverbs, such as *ves* ‘break’, that form a phonological unit with the verb, precede the completive marker, whereas nuclear adverbs that are phonologically independent, such as *lxen* ‘again’, follow the completive marker:

(74) \[n=t\varepsilon s-ves-nenev \quad \textbf{lxen} \quad nxa\]
1S:\(R=cut-break-COMPL\) again tree

*I pruned all the trees again.*

Nuclear adverbs precede the 3S object marker:

(75) \[i=x\varepsilon-h-din-i\]
3S:\(R=bite-dead-3s\)

*He bit him dead / he bit him to death.*
Grammatical transitivity
As demonstrated in the above examples, most nuclear adverbs do not affect the grammatical transitivity of the verb complex; grammatical transitivity is determined by the verb root. However a small group of nuclear adverbs, including navon ‘too much’ and rad ‘in vain’, do affect the grammatical transitivity of the VP. If they combine with a transitive verb, the resulting expression is semi-transitive:

\[(76)\]  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
  n=\text{wès} \\
  \text{1S:R=eat} \\
  \text{neŋa} \\
  \text{native.almond} \\
  \text{mŋe} \\
  \text{PART}
\end{array}
\]

\[I \text{ ate some native almonds.}\]

\[(77)\]  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
  n=\text{wès} \\
  \text{1S:R=eat} \\
  \text{navon} \\
  \text{(* Ø /) xini} \\
  \text{neŋa} \\
  \text{native.almond}
\end{array}
\]

\[I \text{ ate too many native almonds.}\]

The nuclear adverbs which demote the object to an oblique phrase include navon ‘too much’, slemus, ‘always’, rad ‘in vain’ and mnet ‘in vain’.

Multiple nuclear constituents
Nuclear adverbs follow nuclear verbs, such as vahex ‘(be) clear’:

\[(78)\]  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
  \text{nxa-nevir} \\
  \text{torch} \\
  \text{i=erex-vahex} \\
  \text{kreh} \\
  \text{through} \\
  \text{window} \\
  \text{hɔk} \\
  \text{1S:R=shine-be.clear} \\
  \text{window(B)} \\
  \text{1S:POSS}
\end{array}
\]

\[V-N.\text{VERB} \quad N.\text{ADV}\]

\[(The) \text{ torch shined clearly through my window.}\]

\[M \& R \text{ p.246}\]

Up to three nuclear adverbs have been elicited, exemplified below:

\[(79)\]  
\[
\begin{array}{c}
  n=\text{tês-veṣ} \\
  \text{1S:R=cut-break} \\
  \text{mumux} \\
  \text{properly} \\
  \text{lxen} \\
  \text{nxa} \\
  \text{again} \\
  \text{tree}
\end{array}
\]

\[I \text{ pruned all the trees properly again.}\]
The order of adverbs in the VP has not yet been explored, but based on these and other examples, it appears to be:

\[
\text{N.Adv(semantic)} \quad \text{N.Adv(manner)} \quad \text{N.Adv(quantity)}
\]

where \text{N.Adv (semantic)} represents adverbs contributing semantic content to the VP to change the meaning of the stem, such as \textit{ves} ‘break’ and \textit{hlex} ‘replace’. These can be followed by manner adverbs, such as \textit{mumux} ‘properly’, which can be in turn followed by quantity adverbs, such as intensifiers and adverbs indicating iteration, such as \textit{lxen} ‘again, back’.

The nuclear adverbs attested in the corpus are listed in tables 4.10 and 4.11, which show respectively nuclear adverbs which form phonological units with the verb, and those which do not.

\textbf{Table 4-10:} Tirax nuclear adverbs in N.Adv1 slot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuclear Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{din}</td>
<td>‘do to death’</td>
<td>\textit{rub} ‘hit, kill’</td>
<td>\textit{rub-din} ‘hit to death, kill’,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{xeh} ‘bite’</td>
<td>\textit{xeh-din} ‘bite to death’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{bal} ‘be beaten (up)’</td>
<td>\textit{bal-din} ‘be beaten to death’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{ves}</td>
<td>‘do till NP breaks’</td>
<td>\textit{tes} ‘cut’</td>
<td>\textit{tes}-\textit{ves} ‘cut right through’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{lse} ‘bend’</td>
<td>\textit{lse-ves} ‘break by bending’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{sme} ‘suck, chew’</td>
<td>\textit{sme-ves} ‘break by chewing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{vre} ‘tread on’</td>
<td>\textit{vre}-\textit{ves} ‘break by standing on’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{xeh} ‘bite’</td>
<td>\textit{xeh-ves} ‘break by biting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{ves}</td>
<td>‘notice (by \textit{V}_1\text{-ing})’</td>
<td>\textit{leh} ‘see’</td>
<td>\textit{leh-ves} ‘notice (by looking)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textit{rga} ‘hear’</td>
<td>\textit{rga-ves} ‘notice (by hearing)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4-11: Tirax nuclear adverbs which fill N.Adv2 slot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuclear Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>lxen</em></td>
<td>‘do again’</td>
<td><em>van</em> ‘go’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘look’</td>
<td><em>ri</em> <em>lxen</em> ‘look back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘cut’</td>
<td><em>tes</em> <em>lxen</em> ‘cut (same NP) again’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mumux</em></td>
<td>‘do V1 properly’</td>
<td><em>huv</em> ‘bathe’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>res</em> <em>mumux</em> ‘speak competently’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>xesxesir</em> ‘do the sweeping’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>tes</em> <em>mumux</em> ‘cut / prune properly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ve</em> <em>mumux</em> ‘do properly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hlex</em></td>
<td>‘replace by doing V1’</td>
<td><em>tur</em> ‘stand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>to</em> ‘put’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>txun</em></td>
<td>INTENSifier ‘very’</td>
<td><em>kɔr</em> ‘be grateful’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>nam</em> ‘be good’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>wes</em> ‘eat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>rav</em> ‘hold’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>netur</em> ‘sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kreh</em></td>
<td>‘through, pierce by doing V1’</td>
<td><em>her</em> ‘spear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>her kreh</em> ‘spear through, pierce through by spearing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>xvah</em></td>
<td>‘break in two by doing V1’</td>
<td><em>her</em> ‘spear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>her xvah</em> ‘spear in two pieces’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>xriv</em></td>
<td>‘to V1 near(by) (to)’</td>
<td><em>hlau</em> ‘arrive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>hlau xriv</em> ‘arrive near’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>xorɔ</em></td>
<td>‘to block by doing V1’</td>
<td><em>netur</em> ‘lie, sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>tur</em> ‘stand’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>netur xorɔ</em> ‘block by lying (in front of), lying across’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>tur xorɔ</em> ‘stand blocking, block by standing (in front of)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>trɔn</em></td>
<td>‘CONTinuous marker, keep doing V1’</td>
<td><em>huv</em> ‘swim’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>huv trɔn</em> ‘keep swimming’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-12 shows nuclear adverbs which form semi-transitive VPs when modifying transitive verbs. They fill the N.Adv2 slot.
**Table 4-12**: Tirax nuclear adverbs which demote direct object to oblique phrase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuclear Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nav ɔn</td>
<td>quantifier: 'too much'</td>
<td>nin 'drink'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>drodrom 'think about, worry about'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nin nav ɔn 'drink too much'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>drodrom nav ɔn 'think too much (about), be very worried (about)'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slemus</td>
<td>'always'</td>
<td>vin 'shoot'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vin slemus 'always shoot'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mnet</td>
<td>‘do V₁ in vain’</td>
<td>das ‘search’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rub drɔ ‘hit (target)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>das mnet ‘search in vain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rub drɔ mnet ‘hit (target) in vain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rad</td>
<td>‘do V₁ in vain’</td>
<td>das ‘search’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>trev ‘wait for (tr)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ri ‘look’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>das rad ‘search in vain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>trev rad (xini mar xar) ‘wait in vain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>riri rad ‘look in vain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vahaxal</td>
<td>‘do V₁ at once’</td>
<td>ve ‘do, make’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ve vahaxal ‘do / make at once’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Verbal origin of nuclear adverbs**

It is likely that nuclear adverbs were originally verbs and have been bleached more or less of their verbal meaning and behaviour through participating in nuclear SVCs, finally losing their ability to function independently as verbs in their own right.

Nuclear adverbs and nuclear SVCs are common in other Vanuatu languages, and there is evidence in many of these languages of a verbal origin for the adverbs which occur within the verb complex; Lolovoli, Araki, Neve’ei and Naman are examples (eg. Crowley 2006a:137-139).

There is evidence for a verbal origin of Tirax nuclear adverbs, as there are vestiges of verbal behaviour and processes in nuclear adverbs. For example, nuclear adverbs can undergo reduplication, similar to canonical verbs. Din is reduplicated in the example below to indicate an iterative aspect with plural object, compared with the unreduplicated version which has a perfective reading:

(80) i=rub-di-din-er

3S:R=kill-DUP-dead-3P

*(The man) was killing them (the ten young birds) dead.*
153

(81) i=rub-din-ɛr
3S:R=kill-DUP-dead-3P

(The man) killed them dead.

R & M-R

Some nuclear adverbs, such as kreh ‘through’ and ves ‘break’ are attested with the causative prefix rɔ-, which normally attaches to canonical verbs. Rɔ-kreh, for example, means ‘to pierce’ and rɔ-ves, ‘to break’. The example below shows that ves cannot occupy the verb slot in a verb phrase; it cannot take the subject marker:

(82) *i=ves
3S:R=break

\aud AB1-014B.wav \as 1855.855 \ae 1866.632

(83) *n=ves nxa
1S:R=break stick

M & R

However, ves can take the causative preverb, rɔ-, in which case it occupies the verb slot in a basic VP.

(84) n=rɔ-ves nxa
1S:R=CAUS-break stick

I broke the stick.

M & R

The example below from a traditional narrative, shows ves taking a causative preverb as well as undergoing reduplication:

(85) i=smɛ natev vv-vv na
3S:R=chew.on sugarcane DUP-DUR now

Now he chewed and chewed on the sugarcane until

i=rɔ-ves-ves nasama=na kenu8
3S:R=CAUS-DUP-break outrigger(B)=ASSOC canoe(B)

he caused the outrigger to break off.

\aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 1622.391 \ae 1626.79

8 The Tirax word for canoe is nuag.
A verbal origin could explain the effect of some nuclear adverbs on transitivity. We saw in §4.5.1 that intransitive nuclear V2s demote a Patient to an oblique phrase. Nuclear adverbs, such as *rad*, ‘in vain’, which demote the Patient to an oblique phrase, may have derived from intransitive verbs which regularly took part in nuclear SVCs.

*Lxen* ‘again, back’

The adverb *lxen*, ‘again, back’ is exceptional in its behaviour, comparable to the directional verbs seen in §4.5.1. *Lxen* is a nuclear adverb, as exemplified below:

(86) i=nev nas=hul lxon-i
3S:R=finish 1P:R=burn again-3S

*After that we burn it again.*

However *lxen* can also have the same pattern of distribution as particles (seen in §2.1.5 and below in §4.7). For example, *lxen* can follow adverbial nouns:

(87) ren Sarere lxon nas=an nas=hlox nədran nŋɛ
  time Saturday(B) back 1P:R=go 1P:R=carry food PART

*Last Saturday, we went and took some food.*

In all other cases in the corpus, nuclear adverbs are restricted to post-verb position within the verb complex.

### 4.6 Grammatical aspect

Grammatical aspect refers to the internal structure of an event and its temporal relation to surrounding events as encoded by the speaker. Grammatical aspect is optionally marked in Tirax. The range of aspect markers attested in the Tirax data is given in table 4-13.
Table 4-13: Tirax aspect markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Grammatical function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dax</td>
<td>PERFfective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na</td>
<td>perfect (‘now’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sar</td>
<td>IMPERfective: includes inceptive, habitual and progressive uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vo</td>
<td>DURative ‘on and on (until)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trɔn</td>
<td>PROTractive: ‘keep on V-ing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lɔbɔ</td>
<td>CONTinuative: ‘still V-ing’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The functional range of these aspect markers is described below.

4.6.1 Perfective dax

Dax is a perfective marker, optionally used to encode actions that have finished taking place:

(88) ren-tɛ r=hlau lain, dede he mlakɛl ɛɛ i=tehix dax
    time-SUB 3D:R=arrive home motherPOSS teenager DEF 3S:R=get.up PERF

When they (two) arrived home, the boy’s mother was already up.

When they (two) arrived home, the boy’s mother was already up.

The event encoded by dax is understood as past, relative to some other event or point in time. If the reference point is in the future, or in a hypothetical world, dax is used to encode an event that will have or should have finished taking place:

(89) ntɛ tbax-in i=dla i=ladlad i=tɔx bɔ
    thing belly-3S:POSS 3S:R=be.thus 3S:R=be.big 3S:R=be DIM

The thing in her belly was just getting bigger,

The thing in her belly was just getting bigger,

but when the time came for her to give birth to it, nothing happened.

but when the time came for her to give birth to it, nothing happened.
For this reason, *dax* is analysed as a perfective marker rather than a past marker.

For stative-inchoative verbs, such as *mwar* ‘be / become clear’, *dax* encodes a change of state:

(90) \[
i=mwar \quad \text{dax} \quad \text{t} \quad \text{de=van} \quad \text{na} \quad \text{de=ver} \quad \text{xini} \quad \text{lex} \quad \text{han}
\]

\[3S:R=\text{be.clear} \quad \text{PERF} \quad \text{SUB} \quad 3S:1=\text{go} \quad \text{now} \quad 3S:1=\text{say} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{husband} \quad 3S:\text{POSS}
\]

*It became clear that she would have to go now and talk to her husband.*

\[\text{aud AB1-001-A.wav} \enspace \text{as 1086.382 \ae 1090.774}\]

*Dax* is often encountered in narrative modifying non-punctual verbs, typically verbs of perception and cognition, where it encodes a punctual aspect. I have translated *dax* when it occurs with non-punctual verbs as ‘suddenly V-ed’ to reflect the punctual effect:

(91) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{be} \quad \text{tata} \quad \text{har} & \quad \text{i=} & \quad \text{at} \quad \text{lalvanu} \quad \text{nja} \quad \text{naxnal} \\
\text{but(B)} & & \text{3P:POSS} & \text{3S:R=be} & \text{inside} & \text{LOC} & \text{nakamal}
\end{align*}
\]

*And their father was inside the men's house*

\[\text{aud AB1-009-B.wav} \enspace \text{as 1806.03 \ae 1815.153}\]

4.6.2 Clause-final *na*

The Tirax particle *na*, ‘now’, is likely to be derived from English ‘now’, via Bislama ‘nao’:

(92) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{“ bar=vla} \quad \text{na} \quad ! = & \quad \text{bar=an} \quad \text{lain} \quad \text{”} \\
\text{2D:1=leave} & \text{now} & \text{2D:1=go} & \text{home}
\end{align*}
\]

*“Let’s leave now and go home!”*

\[\text{aud AB1-009-A.wav} \enspace \text{as 179.902 \ae 182.857}\]

*Na* is frequently encountered in Tirax discourse and has two main functions, associated with two different positions in the clause. It can occur clause-initially, where its function is to move the temporal reference forward, as discussed in §7.2.3.
More frequently it occurs clause-finally, where it functions as a perfect marker; it marks a clause to encode that the event expressed by the clause has taken place and the resulting state persists at the time of utterance. The following example is a line of dialogue spoken by a mother to her absent daughter, who has gone off with a new husband:

\[(93) \text{“x=vla lixdre } \text{nɔc } \text{nɔ !”}\]

\[2s:\text{R}=\text{go.away} \quad \text{leave} \quad 1s \quad \text{now}\]

\[\text{“You have gone and left me now!”}\]

\[\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-018-A.wav as 1985.972 ae 1988.516}\]

Whereas \textit{dax} is used with stative-inchoatives to register the change of state, clause-final \textit{na} is used with those verbs to reflect the fact the final state is holding at the current temporal reference point. In the example below, clause-final \textit{na} is used with a stative-inchoative \textit{tab}, ‘be / become dry’, to indicate that the state of being dry has now been reached and persists, relative to the current temporal reference point:

\[(94) \text{i=ri xini , i=leh te}\]

\[3s:\text{R}=\text{look} \quad \text{OBL:3s} \quad 3s:\text{R}=\text{see} \quad \text{SUB}\]

\textit{He looked and he saw that}

\[\text{nua i=tab na ,}\]

\[\text{water} \quad 3s:\text{R}=\text{be.dry} \quad \text{now}\]

\textit{the dam was now dry,}\n
\[(95) \text{i=v-va …}\]

\[3s:\text{R}=\text{DUP-say}\]

\textit{and he said ...}\n
\[\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav as 1915.32 ae 1921.033}\]

Clause-final \textit{na} can combine with irrealis mood to give a future perfect meaning. In the example below, the chief’s wife is about to give birth and wants to make sure there is enough food to eat for when she has the new baby and will be confined to the house. In the narrative, the question is posed as to what she is going to eat once the baby is born. The clause following the clause marked with \textit{na} is interpreted as taking place following the birth:
(96) vinadr he mleun de=dɛd ve
woman POSS chief 3S:I=give.birth but

The chief’s wife was to give birth, but

vinadr he mleun i=ŋɔrdɔ te de=dɛd na,
woman POSS chief 3S:R=know SUB 3S:I=give.birth now

the chief’s wife knew that she would give birth,

ve de=ヴes havxa ?
but 3S:I=eat what

but what would she eat then (ie. after that)?

4.6.3 Imperfective sar

The morpheme sar is a general marker of imperfective aspect and is glossed IMPF. However it has a range of functions, marking inceptive and habitual, as well as progressive and iterative aspect, depending on the semantics of the VP and the context. The main function of sar is to encode actions that are on-going and it is most frequently encountered with atelic VPs:

(97) nanɔv labuŋ nas=at sar nŋa nen na nɔdran
yesterday night 1P:R=sit IMPF LOC house ASSOC food

Last night we were sitting in the kitchen.

For telic verbs, such as ver ‘tell, say’, sar can encode iterated actions:

(98) i=v-va “ o! ”
3S:R=DUP-say oh

(The daughter) said: “Oh!”

“dede hɔk de=me xar bas=leh-i bas=mtaxit ia! ”
mother 1S:POSS 3S:I=come DST 2P:I=see-3S 2P:I=be.afraid there(B)

“My mother is coming, and you all will see her and become afraid.”
He replied “Not at all. We won't be afraid at all.”

She kept telling her husband:

“You’ll see my mother you’ll be afraid.”

Sar can also be used to encode habitual actions, in which case it is glossed HAB:

They (the ten young birds) would go and drink at a dam.

Sar can also encode the beginning phase of an event. When used in conjunction with clause-final na, the two markers together encode the event expressed by the clause has got underway at the current temporal reference point:

She sang the song like that on and on until

her legs began to go down into the ground.

Her legs went down, into the ground
They went sinking and sinking lower and lower...

The combination of *sar* and *na* contrasts with that of *sar* and the PERFactive *dax*, which encodes an event that would regularly take place, or was taking place, but has since stopped. So the perfectiveness encoded by *dax* is of an iterated action:

(101) *mar xar i=vnax sar dax tuə i=me*  
man DST 3S:R=steal HAB PERF before 3S:R=come

That man used to steal all the time before.

4.6.4 Durative ʋɔ

The particle ʋɔ is frequently encountered in Tirax discourse to mark durative aspect:

(102) *i=ver ʋɔ , mar nə i=tur-tur-tə nə*  
3S:R=say DUR man DEF 3S:R=DUP-stand-NEG PART

*She yells and yells but the man doesn't stop at all.*
Durative *vɔ* contrasts with imperfective *sar* in distribution as well as function. *Sar* can be followed by a clause encoded with *rente* ‘meanwhile’, which marks a simultaneous event:

(104) *i=wεs(*-i) sar ren-te i=at
3S:R=eat-3S IMPF time-SUB 3S:R=stay

*He was eating it while he stayed behind.*

R & M-R:

However *vɔ* cannot be followed by a *rente* clause, since the clause following *vɔ* must relate an endpoint, and not a simultaneous event:

(105) * i=wεs-i vɔ ren-te i=at
3S:R=eat-3S DUR time-SUB 3S:R=stay

R & M-R:

Unlike other particles, durative *vɔ* is only encountered clause-finally. Whereas *sar* can precede any complements of the verb, *vɔ* cannot, as in (106) and (107) respectively:

(106) i=tεs sar [ nabl ñε ]
3S:R=cut IMPF plank DEF

*He was cutting through the plank.*

(107) i=tεs vɔ (* nabl ñε )
3S:R=cut DUR plank DEF

*He was cutting on and on.*

R & M p199

*vɔ* typically functions like a conjunction, connecting two clauses. However prosodically it is part of the first intonation unit. In the following example, the forward slash represents a rising intonation contour and the three dots represent a pause:

(108) i=ñοn bɔ tbax-in xini … navŋa molih bɔ vɔ-ɔv-ɔv /
3S:R=fill DIM belly-3S:POSS OBL fruit orange DIM DUP-DUR

*She just filled her belly with oranges on and on until*
There is one exception, where \( \omega \) does not occur in clause-final position. \( \omega \) can be followed by a locative or temporal NP, which functions as an endpoint instead of a clause:

\[
(109) \quad xain \_i=\text{van} \_\omega-\omega \_laltah
\]

\( 3S:R=\text{DUP-DUR to the sea} \)

\textit{As for him he went all the way to the beach.}

\( \omega \) plays a role in condensing narrative time, allowing the storyteller to jump to a point in the narrative future and resume the narration. It is frequently encountered in the set up of a narrative. After the protagonist is introduced, Tirax narratives almost always have a clause with \( \at \) ‘be, stay’ and the durative \( \omega \), followed by a clause which expresses the incident which is the catalyst for the story:

\[
(110) \quad \text{i=va-hxal}
\]

\( 3S:R=\text{MULT-one} \)

\textit{Once,}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
olfala & vinadr & hxal \\
nold.person(B) & woman & INDEF
\end{tabular}

\textit{there was an old woman.}

\[
\text{i=at} \_\omega-\omega \_\text{DUP-DUR}
\]

\textit{She lived for a while and then one day}

\[
i=\text{r}\_\text{de=we}\_\text{naxtabol}
\]

\( 3S:R=\text{want} \ 3S:R=\text{eat} \)

\textit{she wanted to eat some dragon plums.}
Vɔ can also be used to paraphrase repetitious information, and so condense narrative time, similar to the English ‘and so on’:

111) s=vla  i=dla  ƞɛ,  tete amu  xain i=telamu,

3P:R=go.away  3S:R=be.thus  DEF  child  in.front  3S  3S:R=lead

The went of like that, with the oldest one leading the way,

tete  sre  i=sre-i,
child  next  3S:R=follow-3s

the next born following him,

xair  drul  vɔ-vɔ,  tete  tax  i=teltax.
3P  all  DUP-and.so.on  child  last  3S:R=walk.behind

and so on with the youngest one walking in the rear.

4.6.5 Other markers of imperfective aspect: lɔbɔ and ɔrn
There is a particle lɔbɔ and the less frequently encountered nuclear adverb ɔrn, which function as continuative and protractive markers respectively. Lɔbɔ has several meanings: ‘first’, ‘still’ and a politeness marker to soften the force of imperatives. There is a variant lebɔ for some speakers, and it is likely that lɔbɔ is an innovation, the first vowel assimilating with the second, similarly to tɛbɔ / lɔbɔ ‘no more’, seen in §4.4.4.

Lɔbɔ is a continuative marker, used to indicate that the action described by the verb is still going on, exemplified by the elicited sentence below:

112) n=we  lɔbɔ  nalɔk
1S:R=eat  still  laplap

I’m still eating the laplap.

In irrealis clauses, lɔbɔ means ‘first’. The variant lebɔ is used in the following example, though lɔbɔ is equally acceptable with no difference in meaning:
As mentioned above, \textit{la\text{\textasciitilde}bo} is also used to soften imperatives. In the example below, a devil makes the protagonist carry him on his shoulders and pick coconuts for him. The boy repeatedly asks the devil to get down to make it easier for him.

\begin{verbatim}
(114) mleun tra bih ŋe i=v-va “ba=turtur la\text{\textasciitilde}bo”
  chief   big  small DEF 3S:R=DUP-say 2S:1=stop   POL.

The little chief said (to the devil) “Would you mind stopping please.”
\end{verbatim}

There is another less frequently encountered marker of persistence of an event, the nuclear adverb: \textit{tron} ‘keep on’. It is glossed as a PRO\textit{t}ractive marker:

\begin{verbatim}
(115) nxariv ŋe xain i=at xini te i=te-tedi\text{\textasciitilde}x i=tron xini
cat  DEF 3S  3S:R=be  OBL  SUB  3S:R=DUP-defecate  PROT  OBL:3S

The rat, he kept pooping on (the turtle’s back).
\end{verbatim}

We have seen that Tirax has several ways of marking imperfective aspect. In the following elicited examples, the English translations reflect the subtle differences in meaning between the various markers:

\begin{verbatim}
(116) n=\text{\textasciitilde}wes n\text{\textasciitilde}b\text{\textasciitilde}k v\text{\textasciitilde}
1S:R=eat laplap  DUR

I am eating laplap on and on
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(117) n=\text{\textasciitilde}wes sar n\text{\textasciitilde}b\text{\textasciitilde}k
1S:R=eat IMPF laplap

I am eating laplap.
\end{verbatim}
I keep on eating laplap.

I’m still eating laplap.

4.7 Particles

There is a small, closed class of invariable morphemes that can occur within NPs as well as VPs. Called here, particles, following Crowley’s label for a similar category in Naman, this group comprises the morphemes listed in Table 4-14.

Table 4-14: Tirax particles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sar</td>
<td>§4.6.3</td>
<td>IMPerFective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dax</td>
<td>§4.6.1</td>
<td>PERFective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lebo / lobo</td>
<td>§4.6.5</td>
<td>‘still, first’ &amp; POLiteness marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vor</td>
<td>§4.7</td>
<td>EMPHasis marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bo</td>
<td>§4.7</td>
<td>DIMinutive, minimises the impact of the word or proposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kle</td>
<td>§4.7</td>
<td>ITERative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mul</td>
<td>§4.7</td>
<td>‘more’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temul</td>
<td>§4.4.4</td>
<td>‘no longer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tevor / tevor</td>
<td>§4.4.4</td>
<td>‘not yet’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tebo / tobo</td>
<td>§4.4.4</td>
<td>‘not much’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We saw in §3.3.3 that particles follow the plural object marker, but cannot co-occur with the third person singular object marker:

He tried to stop them.
(121) *i=trɛ dax-ɛr 
3S:R=prevent PERF-3p

(122) tnah ɛ̲ xner s=me , ... s=ri s=leh(*-i) dax 
devil DEF PL 3P:R=come ... 3P:R=look 3P:R=see PERF

Those devils came and came ... and then they looked and they suddenly saw (him).

Particles are attested both before and after NP objects, as in (123) and (124)
respectively:

(123) i=he-herɛ sar ntebibih 
3S:R=DUP-teach IMPF children

She was teaching (the) children.

(124) s=ri k-kreh nabu sar xini vinadr ɛ̲ vɔnɔ-ɔnuvɔ-vɔ 
3P:R=look through bamboo IMPF OBL woman DEF DUP-DUR

They were peeping in through the bamboo at the woman, on and on...

Other positions in the clause in which particles are encountered
Particles can follow nominals, as in the examples below, where an aspect marker
follows the third person pronoun / demonstrative xan (125), a free pronoun (126-127),
a proper noun (128), adverbial noun (129), and interrogative pronoun (130):

(125) “ xan lɔbo Santo ”
3S still Santo

“She is still in Santo.”

(126) “ xanɔ dax n=me ”
3S PERF 1S:R=come

I’m already here.
“It`s been you! You have been coming to eat our chicken!”

At that time, while (I was at) Mission school,

(I was) still (at) Mission School.

(There was) a chief, who lived together with his wife, in olden times.

“Who on earth has been slashing (the undergrowth in) my garden here?”

Diminutive: bo

bo is the most frequently attested particle, used to soften the impact of any utterance.

It can occur inside an NP as well as a VP. The following Tirax sentences are equivalent in meaning:

She just slept for one day.

She slept just for one day.
She slept for just one day.

Bo is also attested following adverbs and conjunctions, as in the following examples respectively:

That man is just always stealing my pig.

Today, it is just because of this matter she comes to see me

Multiple particles

Up to three particles per clause are attested the texts, preserving the following order:

Complex negatives, such as temul, follow aspect-marking particles, such as imperfective sar:

I nomo stil oltaem.

As aspect markers precede other particles:

Then, the two of them went on walking again.
Bɔ tends to precede the remaining particles, whether in a NP or VP:

(138) xɔnɔ  bɔ  kłɛ
    1S   DIM  again

    It's me again.

(139) a:  da=vr  bɔ  kłɛ  mʌl  stɔrɪ
    HES  1S:1=say  DIM  again  more  story(B)

    I’m just going tell another story.

The following example shows that there are no restrictions on the order of vɔr and kłɛ relative to each other:

(140) i=nam  vɔr  kłɛ  tɛ  bas=leh-ɪxɛn
    3S:R=good  EMPH  again  SUB  2P:1=see-back

    It’s better that we look again for that thing here.

    bas=leh  kłɛ  vɔr  nɛ  xar  kłɛ
    2P:1=see  again  EMPH  thing  DST  again

    We’ll look again for that thing here. 9

---

9 You may recall from §3.3.2, that second person non-singular irrealis forms are also used for first person inclusive meaning.
5 Clause structure

The previous two chapters have looked at Tirax morphosyntax at the level of the phrase, and now we turn to clause-level grammar. This section presents the different basic clause types that are encountered in Resan Tirax.

5.1 Verbless clauses
Verbless clause types include presentative, equational, locative / demonstrative and possessive clauses, as shown in table 5-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Presentative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP NP</td>
<td>Equational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP LocNP</td>
<td>Locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PossNP</td>
<td>Possessive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these clause types have verbal counterparts, discussed in §5.2. The clause types given in table 5-1 are demonstrated in sections §5.1.1 to §5.1.4 below.

5.1.1 Presentative clauses
The simplest clause can comprise a single noun phrase, and have the function of introducing or presenting something or someone. Presentative clauses can be used to introduce characters in narrative:

(1) morti haxal
    person INDEF

_There was a man,_

net=na haxal
child=ASSOC INDEF

_who had a son,_
Presentative clauses are also used in everyday interactions, such as the following frequently encountered expression:

(2) ophon bo
1S DIM

*It’s just me.*

5.1.2 Equational clauses

Noun phrases can function as predicates, in which case they do not take the subject-mood clitic. Examples (3) and (4) show a common noun and proper noun respectively, functioning as predicates:

(3) mar xar mleun
man DST chief

*That man is a chief.*

(4) xɔnɔ, nahxa-k R
1S name-1S:POSSR

*Me, my name is R.*

5.1.3 Locative clauses

Locative clauses can be formed by juxtaposing a noun phrase with a locative NP or PP.

(5) nato nga naut
chicken LOC garden

*A chicken is in the garden.*

(6) nato lanih
chicken LOC.bush

*A chicken is in the bush.*
5.1.4 Possessive clauses

Propositions relating a possessor and possessum are sometimes presented as verbless clauses. In (7) below, for example, the possessive suffix on buŋ ihavl ‘ten day ceremony (traditional baptism)’, represents the whole proposition, translated by the English sentence ‘I had a ten day ceremony’:

(7)  ren-te  ni=ak  i=nev  
     TIME-SUB 1S:R=be.born 3S:R=finish  

After I was born,

buŋ-g  i=ihavl  
     day-1S:POSS 3S:R=ten  

I had my ten day ceremony,

vav  hɔk  i=me  i=ser  ɲɔnɔ  
     aunt 1S:POSS 3S:R=come 3S:R=wash 1S  

(where) my aunt came and bathed me.

‘Alienable’ possessive constructions can also form verbless possessive clauses. The example below is from a narrative about a woman who asked five brothers, each in turn, to give her sick daughter some fish that they had caught for her to eat. The first four brothers each responded bluntly:

(8)  “ɲɔnɔ,  nas  drɔk  vɔr ”  
     1S  fish 1S:POSS:FOOD EMPH  

“As for me, these fish are mine!”

In §3.8 we saw that verbless possessive clauses can also occur as relative clauses, whose pivot is a possessor NP, and the possessive morpheme functions as a resumptive pronoun:

(9)  vinadr  he  mar  te  lidax  han  ɲɛ  i=me  
     woman  POSS  man  REL  dog 3S:POSS  DEF 3S:R=come  

(The) wife of the man whose dog it came along.
5.2 Verbal Clauses

The vast majority of Tirax clauses contain verbs. The range of verb subcategories in Tirax was presented in §4.2, and includes intransitive, transitive, semi-transitive, ambi-transitive and ditransitive verbs as well as verbs with sentential complements, which are discussed in chapter 6. Verbal clauses have a default S V (O) word order. A summary of the clause types involving function verbs: copula ve, existentials at and tx, negative existential hge and possessive ak xini is given in table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Subcategories of Tirax functional verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic behaviour</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S ve NP</td>
<td>Copula</td>
<td>Links subject with NP predicate</td>
<td>mar ive mleun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘(the) man is a chief’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S V</td>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>One-place predicates</td>
<td>at existential (animate S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tx existential (inanimate S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hge negative existential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S ak xini NP</td>
<td>Possessive</td>
<td>Links subject with NP possession</td>
<td>mar iak xini lidax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘(the) man has a dog/s’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.1 Copula ve

The copula, ve, is optionally used to link a S NP and a predicative complement, comprising a co-referential NP:

(10) n=ve

mar B, naxnel hɔk
1S:R=COP man B house 1S:POS

I am a B man. My house is B.

(11) nvat xar i=ve

nvat hat
stone DST 3S:R=COP stone bad

That stone is a sacred stone.

Ve can also mean ‘become’, following the pattern of stative-inchoative verbs, seen in §4.2.1, which can predicate a state or becoming that state. The sentence below is one of the final lines from a teleological story about how the rat got its tail:
As for that octopus’s tentacle, it became the rat’s tail.

We saw in §4.2.1 that the perfective marker dax can enforce a stative reading for stative-inchoative verbs. Similarly dax can enforce the stative reading with the copula. There is an expression for respectfully relating news of someone’s death, using the copula and perfective dax, which emphasises the stative reading. The expression is only encountered as a fronted construction:

Our niece is dead.

Ve is a multi-functional word participating in a range of constructions. The range of constructions and meanings of ve is presented in §6.4.4.1.

5.2.2 Locative-existing at

The verb at, which can mean ‘sit, stay, live, dwell’, is used in locative and existential sentences with animate NP subjects. At can be used in conjunction with a locative NP or PP to give the location of an animate entity:

A chicken is on the roof / There is a chicken on the roof.

At is frequently encountered in the beginning of a narrative introducing the main characters, as an alternative to verbless presentative construction, seen in §5.1.1:

Once, there were two children.

Often in narratives, at is used both to introduce characters, and to locate them:
There was a woman who lived in a small village.

\(16\) \text{vinadr haxal i=at nŋa nvanu bih haxal}
\text{woman INDEF 3S:R=be.located LOC village small INDEF}

At is frequently encountered in narratives in conjunction with the durative marker \(vɔ\) to indicate passage of time, as seen in §4.6.4. It typically occurs in the set up of the story, where the characters and situation are established, prior to the first important story event. English structures its narrative opening sequences differently, which can present issues for translation. In the sequence below, the Bislama translation is also given for comparison:

\(17\) \text{i=va-haxal niakan xair i=lin khek}
\text{3S:R=MULT-one sibling 3P 3S:R=five together}

Wan taem ol brata olgeta faev.

\text{Once, there were five brothers.}

\text{xair i=lin khek si=at vvvvv-vɔ}
\text{3P 3S:R=five together 3P:R=be DUP-DUR}

Olgeta faev oli stap \text{gogogogo}

\text{The five brothers lived together (for a long time / then one day)}

\text{tete-amu i=v-va}
\text{child-first 3S:R=DUP-say}

\text{fesbon i talem i se …}
\text{the oldest brother said …}

5.2.3 Locative-existential \(tɔx\)

\(tɔx\) is the locative-existential used for inanimate referents. Like \(at\), it can be followed by a locative NP or PP:

\(18\) \text{nalex i=tɔx xnal}
\text{kava 3S:R=be.located LOC men’s house}

\text{There is kava at the men’s house.}

\(19\) \text{nevin i=tɔx nŋa male=nan}
\text{bullet 3S:R=be.located LOC leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS}

\text{A bullet was in its leg.}
Tɔx is used with generic NPs, including those with human referents. At also means ‘live, sit, or stay’, and if at were used in the following sentence instead of tɔx, it would be interpreted as meaning ‘sit’ or ‘stay’:

(20) nɔx tate ham i=tɔx  
    2S father 2S:POSS 3S:R=exist

   You, you have a father.

Generic common nouns do not trigger number agreement when functioning as subject of existential tɔx:

(21) naur i=tɔx  
    crayfish 3S:R=exist

   There are crayfish / There is a crayfish.

(22) xair bo i=ru r=marit  
    3P DIM 3S:R=two 3D:R=married(B)

   They are both married.

   vinadr har i=tɔx  
    woman 3P:POSS 3S:R=exist

   They have wives. (Lit. their wives exist)

5.2.4 Negative existential hge

The negative existential, hge, is used to assert the non-existence of a subject NP:

(23) nebe i=hge  
    song 3S:R=not.be

   There is no song. (ie. The story doesn’t have a song.)

Hge can also negate the existence of an event, usually by anaphoric reference to the event related in the previous clause:

---

¹ There is a variant hxɛ used by some older speakers.
I don’t know whether I will go to Lakatoro or not.

Hge can express an unfulfilled outcome to the endeavour described by the previous clause:

They (two) looked and looked and looked on and on (but found) nothing.

The negative existential hge is used in possessive sentences to assert the lack of the possessum, here functioning as an antonym of tɔx. The possessum is represented by a subject NP with generic reference:

Once, there lived a man and time went on,

but he had no wife.

The existence of a possessum can be negated with hge. In this case, both the possessor and possessum NPs precede the verb, similar to the constituent order in the expression NP nte ive dax, seen above in §5.2.1:

In the sentence below, both NPs are present:

J doesn’t have a dog.
The same meaning can be expressed with one complex NP:

(28) [ lidax he J ] i=hge
dog POSS J 3S:R=not

*J doesn’t have a dog.*

A sentence with only one NP preceding *hge*, is potentially ambiguous between *NP doesn’t have any*, and *There are no NPs*. Generally context is likely to disambiguate, so the following sentence would be understood as ‘P doesn’t have any’, rather than ‘There are no Ps’, where P is standing in for a proper name:

(29) P i=hge
    P 3S:R=not.be

*P doesn’t have any. (OR There are no Ps.)*

We saw in §4.4.4 that the negative marker *tɛ* combines with the partitive *ŋɛ*, and particles *mul* ‘more’, and the emphatic *vɔr* to form negative adverbial expressions: -*tɛ* *ŋɛ* ‘not at all’, *temul* ‘no longer’ and *tevɔr* ‘not yet’. The negative existential *hge* can also combine with these particles:

(30) i=v-va “ i=hge  nŋɛ ”
    3S:R=DUP-say 3S:R=not.be PART

*He (the devil) said “No way!”*

(31) lidax i=va “ i=hge-vɔr ”
    dog 3S:R=say 3S:R=not.yet

*(The) dog said “Not yet!”*

5.2.5 Possession *ak xini*

Possession is expressed verbally with the expression:

\[
\text{NP}_{\text{possessor}} \quad \text{SM}=\text{ak xini} \quad \text{NP}_{\text{possessum}}
\]

where SM stands for subject marker.
Ak by itself means ‘be born’:

(32) R xain, ren-tɛ i=\textit{ak} i=me
R 3S time-SUB 3S:R=be.born 3S:R=come

\textit{As for R, when she was born},

i=\textit{ak} xini rɔsan nŋa ntæŋ-nuenma=nan
3S:R=have OBL illness LOC heart=ASSOC.3S:POSS

\textit{she had a heart condition.}

We saw above in §5.2.4, that the non-existence of a possession can be expressed with \textit{hge}. Alternatively, \textit{ak} can take the negative marker to form a negative possessive clause:

(33) J i=ak-tɛ xini lidax
J 3S:R=have-NEG OBL dog

\textit{J doesn’t have a dog.}

5.3 Prepositional phrases

Prepositional phrases are formed with a preposition and post-posed NP. In §2.1.6 we saw that there are three classes of prepositions called here verbal, nominal and uninflecting. A ‘verbal’ preposition can take the object marker to encode its complement, similarly to verbs, and a ‘nominal’ preposition can take a possessive suffix to encode its complement. There are at least twelve prepositions attested in the Tirax corpus, including the associative \textit{na}, a nominal preposition discussed in §3.4.3, and excluding \textit{vɔ} ‘until’, an uninflecting conjunction which sometimes takes locative nominal complements, and is discussed in §4.6.4.

PPs in Tirax can function as complements, subcategorised for by the verb, and as adjuncts, providing additional information and being less tightly bound to the verb.
5.3.1 Verbal preposition: OBLique xini

There is only one verbal preposition attested in the corpus: the OBLique marker xini. It is distinct from other Tirax prepositions in taking the object marker as the pronominal form of a full NP:

(34) n=lev natɔ xin-ɛr
1S:R=give chicken OBL-3p

\textit{I gave the chicken to them.}

Xini is the most frequently encountered preposition in Tirax. It has the broadest functional range of all the prepositions, marking a range of core arguments, oblique phrases and demoted direct objects, and is glossed as OBLique. It is likely to be a reflex of the POc applicative suffix *-aki(ni), which added an oblique object such as a goal or instrument (Crowley 2002:34). Evans (2003) notes that there are a number of modern Oceanic languages in which *aki(ni) is reflected as a verbal preposition introducing oblique objects, including the Polynesian language Tongan, Tolo (Southeast Solomonic) and Woleaian (Micronesian). In Tirax, xini typically marks arguments with the thematic role of Recipient, Addressee, Instrument or Goal, exemplified below.

\textit{Xini marks the Recipient of the verb lev \textquoteleft give\textquoteleft:}

(35) i=v-va “ da=lev rɔxa xan de=ha=xal xini nɔx”
3S:R=say 1S:1=give leaf PRX 3S:1=one OBL 2S

\textit{She said \textquoteleft I will give this leaf to you...”}

\textit{Xini marks the Addressee of the verb mex \textquoteleft ask\textquoteleft:}

(36) na xɔnɔ T n=me-mex xini J n=va ...
now 1S T 1S.R=DUP-ask OBL J 1S.R=say ...

\textit{Then I, T, asked J I said...}

\textit{Xini marks the Instrument of the verb drur \textquoteleft stab\textquoteleft:}
This man stabbed (the) pig with his knife.

Xini marks the Goal of the verb *hex* 'climb (up)':

He climbed the Tahitian chestnut.

Xini introduces other non-core NP arguments, covering a range of semantic roles:

I was dancing to the slit drums.

They really didn’t want to allow R. (ie. to have an operation)

She sent word to her daughter.

He kept sending word to me.
Xini is also used to encode reason or purpose, taking both nominal and subordinate clause complements:

(43) nar=an xini neturan
1D:R=go OBL sleep

We (two) are going to bed.

(44) xain=na xan i=ve xini [ te r=lev lxen bxoh i=ru ]
3S=ASSOC PRX 3S:R=be OBL SUB IMP:S:R=take back pig 3S:R=two

That's why two pigs were given.

Similarly, xini can take both nominal and sentential complements with semi-transitive verbs such as drax ‘be frightened, to get a fright’:

(45) na n=drax xini te r=vursum xini xoνο, now 1S:R=jump OBL SUB IMP:S:R=make.noise OBL 1S

Now I got fright because someone called out to me,

r=va “tsch” 1S:R=say psst

They went “pssst”.

Xini can also precede locative PPs:

(46) n=van xini [ nŋa drał nain ]
1S:R=go OBL LOC roof house

I going (up) to the roof.

While this preposition is likely to have derived from POc applicative *-aki(ni), it is possible that it lost the final vowel early on, in addition to the lenition of *k to x, to become xin. There is a cognate in neighbouring Naman, xon, also an oblique verbal preposition, and in Tirax, the plural object –er suffix attaches to a xin root, exemplified in (34) above. A possible scenario is that the Tirax 3rd singular object marker –i, has been reanalysed as part of the preposition root.
Table 5-3 compares the form and function of \textit{xini} with possible cognates in neighbouring languages:²

Table 5-3: Comparison of possible cognates of Tirax preposition \textit{xini}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Neve‘ei</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposition</td>
<td>\textit{xini}</td>
<td>\textit{xən}</td>
<td>\textit{en}</td>
<td>\textit{en}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>oblique (marks a wide range of roles)</td>
<td>oblique (marks a wide range of roles)</td>
<td>oblique (marks a wide range of roles)</td>
<td>oblique (marks a wide range of roles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-class</td>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up, the verbal preposition \textit{xini} has a range of uses and is glossed as \textit{OBLique}. It primarily marks complements, but can mark a range of non-core as well as core arguments, including:

- recipients
- addressees
- goals
- instruments
- other oblique arguments
- demoted objects
- purpose NPs and clauses
- nominal and sentential complements of some semi-transitive verbs

5.3.2 Nominal prepositions

Nominal prepositions can take possessive suffixes to encode pronominal complements:

² For the sake of a transparent comparison, the orthography used for other languages is consistent with Tirax orthography, supplemented by IPA symbols for phonemes which are not part of the Tirax inventory. In Naman orthography, for example, the velar fricative is actually represented by the digraph \textit{kh}.

³ There is no mention of prepositional subcategories in Musgrave’s Neve‘ei grammar.
They (two) came home to us.

(47) \( r=\text{m}' \text{lain} \ \text{sxi-nen} \)
\[
3D:R=\text{come} \quad \text{home} \quad \text{ALL-1PX:POSS}
\]

A free pronoun can be used instead of a possessive suffix:

(48) \( i=\text{hlau} \ \text{sxi} \ \text{kanen} \ \text{lanih} \ i=\text{va-haxal} \ \text{te} \ \text{nas}=\text{telul} \)
\[
3S:R=\text{arrive} \quad \text{ALL} \quad 1PX \quad \text{bush} \quad 3S:R=\text{MULT-one} \quad \text{SUB} \quad 1P:R=\text{go.to.garden}
\]

It happened to us in the bush one time when we were out gardening.

Nominal prepositions encountered in the data are:

- DATive / ALLative \text{sxi}
- LOCative \text{nya}
- COMitative \text{dxi}, and
- ILLative \text{lal}

5.3.2.1 DATive / ALLative \text{sxi}

\text{sxi} is a nominal preposition primarily used to mark NPs which are recipients or destinations, often used in conjunction with the directional verbs \text{me} ‘come’, and \text{van} ‘go’.

(49) \( r=\text{lev-i} \quad i=\text{van} \quad \text{sxi} \quad \text{tata} \quad \text{hok} \)
\[
\text{IMPS:R=give-3S} \quad 3S:R=\text{go} \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{father} \quad 1S:POSS
\]

It (the marriage fee) was given to my father.

(50) \( \text{tuenan} \quad i=\text{van} \quad i=\text{me} \quad \text{sxi} \quad \text{mar} \quad \text{N} \)
\[
\text{one.of.them} \quad 3S:R=\text{go} \quad 3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{man} \quad \text{N}
\]

One of them (the pigs) came to the N people.

\text{sxi} is associated with human complements, including personal destinations or locations:
We saw that J had arrived at our (place) in the evening.

There is an overlap in the functional range of oblique xini and dative / allative sxi.

We saw in §5.3.1 above that xini can also mark destinations. A semi-transitive verb such as, kokon, ‘send messages’, can take a xini complement, or alternatively can take an allative NP following a direction verb:

(52) i=ko-kon xini xɔnɔ renanan xar ni=at Uripiv

He sent word to me while I was on Uripiv.

ni=at Uripiv na ale i=ko-kon i=me sxi-k.

I was on Uripiv now, so he sent word (over) to me.

Xini can also mark allative case. It contrasts with sxi in the proximity of the arguments to each other. Sxi gives a proximal meaning and xini, distal, exemplified below with the verb xriv ‘approach’:

(53) n= xr-xriv

I'm approaching.

(54) n= xr-xriv sxi nain

I'm approaching the house (and am quite close to it.)

(55) n= xr-xriv xini nain

I'm approaching the house (from a long way away).

Sxi also encodes source, with respect to human relationships:
(56) mrɛɛ heni , nɛ sxi W i=neh
niece 2P:POSS ANA.PRO DAT W 3S:R=die

Our niece, one of W’s (children) is dead.

Table 5-4 compares the form and function of sxi with possible cognates in neighbouring languages.

Table 5-4: Comparison of possible cognates of Tirax preposition sxi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Neve‘ei</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposition</td>
<td>sxi</td>
<td>jɔxɛn</td>
<td>ejɔxɛ</td>
<td>saxan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>dative, (personal) allative, (personal) source, nearby</td>
<td>accompaniment, (personal) dative, (personal) allative, (personal) source, nearby</td>
<td>(personal) spatial</td>
<td>(personal) allative, (personal) source, beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-class</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.2 Locative nŋa

We saw in §3.2.3, that locative nouns and place names do not require a preposition when functioning as locative complements or adjuncts. Other NPs functioning as locations are marked with the locative marker nŋa. The locative phrase can be an adjunct to a VP, as in (57) below, or modify an NP, as in (58):

(57) “Ø=rub nxariv xar te [i=tedxi nŋa bati-k ]”
IMP:S=hit rat DST REL 3S:R=defecateLOC head-1S:POSS

“Kill that rat who pooed on my head!”

(58) i=ver xini [mrɛ nŋa nvanu ] te de=lixdre nvanu
3S:R=say OBL people LOC village SUB 3S:1=leave village

She told the people in the village that she was going to leave the village.
Nga also introduces locative NP arguments, for verbs such as dis ‘land’ (59), and the locative existential verbs at and tɔx, discussed above in §5.2, and exemplified below:

(59) i=xaxad i=mɛ i=dis nŋa balbal bxɔh
3S:R=fly 3S:R=come 3S:R=land LOC post pig

*It flew over and landed on the pig-post.*

(60) nanɔv a: labuŋ nas=at sar nŋə nen=na nɔdran
yesterday HES night IP:R=sit IMPF LOC house=ASSOC food

*Last night we were sitting in the kitchen,* …

(61) nevin i=tɔx nŋa male=nan
bullet 3S:R=be LOC leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

*A bullet was in its leg.*

Nga can also mark sources, exemplified below, with the phrase *me nŋa* ‘come from’:

(62) W i=mɛ [ nŋa naxnel T ] [ nŋa nven N ]
W 3S:R=come LOC house T LOC village Navab

*W comes from the T house of the N tribe.*

Nga can be used to encode temporal NPs, in the sense of a location in time:

(63) M i=ak nŋa 1969
M 3S:R=be.born LOC 1969

*M was born in 1969.*

Although most verbs use *xini* to add oblique arguments that are not locations or sources, *nŋa* is also sometimes used for this purpose. In the example below, the intransitive verb vla ‘go (away)’ takes an oblique argument marked by *nŋa*, giving the mode of transport:

(64) mlakel nɛ dxi tate han r=vla nŋa malvat haxal
young.man DEF COM father 3S:POSS 3D:R=go LOC car INDEF

*The young man and his father went in a car.*
We saw above in §5.3.2.1 that *sxi* can also introduce a location, as in (51) above, repeated below, suggesting that there is an overlap in the functional range of *sxi* and *nŋa*. However *nŋa* encodes inanimate locations, whereas *sxi* encodes personal locations:

\[
\text{(65) nas}=\text{leh} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{J} \quad i=\text{hlau sxi-nen} \quad \text{labuŋ}
\]

We saw that J had arrived at our (place) in the evening

Inanimate destinations are marked with *nŋa*:

\[
\text{(66) xain} \quad i=\text{van nŋa (/* sxi)} \quad \text{mrevi-n}
\]

As for him, he went to bed.

Table 5-5 compares the form and function of *nŋa* with possible cognates in neighbouring languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Neve‘ei</th>
<th>Neve‘ei</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposition</td>
<td><em>nŋa</em></td>
<td><em>ra</em></td>
<td><em>ereye ~ reye</em></td>
<td><em>len</em></td>
<td><em>ran</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>(non-personal) locative</td>
<td>(non-personal) spatial</td>
<td>(non-personal) locative, in(side), temporal</td>
<td>(non-personal) locative, temporal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-class</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>uninflected</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 The Neve‘ei locative marker *len* may actually be related to a possible former Tirax locative marker, *l(i)*, which has been reanalysed to become part of the locative noun, as discussed in §3.2.3. Neve‘ei *len* is also used to mean ‘in(side)’ and so may also be cognate to Tirax *lal* ‘in(side)’ (§5.3.2.4).

5 Both *len* and *ran* are also temporal markers in Neve‘ei and therefore may also be cognate with Tirax *ren* (§5.3.3.1).
5.3.2.3 Comitative dxi

Dxi typically functions as a preposition, marking comitative NPs, as in the examples below:

(67) \( \text{nevix=nan \ i=\text{l}ixd\text{r} \ n\text{v}a\text{n}u \ dxi \ nta\text{ŋ} \ i=\text{ru}} \)

\( \text{tomorrow=ASSOC.3S:POSS \ 3S:R=leave \ village \ COM \ basket \ 3S:R=two} \)

*The next day she left the village with the two baskets.*

(68) \( \text{vivni-n\text{en} \ i=\text{ŋar} \ dxi-n\text{en}} \)

\( \text{sister-1PX:POSS \ 3S:R=cry \ COM-1PX:POSS} \)

*Our sister mourned with us.*

Dxi is also used to introduce interlocutors for verbs of locution:

(69) \( \text{R \ i=\text{drar} \ b\text{o} \ dxi \ tate \ h\text{an} \ dxi \ n\text{unu} \ h\text{an}} \)

\( \text{R \ 3S:R=chat \ DIM \ COM \ father \ 3S:POSS \ COM \ mother \ 3S:POSS} \)

*R chatted a little with her father and her mother.*

We saw in §3.7 that dxi is optionally used to link NPs in co-ordinate and inclusory constructions:

(70) \( \text{kn\text{en} \ (dxi) \ texu-m \ n\text{ar}=\text{latlat} \ s\text{ar} \ x\text{ini}} \)

\( \text{1PX \ COM \ bro.in.law-2S:POSS \ 1D:R=argue \ IMPF \ OBL:3S} \)

*Me and your brother-in-law were having a small dispute about it.*

Dxi can also optionally be used to link PPs, though these constructions are not frequently encountered. The following is part of the Tirax translation of my ‘plain language statement’ to the community:

(71) \( \text{kaset \ xner \ des=t\text{ax} \ d\text{rul} \ [n\text{ja \ kaljoral} \ s\text{enta} \ V\text{ila} ]} \)

\( \text{cassette(B) \ P \ 3P:R=be.located \ all \ LOC \ cultural(B) \ centre(B) \ Vila} \)

*The cassettes will be kept at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Vila*
**dxi** [ nga naut haxal Australia ]

and at a place in Australia.

One copy will be kept with you here at M.

Table 5-6 compares the form and function of *dxi* with possible cognates in neighbouring languages. The forms of the suggested cognates are less similar to the Tirax word, compared with other examples of possible cognates for other prepositions. It is also possible that Tirax *dxi* is related to Tirax *sxi*, and that they are both related to *xini*. In Naman, for example, the cognate *bɔtev* is generally followed by the cognate of *xini*, xɔn:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Neve'ei</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preposition</td>
<td><em>dxi</em></td>
<td><em>bɔtev</em> (<em>xɔn</em>)</td>
<td>*(e)duen ~ <em>(e)duon</em></td>
<td><em>bitif(en)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>comitative, co-ordinating NPs</td>
<td>comitative, co-ordinating NPs</td>
<td>comitative, instrumental</td>
<td>comitative, instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-class</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>verbal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.4 **ILLative lal**

*Lal* marks illative case, that is ‘motion into’, as in the example below:

(72) s=serex marbih ɲɛ i=an lal ntah

Others throw the boy into the sea.

More commonly, *lal* functions as a locative preposition meaning ‘in, inside’:
Unlike the general locative marker nja, lal can form PPs with locative nouns:

(74) nŋɛ s=daŋ lal nani
  ANA.PRO 3P:R=work in plantation

Some (of them) work on the plantation.

Lal has an inalienable noun counterpart lalen ‘his/her/its insides’, which is used to form phrases expressing emotion:

(75) lalɛ-k i=druŋ
  inside-1S:POSS 3S:R=anger

I’m angry.

Ref: Tape 04

Lal is likely to be cognate with the Tape illative preposition elel(venu), and the V’ənən Taut locative / illative marker al.

5.3.3 Uninflected prepositions

There are six uninflected prepositions attested in the corpus, the temporal preposition ren, the cause preposition here, and locative prepositions nelve ‘underneath’, talxa ‘over’, selxa ‘beside’ and sher ‘adjacent’. Both ren and here take NP complements, as well as clause complements. When taking clause complements, both ren and here can form complex morphemes with the subordinate marker te.

5.3.3.1 TIME ren

Ren is used exclusively to introduce temporal NPs. The resultant prepositional phrase is an adjunct, and is typically encountered in clause-initial or clause-final position.

(76) ren Mande labuŋ
  TIME Monday-B night

On Monday evening
at eight or nine pm, ...

(77) M xain  i=lev    vinadr  han  ren  1980
M  3S  3S:R=take  woman  3S:POSS  time  1980

M himself took a wife in 1980.

Ren combines with general subordinate clause marker, te, to form a discourse marker which introduces temporal clauses:

(78)  ve  R  xain  ren-te  i=ak  i=me  ...
    but  R  3S  time-SUB  3S:R=be.born  3S:R=come

but when R was born ...

Ren is encountered in the complex discourse markers rente ‘meanwhile’, discussed below in §6.3.4.1, and the expression renana(n), with the associative marker na. This expression appears to be lexicalised, and is glossed ‘at the time’:

(79) renana  navil  April  nas=todranep-i
        at.the.time  moon  April(B)  1P:R=begin-3S

During the month of April we begin it.

Renana can also function as a conjunction encoding clauses, typically with the subordinate marker te:

(80) nanov  renana  te  J  i=hlau
    yesterday  at.the.time  SUB  J  3S:R=arrive

Yesterday when J arrived, ...

Tirax ren has an apparent cognate, ran and / or len, in Neve‘ei, both of which function as locative and temporal markers.

5.3.3.2 CAUSE here
The Tirax preposition here encodes NPs which are causes:
She said “Uncle! I’ve come here.”

I’ve had to come because of a child.”

For verbs of locution, here can mark the reason or topic for discussion:

They asked about her illness that she had caught.

“What illness do you have?” (Lit: Your illness is what illness?)

Here is likely to be cognate with V’enen  Taut sena / sana ‘because of’.6

5.3.3.3 ‘Uninflecting locative prepositions
There are several more prepositions attested in the data, including nelve, ‘underneath’ and talxa ‘over, other side’, which give specific information about relative location.

Perhaps because of their higher specificity they are far less frequently encountered than the general locative marker nga.

‘Underneath’ nelve

Nelve is the most frequently encountered of the uninflecting locative prepositions.7 It is exemplified below:

---

6 POc*/s/ is reflected as /h/ in Tirax and there are other /h/ to /s/ correspondences between Tirax and neighbouring languages.

7 Nelve is possibly a cognate of Tape’s lapan, ‘underneath’, as there appears to be a p - v correspondence between the Tape and Tirax sound systems in certain environments. The Tape cognate for Tirax lev ‘take, give’, for example, is lep. Ne- may be a reflex of the POc article, suggesting the
Meanwhile her mother was sweeping underneath the tropical almond tree.

‘Over’ talxa

Talxa is locative preposition, meaning ‘over’:

(84) nmat i=at talxa niar
snake 3S:R=be.located over fence

The snake is (lying) over the fence.

R & M-R

(85) ntebih i=hid talxa rope
child 3S:R=jump over rope

The child jumped over the rope.

R & M-R

(86) ntebih i=tur talxa rope
child 3S:R=stand over rope

The child stood over the rope (ie. straddling it).

R & M-R

Talxa is likely to be related to the Tirax verb lxa ‘go across’.

‘Beside’ selxe

Selxe is also likely to be related to lxa ‘go across’ and perhaps a former locative preposition si, mentioned above in §3.2.2. Selxe is synonymous with the locative noun sɔsɔ ‘side’, and means ‘on the side of’:

(87) nxariv i=tɔ ntaŋ-hne=na nxariv-deknali selxe nhal
cat 3S:R=put basket-faeces ASSOC rat on.side.of road

Cats leave the entrails of rats on the side of the road (ie. for ants to eat)

R & M-R 18B-05 notes

‘Next to’ vher

Vher encodes NPs which are adjacent to each other, either stationary or moving:

expression may have once been a noun, similar to relational nouns such as salin ‘outside’. It is analysed as a preposition here because it is almost always encountered with a nominal complement.
Now she went and stood next to the main house-post like that.

I am walking beside you.

5.4 Interjections

The main interjections attested so far for Tirax are the expressions for ‘yes’ and ‘no’, and expressions to show surprise, frustration, and to attract attention. Each of these express a state of mind or emotion, and do not have a syntactic relationship to the surrounding words.

5.4.1 ‘Yes’ and ‘no’: a’a’ and mhm’

The Tirax words for ‘yes’ and ‘no’, a’a’ and mhm’ respectively, contain the only glottal stops in the Tirax lexicon. They are illustrated below, with the following elicited sentences. Bislama, like French, has three words to signal agreement or contradiction, yes, no and si, which is an affirmative response, in contradiction to a negative question. The Bislama translations are also given to contrast the responses to the affirmative and negative sentences in the three languages.

A yes-no question can elicit a’a’, for ‘yes’, and mhm’ for no.

Are you coming tomorrow?

Yes, I’m coming tomorrow.
No, bae mi no kam tumoro.  
*No, I'm not coming tomorrow.*

The negative existential verb *hge*, is also often used for ‘no’:

(93) \(\text{i=hge} \) nah=me-te nevix  
\(3S:\text{R} \Rightarrow \text{not.be} \) 1S:NEG=come-NEG tomorrow  

No, bae mi no kam tumoro.  
*No, I'm not coming tomorrow.*

For a negative yes-no question, *mhmm’ and ihge*, ‘no’, contradict the negative assertion, and *a’a’, ‘yes’, agrees with the negative assertion. English tends to rely on intonation to disambiguate these meanings, as indicated with punctuation on the translations below:

(94) nevix ba=me-te?  
tomorrow 2S:1=come-NEG  

Se bae yu no kam tumoro?  
*You’re not coming tomorrow?*

(95) mhmm’ da=me nevix  
no 1S:1=come tomorrow  

Si, mi kam tumoro.  
*No - I'm coming tomorrow.*

(96) a’a’ nah=me-te nevix  
yes 1S:NEG=come-NEG tomorrow  

Yes, mi no kam tumoro.  
*No. I'm not coming tomorrow.*

The interjections *a’a* and *mhmm’* have many variants, some listed in table 5-7. The main distinguishing feature between *a’a* and *mhmm’* through their various incarnations is the intonation: rising tone followed by falling tone for ‘yes’, falling tone followed by rising tone for ‘no’ – the opposite of English intonation for those meanings.
Table 5-7: Phonetic variants for interjections *a’a’* and *mhm’*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orthography</th>
<th><em>a’a’</em></th>
<th><em>mhm’</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a/.a/</td>
<td>m.hm/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e/.e/</td>
<td>/m.hm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5-8: Tirax greetings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nevihxa</th>
<th>morning</th>
<th>inam nevihxa!</th>
<th>‘Good morning!’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lelna</td>
<td>midday (11am-1pm)</td>
<td>inam lelna!</td>
<td>‘Good day!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revrev</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
<td>inam revrev!</td>
<td>‘Good afternoon!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labug</td>
<td>evening, night</td>
<td>inam labug!</td>
<td>‘Good evening!’ / ‘Good night!’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.2 Greetings

*Inam*! ‘hello, good-bye’, is the typical way of greeting someone, or taking leave. The subject marker in *inam* usually carries the stress, suggesting it may be in the process of being reanalysed as part of the word. Table 5-8 shows the greetings that are appropriate for different times of the day.

5.4.3 Question tags

There are several clause-final interjections, including *te*, *de*, *e* and *a*. *Te* and *de* tend to be associated with clauses with a high emotional force:

(97) “ha n:x=na xan x=vnaxε sar nekir de”
    ah 2S=ASSOC PRX 2S:R=steal IMPF 1PI INTJ

“Aha! It’s you that has been stealing from us!”

*A* and *e* can also follow a clause, functioning as a tag to elicit feedback or compliance:
“da=van bo xini ve ba=at weri e?”
1S:1=go DIM OBL:3S but 2S:1=be.located this.place eh

“I will just go (down) to it (the ant). But you’re going to stay there, ok!?"

O is also encountered clause-finally functioning as a question tag:

“hena xan i=kul xar o”
who PRX 3S:R=sing DST Q

“Who is it singing there?”

5.4.4 Interjections to attract attention
A typical way of attracting attention in Tirax, the equivalent of English ‘psst’, is expressed as [tsç], which is transcribed here as tsch:

“tsch”
IMPS:R=say psst

Someone went “Psst!”

Perhaps the most frequently heard interjection, after a’a’ and mhm’, is the expression e, and its variant he, ‘hey’, used to alert someone to the speaker or to the speaker’s intention:

“e taweh lxen de=me vehxɛ da=wes nox na”
3S:R=say hey another back 3S:1=come otherwise 1S:1=eat 2S now

He said “Hey! Throw down another or I’m going to eat you!”

5.4.5 Interjections expressing emotion
Tirax has a range of interjections for expressing emotion, given in table 5-9.8

---

8 Being pure expressions of emotion, it is interesting that some of the Tirax interjections, such as o and a, are similar to their English counterparts. This may be due to the influence of English via Bislama. A cross-linguistic survey of interjections may be useful in determining whether there is a universal correlation between vowel sound and emotional state.
Table 5-9: Tirax interjections expressing emotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>surprise or fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ha</td>
<td>dawning of a (happy) revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hai</td>
<td>frustration or anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>sudden fright</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following example shows o used to express fear:

(102) tnah i=narxat i=va “ o ”
      devil 3S:R=get up 3S:R=say oh

*The devil looked up suddenly and said “Oh!”*

“xɔnɔ n=mtaxit xini morti tɛ i=net ia”
1S 1S:R=be afraid OBL person SUB 3S:R=black there(B)

*“Me, I'm afraid of the dark-skinned man.”*

The exclamation a is used in Tirax to express happiness, as in the acknowledgment of a happy revelation given in the example below:

(103) na marbih ɲɛ i=va “ a! xain bɔ xan n=ve-ve da=ŋɔdrɔ-i!”
      now child DEF 3S:R=say ah 3S DIM this 1S:R=DUP-want 1S:1s=know-3s

*Now the boy said (to himself) “Ah! That is precisely what I wanted to know!”*

Interjections are extra-clausal, either preceding or following the clause they relate to. They are also able to stand alone, functioning as exclamations. The exceptions are question tags, such as te and de, which are only encountered clause-finally.

5.5 Imperative sentences

This section looks at imperative and hortative constructions. Hortative constructions are used to urge the addressee(s) to perform an action with the speaker. Imperatives are used to order the addressee(s) to perform an action without the speaker.
Like some other Vanuatu languages, such as Naman (Crowley 2006:99-100), Tirax does not have a separate paradigm for imperative and hortative modes, irrealis markers are used for those functions instead. In the case of imperatives, there is also a set of forms with realis markers, giving an informal form of imperative. The series with irrealis proclitics, the ‘imperative II’ series, is associated with more polite or formal speech, compared with imperative I, which is associated with more informal or forceful speech. Table 5-10 summarises the forms encountered in imperative and hortative constructions. The free pronouns which are permitted to co-occur are given in brackets.

**Table 5-10: Subject-mood markers for imperative and hortative constructions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>DUAL</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
<th>Subject markers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperative I</td>
<td>Ø=tur!</td>
<td>(keni) xar=tur!</td>
<td>(keni) xas=tur!</td>
<td>2nd person realis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative II</td>
<td>(nɔx) ba=tur!</td>
<td>(keni) bar=tur!</td>
<td>(keni) bas=tur!</td>
<td>2nd person irrealis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hortative I</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>(nekidr) bar=tur!</td>
<td>(nekir) bas=tur!</td>
<td>2nd person irrealis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hortative II</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>(nekidr) dar=tur</td>
<td>(nekir) das=tur</td>
<td>1st person irrealis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5.1 Imperatives

Unlike in Naman, the Tirax imperative is not always indicated with irrealis marking. The most frequently encountered imperative for singular subjects are zero marked imperatives:

\[
\text{(104) marbih } \eta \text{ i=va } \text{ “ ale } \text{ Ø=van”}
\]

The boy said, “Ok, you go!”

\[
\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-002-A.wav \textbackslash as 221.519 \textbackslash ae 224.763}
\]

The irrealis subject marker is used for a more formal imperative construction, the phonological length iconically reflecting social distance (cf. Haiman: 1983:800).

\[
\text{(105) i=va } \text{ “ e”}
\]

He (the devil) said “Hey!”
A vocative noun or free pronoun can also occur in imperative constructions, preceding the VP, as for basic declarative sentences:

(106) i=va " ale "
3S:R=say so

He (the devil) said, “Okay!”

“ nɔx ba=delex nadxan , ba=tintin-i ”
2S 2S:1=light fire 2S:1=roast-3

“You light a fire and roast them.”

For dual and plural addressees, irrealis marking is generally used:

(107) i=va “ bar=trav de=bih , da=an da=tev-i ”
3S:R=say 2D:1=wait 3S:1=small 1S:1=go 1S:1=call-3S

She (the devil’s wife) said “You two wait a bit, I’ll go and call him.”

However realis subject markers are also encountered in imperative constructions. Like the zero form for singular subjects, realis imperatives for dual and plural subjects have a more informal or forceful tone. The realis mood could also be regarded as iconic, reflecting the social proximity of the addressee, compared with irrealis mood, associated with hypothetical or unreal events, reflecting social distance. The following is said by a boy to his older brothers, urging them to kill a devil that was going to eat him:

(108) taem i=sbul i=me litan me i=v-va
when(B) 3S:R=climb.down 3S:R=come down hither 3S:R=DUP-say

When he climbed all the way down he said:

“ ale xas=rub-i ”
ok 2P:R=hit-3S

“Ok. Go get him!”
The particle *lało* ‘firstly’, is often used to soften imperatives, similarly to the Bislama word *festaem*. It is only encountered in the corpus with the more polite, type II imperatives. The example below is a request from my assistant to his grandmother:

(109) “*ba=ver lobɔ tuxtxunmal=na Vnir*”

2S:1=say firstly story=ASSOC Vnir

“Please tell the story of Vnir”

Negative imperatives are formed with the imperative II form and negative marker:

(110) “*keni bar=at nelŋ, bar=vin-vin vakal mlaxɛs* ”

2p 2D:1=be.located today 2D:1=DUP-shoot lizard green

“You two stay here today and hunt green lizards.”

“*be bar=an-te nŋa nvat=na xori* ”

but(B) 2D:1=go-NEG LOC stone=ASSOC LOC:DX2

“But don’t go near that rock there.”

5.5.2 Hortatives

The hortative is used to urge the addressee(s) to join the speaker in some action. The subject markers used in Tirax hortatives are the same as for imperative II. That is, the hortative construction uses second person irrealis subject markers to express the meaning of first person inclusive:

(111) marbih orgetown i=v-va “*bar=vrake bɔ* ”

child DEF 3S:R=DUP-say 2D:1=carry.in.hand DIM

*The boy said “Let’s just carry them in our hands.”*

ale tnah i=vrake.overlay nŋa

so devil 3S:R=carry.in.hand PART

*So the devil carried some,*

ale xain i=vrake.overlay nŋa

then 3s 3S:R=carry.in.hand PART

*and the boy carried some.*
The first person inclusive form of free pronoun is often used in conjunction with the second person subject marker to distinguish the hortative from an imperative. The hortative can co-occur both with informal and formal imperatives:

(112) \[ \text{ale } i=v\text{-va} \quad \text{O}=\text{me} ! \quad \text{nekir } \text{bar}=\text{vla} ! \]  
And he (the boy) said “Come (here), and you and I will go / let’s go!”  
\(\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav} \ \text{as 1952.141} \ \text{ae 1954.535}\)

(113) \[ \text{ba}=\text{me} \quad \text{nekir} \ \text{bar}=\text{vla} \]
“Come and you and I will go away.”  
\(\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav} \ \text{as 1963.207} \ \text{ae 1967.038}\)

The example below shows the switch from a hortative meaning, with second person dual subject marker, to irrealis, with first person dual:

(114) \[ \text{bar}=\text{van } \text{na} \quad \text{lain,} \]
“Now we will go home,”  
\(\text{aud AB1-018-B.wav} \ \text{as 1380.017} \ \text{ae 1386.309}\)

First person irrealis can be used for a hortative meaning, although there are few instances of this in the corpus:

\[^{9}\text{Note, the singular realis form is used for the existential } \text{tax} \text{ with generic subject. The singular irrealis is also acceptable here, } \text{det} \text{tax}, \text{as well as the plural forms } s \text{tax} \text{ and } \text{det} \text{tax} \text{ for a generic plural interpretation (M & R).}\]
He (the boy) said “Hey! We’ll stop here!”

“What kind of man are you afraid of?”

5.6 Interrogative sentences

Interrogative sentences are formed in Tirax with an interrogative pronoun standing in for the missing information. Questions have a question intonation contour, which is slightly higher and rising compared with that of declaratives. The syntax is otherwise the same as for declarative sentences:

“What are you looking for?” (Lit: You are searching for what?)

Table 5-11 shows the range of interrogative pronouns in Tirax.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hena</td>
<td>who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haxa / havxa</td>
<td>what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>here ha(v)xa</td>
<td>why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dla ha(v)xa</td>
<td>how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hveliŋ</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(anx)ade</td>
<td>where</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6.1 *Hena* who

_Hena_ is the interrogative pronoun used in Tirax when the missing information sought refers to a person:

(117) i=me-mex-i i=va-va “e! **hena** lalvanu?”

3S:R=DUP-ask-3S 3S:R=DUP-say hey who inside

*(The devil) asked him, he said: “Hey! Who’s there?”*

When asking a person their name, _hena_ is used rather than _haxa_ ‘what’:

(118) nahxa-m i=ve hena

name-2S:POSS 3S:R=COP who

*What is your name?*

_Hena_ can stand in for the full range of grammatical functions applicable to human referents, including that of possessor:

(119) nadrɛ  **hena**

blood who

*Whose blood?*

5.6.2 *Haxa* what

The interrogative pronoun _haxa_, ‘what’, is the most frequently encountered of the Tirax interrogative pronouns. It can stand in for the full range of grammatical functions, such as subject, as in (120) below, object, and object of a preposition, as seen above in (116):

(120) “nue hɔk xan! **haxa** i=ve-i i=tab ?”

water 1S:POSS PRX what 3S:R=CAUS-3S 3S:R=empty

“My dam! What has made it empty / emptied it?!”

_Haxa_ takes a relative clause to form an indirect question. In the example below, _haxa_ is the direct object of the relative clause verb, and is represented in the relative clause by the resumptive pronoun –i:
(121) “bas=at na , bas=drarg xini haxa te mleun de=ver-i”
2P:1=be now 2P:1=listen OBL what REL chief 3S:1=say-3s

“Let’s wait now and listen to what the chief says to her.”

Related to haxa is the interrogative havxa, which functions as a NP modifier:10

(122) “rɔsan ham i=ve rɔsan havxa?”
illness 2S:POSS 3S:=COP illness what

“What illness do you have?” (Lit: Your illness is what illness?)

The interrogative adnominal modifier can precede the head noun, in which case it appears as hav:

(123) “kulan xar de=me , de=sre hav nhal?”
singing DST 3S:1=come 3S:1=follow which road

“That singing that is coming, which road will it take?”

Havxa is likely to have descended from the combination of two morphemes hav and some form of xa, which is likely to be related to the demonstrative series. There is an indefinite pronoun, havxan, which appears to be transparently derived from hav and the proximal demonstrative, xan.

(124) nasix xair dxi … havxan ? … nxariv - nxariv-deknali
kingfisher 3P COM something cat rat

A kingfisher and a ... what?... ( - cat) - rat.

H(a)xa forms interrogative phrases with other words, such as idla-hxa ‘how’, discussed in §6.5.5.1, and here hxa ‘why’, exemplified below:

10 These two words may have originally been the one word, havxa, with weakening and deletion of the /β/ in the pronominal form. My language consultant did not make a distinction between havxa and haxa. However, on the basis of distribution: haxa almost always occurring as pronoun and havxa almost always confined to a modifying function, they are analysed as distinct, but related forms.
The causal interrogative here hxa does not require a subordinate clause marker to form indirect questions:

(126) i=ŋɔdrɔ-te na here hxa i=ded-te

Now he didn’t know why she hadn’t given birth.

5.6.3 Hveliŋ when

The Tirax interrogative temporal pronoun is hveliŋ. It elicits information about the time of an event.

(127) “ lɛlɛ ham des=me hveliŋ ?”

“When are your brothers coming back?”

Like other temporal nominals, hveliŋ can occur clause-initially and clause-finally:

(128) “ hveliŋ lex ham de=me ?”

“When is your husband coming?”

(129) “ lex ham de=me hveliŋ ?”

“When is your husband coming?
5.6.4 Adɛ ‘where’ and anxdɛ ‘whereabouts’

There are two locative interrogative pronouns in Tirax, adɛ, ‘where’ and anxdɛ ‘whereabouts’. Adɛ is used to enquire after the origin or destination of a referent which is present:

(130) nate mre ɲɛ s=lehi na s=va
and.then people DEF 3P=R=see-3S now 3P=R=say

And then the people see (them) and they say:

“bas=an Adɛ?”
2P:i=go where

“Where are you all going?”

The locative interrogative pronoun follows the subject NP, reflecting the constituent order for locative clauses:

(131) vinadr adɛ?
woman where.from

Where is (the) woman from?

M & R

(132) vinadr Malakula
woman Malakula

(The) woman is from Malakula.

M & R

Anxdɛ is used to enquire after the whereabouts of a referent:

(133) vinadr anxdɛ?
woman whereabouts

Whereabouts is (the) woman?

M & R

(134) i=at lain
woman 3S=R=be.located LOC.home

(The) woman at home.

M & R

Adɛ can also be used to give the meaning of which one?:
The two words have different but overlapping patterns of distribution. *Anxde* can precede the subject NP, whereas *ade* cannot:

(136) net nesil **anxde**?
child knife where

*Where is the pocket-knife?*

Ref: Tape 04

(137) net nesil **ade**?
child knife where.from

*Where is (the) pocket-knife from?*

M & R

*Ade* can also function as an indefinite locative pronoun, similar to the indefinite pronoun *havxan*, discussed in §5.6.2 above, whereas *anxde* cannot:

(138) **anxde** (/* **ade** ) net nesil?
where child knife

*Where is the pocket-knife?*

Ref: Tape 04

5.7 Thematic variants

We have seen that the basic constituent order in Tirax is SV(O), followed by prepositional complements and clause-level modifiers. Tirax speakers have a variety of strategies available to control the emphasis and flow of information in discourse. Some strategies, such as fronting and topicalisation, give prominence to discourse entities, and other strategies, such as the use of impersonal constructions, can de-
emphasise aspects of information in their discourse. These three frequently
encountered thematic variants are discussed below.

5.7.1 Fronting
One way of giving a constituent pragmatic prominence is to place it at the front of a
clause, in extra-clausal position. In the following example, the object of rub ‘kill’ is
fronted:

\[(140) s=rub-din-i \quad i=nev \quad 3P:R=hit-dead-3S \quad 3S:R=finish \]

\[\text{They killed him(but) after that}\]

\[\text{vinadr,} \quad s=rub \quad \text{temul} \]

\[\text{woman} \quad 3P:R=hit \quad \text{no more}\]

\[\text{the woman, they could no longer kill}\]

\[\text{ta xain} \quad i=haxra \quad xini \quad \text{narit} \]

\[\text{SUB} \quad 3S \quad 3S:R=knot \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{rope}\]

\[\text{because she had knotted a rope, ...}\]

A fronted constituent is typically prosodically extra-clausal, whereas a non-fronted
subject is prosodically part of the clause. Therefore intonation distinguishes a non-
fronted subject from a fronted subject NP. In the example below, marbih \(\eta\), ‘the
boy’, is mentioned twice in two clauses. The first is a basic clause, and the full NP
marbih \(\eta\) is used to distinguished the referent from ‘the devil’, with whom the boy is
having a dialogue. In the second clause, marbih \(\eta\) is fronted. The intonation pattern
for the two NPs is different, the first has a flat intonation, and the second has a rising
intonation, signalling extra-clausal position:

\[(141) \text{marbih} \ \eta \ \ i=va \ \ “\ ale \ \ O=van ” \]

\[\text{The boy said, “Ok, you go!”}\]

\[\text{ve marbih} \ \eta \]

\[\text{but child DEF}\]

\[\text{But the boy,}\]
A clause-initial temporal constituent will intervene between a fronted NP and VP. This can further disambiguate fronted subjects from clause-internal ones. The examples below show respectively a temporal adverbial, temporal interrogative and discourse marker, *na*, intervening between the fronted NP and VP:

\[(142)\text{ knen, nevix das=an Norsup} \]
\[1\text{PX tomorrow 1P:I=go Norsup} \]

*As for us, tomorrow we will go to Norsup.*

\[(143)\text{ “ lex ham, hveliŋ de=me? ”} \]
\[2\text{S:POSS when 3S:I=come} \]

*“Your husband, when is he coming?”*

Particles and the discourse marker *na* can follow fronted constituents:

\[(144)\text{ “ knen na, nas=txah skul xar ”} \]
\[1\text{PX now 1P:I=open school(B) DST} \]

*“We now, we opened that school.” (ie. we were the first students).*

A fronted object has a resumptive pronoun in the matrix clause, similar to English left-dislocation constructions:

\[(145)\text{ mrre, s=hloxi i=me salin} \]
\[3\text{P:R=carry-3S 3S:I=come outside} \]

*Our niece, they carried her outside.*
Me, my mother gave birth to me

in the month of June.

Fronted possessor NPs, are represented by a possessive marker in the matrix clause:

The boy, his father said to

(147) mlakel ɲɛ, tate han i=ヴɛr xini

The boy, his father said to

(148) “here ɲɛ, naxda-k i=ヴɛx ”

“Because as for me, I have wings."

Other constituents can also be fronted, such as PPs and adverbial nouns. Fronted PPs and adjuncts, such as locative adverbials, do not have a resumptive marker in the matrix clause:

(149) mrɛ i=mal lain

There are many people at home.

(150) lain, mrɛ i=mal

At home there are many people.

(151) nŋa ledled ɲɛ, naur i=ヴɛx

In that lake there are crayfish.
A referent can be singled out for fronting from a group. In this case, the resumptive pronoun does not agree in number with the fronted NP, but is plural as it is part of an inclusory construction:

(152) J, xair dxı E r=leh xənɔ r=ver xini xənɔ ...

   J, her and E saw me and said to me ...

5.7.2 Topicalisation

Tirax has another type of construction with fronted NPs, but in which the fronted NP has no grammatical function in the clause, and the clause can be seen a comment relating to the fronted NP. In the example below, xair drul, referring to all the devils, is fronted, and has no grammatical role in the sentence, since va, ‘say’ does not subcategorise for an indirect object:

(153) xair drul i=va “te bas=hlox vor nte de=mal”

   3p all 3s:r=say SUB 2p:i=carry EMPH thing 3s:i=many

   (To) all of them he said, “We have to bring lots of weapons!”

This construction is called here top­icalisation, following Crowley (2006a), although there is no obvious process deriving this construction in Tirax, so topic-comment construction might be a more appropriate term. Crowley describes a similar phenomenon in Naman discourse, and observes that this kind of construction is not described in the grammars of other Vanuatu languages (Crowley 2006a:206). However topicalisation is quite frequently encountered in Tirax discourse. In the following example, two sentences in a row have topicalised NPs. The first, kelkel ‘exchange’, is literally what the following sentence is about, although there is no grammatical role for kelkel in the sentence. In the second sentence, xənɔ functions as a topic, and again there is no obvious place for it in the clause it precedes:

(154) kelkel / renanan xar s=vol xənɔ

   swap at.the.time DST 3p:r=buy 1s

   With the exchange, when they paid for me,
the exchange was just for ... ten pounds.

Me, they gave ten pounds, (ie. to exchange for me as a bride price)

ah ... it was given to ... it was given to my father.

5.7.3 Impersonal constructions

As is common in Oceanic languages, there is no passive in Tirax. To de-emphasise an agent and put the focus on a patient or process, an impersonal subject marker can be used, functioning analogously to the Bislama impersonal construction with oli ‘they’.

A subject NP cannot co-occur with an impersonal marker. The Tirax impersonal marker is isomorphic with the third person dual subject marker:

Mamag em i wan smol tri we oli stap yusum lif blo em blo wasem lo wan pikini Mamag is the plant that is used / that one uses for washing children

each we em i ten des blo em.

during their ten day ceremony.

In the above example the impersonal pronoun does not refer to a specific person, and the impersonal construction refers to a generic event. Its meaning is close to an English passive.

The impersonal construction is also used to refer to a specific person, whose identity is not known or obscure. In the example below, the object is also fronted.
The next day he returned to see that

The undergrowth, someone had already finished slashing (it).

Note that the fronted object, in combination with the impersonal construction, appears similar in configuration to a passive construction; an agent is suppressed and the object appears in subject position. The only difference between this impersonal with fronted object and a true passive is that the subject marker does not agree with the fronted constituent. Although there is no passive in Tirax, it is possible that a passive could develop, if a construction such as the one above is reanalysed as a simple clause, whereby the fronted object is taken to be the subject of the clause.
6 Complex sentences

The main ways that clauses can combine to form sentences in Tirax are by coordination (§6.2), subordination (§6.3), complementation (§6.4), clause-juxtaposition, clause-chaining and core-layer serialisation (§6.5). These types of complex clauses are compared and contrasted in the following section.

6.1 Range of intra-sentence linkages

The range of intra-sentence linkages that are encountered in Tirax are summarised in table 6-1. For the sake of comparison, the table includes the single-clause constructions with nuclear adverbs and nuclear serial verbs, which are discussed in §4.5.

**Table 6-1: Range of intra-sentence linkages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>V2 can be fully-inflecting verb</th>
<th>Verbal inflection on non-initial verb(s)</th>
<th>Prosodic cues to clause boundaries</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic markers of clause boundaries</th>
<th>Constituents are syntactically of equal status¹</th>
<th>Capable of having non-shared arguments</th>
<th>Unrestricted range of VPs which can participate as V2s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordination</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>fully inflecting</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordination</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>fully inflecting</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementation</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>fully inflecting</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause-</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>fully inflecting</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juxtaposition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause-</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>fully inflecting</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core-layer SVCs</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>invariable 3s subject marker</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVCs</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear SVCs</td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear adverbs</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The constituents of core-layer SVCs in Tirax are analysed as having unequal status following Bril’s (2007) analysis for analogous constructions in other Oceanic languages. By this analysis, the constituents of nuclear SVCs may have unequal status, depending on whether the arguments of the participating verbs are shared or fused. See §4.5 for a brief discussion.
The following section describes and exemplifies the various complex constructions encountered in Tirax.

### 6.2 Coordination

Coordination refers to the morphosyntactic linking of clauses of equal syntactic status. Clauses can be coordinated in Tirax using either a coordinating conjunction \( \text{ve} \), ‘and, but’, or a coordinating disjunction \( \text{hxa} \), ‘or’. The range of co-ordinating conjunctions encountered in Tirax is given in table 6-2.

**Table 6-2: Range of co-ordinating conjunctions in Tirax**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Tirax conjunction</th>
<th>English translation</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinating conjunction</td>
<td>( \text{ve} )</td>
<td>‘and, but’</td>
<td>Appears to co-ordinate clauses encoding non-contradictory propositions as well as those encoding contradictory ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinating conjunction</td>
<td>( \text{be} )</td>
<td>‘and, but’</td>
<td>Bislama borrowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinating disjunction</td>
<td>( \text{hxa} )</td>
<td>‘or’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlative</td>
<td>( \text{we} )</td>
<td>‘so’</td>
<td>Bislama borrowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlative</td>
<td>( \text{vov} \ldots \text{txun} )</td>
<td>DURative … intensifier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitative</td>
<td>( \text{dxi} )</td>
<td>‘and’</td>
<td>Co-ordinates stative one-place predicates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.2.1 \( \text{ve} \) ‘and, but’

\( \text{ve} \) is translated into Bislama as \( \text{be} \) ‘ but’. It can connect clauses which contain somehow contrary propositions, such as in the example below, which describes the death of a small girl:

\[(1)\quad \text{i=nev} \quad \text{i=van} \quad \text{lxen te de=netur} \]

\[
\text{3S:S=finish} \quad \text{3S:S=go back SUB} \quad \text{3S:I=sleep} \\
\]

*After that she went back to go to sleep*

\"aud AB1-001-A.wav \as 1489.442 \ae 1492.25
but she just gasped twice and then her breathing stopped.

The distribution of \( \text{ve} \) is wider than English ‘but’, and includes cases which translate to English ‘and’. The linked clause can even appear to be the result of a previous clause, as in the example below, where the final clause proposition is a result of the first line of dialogue:

(2) "\( \text{ale} \ \text{xas}=\text{rub-i} \)"

"Ok, go get him!"

"Since he wanted to knock me out and drag me away."

So he said that,

\[ \text{and they speared the devil dead.} \]
But they were singing as they were going (ie. over the men’s house),

but(B) father 3P:POSS 3S:R=be inside LOC nakamal

but their father was inside the men's house

and he heard them singing outside.

6.2.2 Hxa ‘or’

The co-ordinating disjunction hxa links clauses which describe alternative propositions:

But if that is what you want,

or if that is what you are planning, ...

Hxa can also co-ordinate one-place numeral predicates within a NP:

On Monday evening at eight or nine pm, ...

6.2.3 Other conjunctions

There is another particle, we, which has a restricted distribution, linking VPs and clauses to express superlatives.
(6) a’’a’ n=mtaxit we n=mtaxit
yes 1S:R=be.afraid  so 1S:R=be.afraid

Yes, I was really afraid.

(7) i=ŋŋ i=hat we i=ŋŋ i=hat
3S:R=feel  3S:R=bad  so 3S:R=feel  3S:R=bad

She felt really really bad.

We is a Bislama borrowing. It is far more frequently encountered than the indigenous alternative vɔvɔ ... txun:

(8) i=ŋŋ i=hat vɔ-vɔ i=ŋŋ i=hat txun
3S:R=feel  3S:R=bad  DUP-DUR  3S:R=feel  3S:R=bad  very

She felt really really bad.

The comitative dxi, discussed in §5.3.2.3, can also be used to conjoin stative predicates, though these constructions are more typically juxtaposed:

(9) lidax xar i=nɛt (dxi) i=ladlad
dog DST 3S:R=black  COM  3S:R=be.big

That dog is big and black.

Ref: Tape 04

(10) nas=kɔr txun tɛ  naŋɔv nas=an dax nas=huv
1P:R=be.grateful very SUB yesterday 1P:R=go PERF 1P:R=swim

We are very grateful that yesterday we went swimming.

here-tɛ [ nial i=sɨn ] dxi [nlaŋ i=hɡɛ]
because-SUB sun 3S:R=shine com wind 3S:R=not.be

because the sun was shining and there was no wind.

M & R p245

Dxi cannot be used to co-ordinate other VPs or clauses:
(11) mar xar i=kul (*dxī) i=vla
man DST 3S:R=sing COM 3S:R=go.away

That man sang and went away.

6.3 Subordination

Subordinate clauses are clauses which are somehow dependent on another clause, referred to as the main, or matrix, clause. Tirax subordinate clauses are generally marked by a subordinating conjunction, which precedes the subordinate clause. The kinds of functions encoded by subordinating conjunctions include purpose, condition and reason, as in te; ‘in order to’, veve ‘if’ and here-(te) ‘because’ respectively. For some subordinate clauses, such as purpose and conditional clauses, the mood is always encoded as irrealis, regardless of whether or not the event related by the clause has taken place. The range of conjunctions are given in table 6-3.

Table 6-3: Range of subordinate clauses in Tirax

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Subordinating conjunction</th>
<th>English translation</th>
<th>Obligatory irrealis mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>te</td>
<td>(in order) to</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>here(-te)</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>ivei-te</td>
<td>‘so that’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>rente</td>
<td>‘when’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>vo</td>
<td>‘until’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>ve(ve)</td>
<td>‘if’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>rente veve</td>
<td>‘whenever’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>vehxe</td>
<td>‘otherwise’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adversative</td>
<td>evehxo</td>
<td>‘lest’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.1 Purpose clauses: te

Purpose clauses are marked with the general subordinate marker te, which occurs clause-initially. The purpose clause takes irrealis mood:
(12) mtetuxan n=mɛ  lxen
now 1S:R=come back

Now I'm back again

tɛ da=hbg  nehan  he  mrɛɛ  hɔk
SUB 1S:1=talk.about death POSS nephew 1S:POSS
to talk about the death of my niece.

Irrealis mood is used for subordinate clauses which express actions desired or intended to happen, such as purpose clauses:

(13) nevix=nan  naut  i=ren  nevihxa
tomorrow=ASSOC.3S:POSS place 3S:R=time morning

The next day when morning broke

i=van  i=lev  nerid han  dxi  ntaŋ-vlel  i=hlox-i
3S:R=go  3S:R=take knife 3S:POSS COM basket-hibiscus.rope 3S:R=carry-3S

she went and got her knife and her hibiscus rope bag and carried them

tɛ de=van  lanih
SUB 3S:1=go bush

in order to go into the bush

dɛ=an  de=ri  xini  kaka
3S:1=go  3S:1=look OBL yam

and look for yams

tɛ de=mɛ  te de=rev  ntebih  nɛ  na
SUB 3S:1=come SUB 3S:1=make.into.laplap child DEF now

to make laplap out of the child.
6.3.2 Reason clauses: *here-te* ‘because’

We saw in §5.3.3.2, that *here* is a preposition encoding NP adjuncts relating cause or reason. *Here* typically forms a complex morpheme with *te* to encode subordinate clauses which relate reasons or causes. The following is the mother’s response, when her two little boys tell her they want to go out and avenge the death of their father:

(14) “*n=ŋɔ dungeon*”

1S:R=feel not.wan:1S

“*I do not want (it)*”

“*here-te* xar=bi-bih drɔ”

because-SUB 2D:R=DUP-small true

“*because you are too small.*”

`\aud AB1-020-A.wav` `as 92.514` `ae 97.939`

*Here* has variant *hara*:

(15) “*da=vla na \ = da=van lxen lain*”\…

1S:1=leave now 1S:1=go back home

“I’m leaving now, I’m going back home,”

`\aud ABV1-002-RS.wav` `as 158.687` `ae 160.561`

“*hara-te* nxa-nevir hɔk de=nev na xɔtan*”\…

because-SUB torch 1S:POSS 3S:1=finish now LOC:DX1

“*because my torch is about to go out now.*”

`\aud ABV1-002-RS.wav` `as 160.561` `ae 163.495`

*Here* occasionally marks clauses without *te*, as in the example below, where *here* is followed by *tue*, ‘before’:

(16) *here* [ *tue / … [ mleun i=at i=ḥaxal vor ]* ] /  

because before chief 3S:R=be.located 3S:R=one EMPH

“*because before, the chief lived separately, …*”

`\aud AB1-020-A.wav` `as 1959.09` `ae 1961.969`
6.3.3 Result clauses: *ivei te* ‘so that’
The causative *ve*, discussed below in §6.4.4.1, is encountered in the expression *ivei te*, which functions as a conjunction. The expression is translated into Bislama with *i me kem se*, ‘so that, such that’. The −*i* suffix in these constructions is analysed as a D(ifferent) S(ubject) marker, as discussed in §6.4.3.

(17) here-te nηe=nan ri neliŋ i=ve tete-tax=nar
because-SUB ANA.PRO=ASSOC:3POSS FOC maybe 3S:R=COP child-last=ASSOC:3P.POSS

... *Because the other one is perhaps the youngest of them,*

(18) *ri* tɛ=lixdrɛ bo i=at
3S:R=leave DIM 3S:R=be

*so that they leave him behind.*

6.3.4 Temporal clauses
Another kind of relationship that is encoded morphosyntactically in Tirax discourse is time, relative to another state or event. The markers of temporal relationships between clauses in Tirax are *re*nte ‘when, meanwhile’ and *vɔ* ‘until’.

6.3.4.1 *Rente* ‘when, meanwhile’
*Rente* generally marks clauses which take place either before, or during, another event. It is derived from the temporal noun / preposition *ren* ‘time’ and the subordinate marker *te*. *Rente* marks the clause with old or predictable information, and the clause relating new information is bare:

(18) *ren-te* r=hlau lain
*time-SUB 3D:R=arrive home*

*When they arrived home,*

*dede* he mlakeł nɛ i=tehix dax
mother POSS teenager DEF 3S:R=get.up PERF

*the boy's mother was already up.*
Rentɛ has an important role in structuring discourse, and has a variety of functions. For example, it works in combination with the aspect marker dax to demarcate certain sequences which are flashbacks or otherwise off the timeline, described in Brotchie (forthcoming). The discourse uses of rentɛ are discussed in chapter 7.

6.3.4.2 Vɔ ‘until’

As discussed above in §4.6.4, the particle ʋɔ marks durative aspect. Polysemous with durative ʋɔ is a conjunction / preposition ʋɔ, ‘until’, which is used to indicate that the following clause relates some kind of endpoint or resolution to the action related in the ʋɔ-clause. ʋɔ ‘until’ subcategorises for locative NPs and PPs, as well as clausal complements, as in the following examples respectively:

(19) r=vl-vl-vl-vl-vla  i=an  ʋɔ laltah
3D:R=DUP-go  3S:R=go until LOC.shore

_They (two) (swam) and (swam) and (swam) and (swam) up to the shore._

M & R p.225

(20) i=vial  i=an  ʋɔ  n̥a  nain
3S:R=walk  3S:R=go until LOC  house

_He walked until (he got) home._

M & R p.225

(21) r=vl-vl-vl-vl-vla  i=an  ʋɔ i=sder  laltah
3D:R=DUP-go  3S:R=go until 3S:R=reach  LOC.shore

_They (two) (swam) and (swam) and (swam) and (swam) up to the shore._

M & R p.225

The conjunction / preposition ʋɔ does not sub-categorise for non-locative NPs:

(22) i=vial  i=an  ʋɔ lain
3S:R=walk  3S:R=go until LOC.home

_He walked until (he got) home._

M & R p.225

(23) i=vial  i=an  ʋɔ n̥a (/ sxi ) nain
3S:R=walk  3S:R=go until LOC ALL  house

_He walked until (he got) home._

M & R p.225
(24)  *i=vial  i=an  vo  nain
      3S:R=walk  3S:R=go  until  home

He walked until (he got) home.

When the constituent following vo is a clause, the sentence is ambiguous between having a conjunction / preposition vo or a durative marker vo. Prosody can be used to distinguish durative vo from conjunction vo: durative vo, discussed and exemplified in §7.7.3, occurs clause-finally, whereas conjunction / preposition vo has a clausal complement:

(25)  ren-te  i=s-ser-nenev  dax  xain  xini  nmb [ vo  i=vlxnet ]
      time-SUB  3S:R=DUP-paint-COMPL  PERF  3S  OBL  chestnut  until  3S:R=turn.black

He’d completely painted himself with (the) chestnuts until he’d turned black.4

6.3.5 Conditional systems
There is a range of conjunctions encoding subordinate clauses, describing an event which is contingent on the event described in the main clause. Conditional clauses are always irrealis.

6.3.5.1 Veve ‘if’
A conditional clause is encoded with ve ‘if’, which is almost always reduplicated as veve, or veveve. The conditional clause can be in realis mood, but the consequence clause is always irrealis:

(26)  ve-ve-ve  x=ri  lal  ntaŋ  xar
      DUP-if  2S:R=look  inside  basket  DST

If you look inside the basket

---

4 Here, ren-te ... dax establish a new timeline, prior to the current temporal reference point, translated here with the English pluperfect.
A conditional clause can be negated with the negative marker –tɛ:

(27) ve-ve x=ri-tɛ lal ntan
DUP-if 2S:R=look-NEG inside basket

If you don’t look inside the basket

ah=leh-tɛ mlevux lale-n
2S:NEG=see-NEG ant inside-3S:POSS

you won’t see (the) ants inside it.

Irrealis conditionals describe a hypothetical alternative to what actually took place:

(28) ve-ve-ve ba=ri-van-tɛ tax tɛ ba=leh-i
DUP-if 2S:1=look-go-NEG back SUB 2S:1=see-3S

If you hadn’t looked back and seen him

be de=rub-din nɔx , nɔx ba=nɛh
but(B) 3S:1=hit-dead 2s 2s 2s:1=die

he would have killed you. You would be dead.

Some bare irrealis clauses can have a conditional interpretation, reflected in the Bislama translation:

(29) ba=leh dede hɔk ba=mtaxit ia
2S:1=see mother1S:POSS 2S:1=be.afraid there(B)

Sapos yu lukim mama blong mi bae yu fraet ia.

“If you see my mother you will be frightened of her.”
6.3.5.2 Rentę veve ‘whenever’

For habitual conditions and consequences, the consequence clause is in realis mood. The condition clause is marked with the time-marker rentę, discussed above in §6.3.4, in conjunction with ve-ve:

(30) **rentę veve veve**

time-SUB DUP-if sun 3S:S=shine 3S:S=be.strong

Whenever the sun is shining strongly

\(\text{\textbackslash audi AB1-009-B.wav \ as \ 2278.593 \ \text\textbackslash ae \ 2283.275}\)

\(\text{te nas=rįŋ das=lav naut xar}\)

SUB 1P:S=want 1P:P=plant place DST

when we want to plant the garden

\(\text{\textbackslash audi AB1-009-B.wav \ as \ 2283.275 \ \text\textbackslash ae \ 2286.115}\)

\(\text{nas=van nas=lev rɔxai} haxal lual}\)

1P:S=go 1P:S=take leaf INDEF LOC.river

we go and get a leaf from the river ...

\(\text{\textbackslash audi AB1-009-B.wav \ as \ 2286.115 \ \text\textbackslash ae \ 2290.676}\)

6.3.5.3 Negative conditionals: vehevxe ‘otherwise’

Negative conditionals are comprised of an irrealis clause relating a hypothetical proposition, followed by vehevxe, ‘if not’ and another irrealis clause relating the consequence. Vehevxe is likely to be a combination of ve ‘if’ and the negative existential hxe:

(31) **ba=busde haxal = ba=serex-i de=me litan**

2S:1=remove one 2S:1=throw-3S:3S:1=come down

Pick one (Tahitian chestnut) and throw it down!

\(\text{\textbackslash audi AB1-002-A.wav \ as \ 78.528 \ \text\textbackslash ae \ 81.846}\)

\(\text{ve-hxe da=węs nɔx}\)

if-not 1S:1=eat 2S

Or I’ll eat you!’

\(\text{\textbackslash audi AB1-002-A.wav \ as \ 81.846 \ \text\textbackslash ae \ 83.334}\)
6.3.5.4 Adversatives: \(\text{ev\textsubscript{ehxo}}\) ‘lest’

Adverse consequences or warnings can be marked with \(\text{ev\textsubscript{ehxo}}\) ‘lest’. An irrealis clause relates a hypothetical event, followed by \(\text{ev\textsubscript{ehxo}}\), followed by the likely undesirable consequence, also in irrealis mood, as in (32) and (33) below:

(32) \(\text{ba=vial nav\-n\-te nja nalev}\)
2S:1=walk very.much-NEG LOC soft.mud

*Don't walk around too much in the mud*

\(\text{ev\textsubscript{ehxo}}\) \(\text{de=xeh male-m}\)
or.else \(3S:1=bite\) \(\text{leg-3S:POSS}\)

*lest it stick to your feet.*

(33) \(\text{ve lidax n\-i=ni-nir xini}\)
but dog DEF 3S:R=DUP-growl OBL:3S

*But the dog growled at her.*

\(\text{ale lex han i=ver xini i=va “ ba=natnat xini nax ”}\)
so husband 3S:POSS 3S:R=say OBL:3S 3S:R=say 2S:1=look.after OBL 2S

*So her husband said “Watch out!” (lit.: take care of yourself)*

\(\text{“ ev\textsubscript{ehxo} de=xeh nax ”}\)
otherwise \(3S:1=bite\) 2S

*“He might bite you!”*

6.4 Complement clauses

Complement clauses are subcategorised for by a word, typically a verb, such as \(\text{mtaxit}\) ‘be afraid’. The following section looks at some of the morphosyntactic behaviour associated with complement clauses.
6.4.1 Complementiser *te*

Complement clauses are typically marked with the subordinate clause marker *te*, which functions as a complementiser. For some verbs, such as *mtaxit* ‘be afraid’ and *tɔdrɔvŋe* ‘to begin’, the complementiser is obligatory:

(34) \( i = tɔdrɔvŋe \) *(*\( tɛ \)) \( i = v i - v i a l \)  
\( 3S : R = b e g i n \) \( S U B \) \( 3S : R = D U P - w a l k \)

*She began walking.*

(35) \( i = m t a x i t \) *(*\( tɛ \)) \( t n e h \ ŋ e \) \( d e = w e s - i \)  
\( 3S : R = b e . a f r i d \) \( S U B \) \( d e v i l \ \text{DEF} \) \( 3S : I = e a t - 3 S \)

*He was afraid that the devil would eat him.*

Other verbs, such as *tebex* ‘find, decide’, and *ŋɔ* ‘want, desire’, allow both *te* complements and bare sentential complements. The complementiser is optional, whether the subject NPs in the matrix and subordinate clauses are co-referential or not, as in (36) and (37) respectively:

(36) \( n = t e b e x \ ( tɛ) \) \( d a = u l \) \( r e s a n \) \( T i r a x \)  
\( 1S : R = d e c i d e \) \( S U B \) \( 1S : I = w r i t e \) \( l a n g u a g e \) \( T i r a x \)

*I decided (that) I would write the Tirax language.*

(37) \( n = t e b e x \ ( tɛ) \) \( nɔx \) \( b a = u l \) \( r e s a n \) \( T i r a x \)  
\( 1S : R = d e c i d e \) \( S U B \) \( 2S \) \( 2S : I = w r i t e \) \( l a n g u a g e \) \( T i r a x \)

*I decided (that) you would write the Tirax language.*

We saw in §3.3.3 that the object marker cannot co-occur with direct object free NPs. Complement clauses also cannot co-occur with an object marker:

(38) \( n = t e b e x - i \ ( * tɛ \) \( nɔx \) \( b a = u l \) \( r e s a n \) \( T i r a x \))  
\( 1S : R = d e c i d e - 3 S \) \( S U B \) \( 2S \) \( 2S : I = w r i t e \) \( l a n g u a g e \) \( T i r a x \)

*I decided it.*
For matrix verbs which can take direct object NPs, such as *ŋɔ*, ‘perceive (hear/feel)’, the subject of the complement clause can appear as main clause object, in which case the subordinate clause appears as a relative clause. Alternate structures, one with a complement clause and one with a relative clause, were used in different tellings of the same story:

(39)  
\[ i=ŋɔ \ [ tɛ \ [ nɛ haxal \ i=sŋareh ] ] \]  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
3S:R=hear & \text{SUB} & \text{thing} & \text{INDEF} \\
3S:R=rustle
\end{array}
\]

*He heard something rustling ... (Lit: He heard that something was rustling)*

(40)  
\[ ren-tɛ \ i=ŋɔ \ [ \ [ nɛ haxal ] \ [ tɛ \ i=sŋareh ] ] \]  
\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
time-SUB & 3S:R=hear & \text{thing} & \text{INDEF} & \text{REL} & 3S:R=rustle
\end{array}
\]

*Then he heard something rustling ... (Lit: heard something which was rustling)*

In some Malakula languages, such as Naman (Crowley 2006a:182), the verb for ‘sit, live, stay’ can also express durative aspect, similarly to the dual functions of the Bislama verb *stap*. There is no evidence that the corresponding Tirax word *at* can similarly function as a durative marker, although an expression *at xini*, can be used to encode durative aspect. The expression takes a complement clause with *tɛ*:

(41)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{mar} & \text{xar} & i=at & \text{xini} & \text{tɛ} & i=vnaxɛ & \text{bxɔh} & \text{hɔk} & i=haxalxin
\end{array}
\]
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{man} & \text{DST} & 3S:R=be & \text{OBL} & \text{SUB} & 3S:R=steal & 1S:POSS & 3S:R=do.continuously
\end{array}
\]

Man ia i stap stilim pig blong mi oltae m.

*That man is always stealing my pig.*

6.4.2 Mood

Many verbs, including verbs of cognition and perception, subcategorise for sentential complements which can be encoded as realis:

(42)  
\[ xair \ s=ve \ tɛ \ i=neh \ dax \]  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
3P & 3P:R=believe & \text{SUB} & 3S:R=be.dead \text{PERF}
\end{array}
\]

*As for them, they thought he was dead.*
Other verbs sub-categorise for irrealis complement clauses, regardless of the mood of the matrix verb. The type of complement clause is lexically determined by the matrix verb, and generally reflects a hypothetical reality. Verbs which sub-categorise for irrealis sentential complements include mtaxit, ‘be afraid’, vrax, ‘promise’, rŋɔdrɔ ‘know, be able to’, the desideratives, ve ‘want, intend’ and rŋɔ ‘want, desire’, and other verbs which relate a hypothetical or future event in a complement clause.

Verbs which take irrealis complements do so regardless of whether the desired or intended outcome has already manifested. Irrealis mood is used in the example below even though the intention has been realised. The character is addressing a devil he has just killed:

(43) “n=ve ba=neh bo”
1S:R=want 2S:1=die DIM
“I just wanted you dead.”

The verb rŋɔ has two different meanings, ‘perceive’ and ‘want’, and these meanings can be distinguished by the type of complement it subcategorises for.

The sentential complement of rŋɔ ‘perceive (hear/feel)’ is encoded with te and is in realis mood when the matrix clause is realis:

(44) i=rŋɔ te nte haxal i=sparch
3S:R=hear SUB thing INDEF 3S:R=rustle

He heard something rustling ... (Lit: He heard that something was rustling)

To express emotion or pain, the feeling is attributed to the body or body part, for example neden ‘his/her/its body’, or lalen ‘his/her/its insides’, and rŋɔ does not take the complementiser:

(45) i=rŋɔ nede-n i=drup navɔn xar /
3S:R=feel body-3S:POSS 3S:R=pain much DST

He's in a lot of pain.
R رغم ‘want’ takes an irrealis complement, but not the complementiser *te*:

\[(46) \begin{array}{llll}
n=\text{ŋɔ} & \text{da}=\text{hbe} & \text{tu} & \text{txun} \\
1\text{s}:\text{R}=\text{want} & 1\text{s}:\text{i}=\text{tell} & \text{INDEF} & \text{haxal}
\end{array}\]

*I want to tell a story.*

Both verbs also sub-categorise for direct objects:

\[(47) \begin{array}{llll}
\text{ren} & \text{tɛ} & \text{i}=\text{ŋɔ} & \text{ntɛ} \\
\text{time}-\text{SUB} & 3\text{s}:\text{R}=\text{hear} & \text{thing} & \text{INDEF}
\end{array}\]

*Then he heard something rustling.*

\[(48) \begin{array}{llllll}
n=\text{ŋɔ} & \text{naur} & \text{dram} & \text{xar} \\
1\text{s}:\text{R}=\text{want} & \text{crayfish} & \text{PC:FOOD:2S:POSS} & \text{DST}
\end{array}\]

*I want your crayfish there.*

Whether or not verbs obligatorily take a subordinate marker, and / or irrealis complement is lexically determined. The four possibilities are exemplified in table 6-4.

**Table 6-4:** Four possibilities for complement constructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligatory takes <em>te</em></th>
<th>Irrealis complement</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>mtaxit</em> ‘be afraid’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><em>ŋɔ</em> ‘feel, hear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td><em>tɔdrɔŋɛ</em> ‘begin’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>ŋɔ</em> ‘want, desire’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td><em>tebex</em> ‘decide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><em>ve</em> ‘make’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(causative §6.4.4.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4.3 Quasi-complements

Subordinating conjunctions such as ve ‘if’ and rente ‘when’ can also encode complement clauses. Clauses marked with a complementiser other than te have a slightly different morphosyntax to te-complements, and are referred to here as ‘quasi-complements’. Sentential complements encoded with subordinating conjunctions other than te, co-occur with suffix, –i, on the matrix verb. For some speakers this suffix is obligatory, while for others it is optional. The suffix is exemplified below:

(49) ba=rŋɔðrɔ-i ve-ve des=hlau
2S:1=know-DS DUP-if 3P:1=arrive

Find out whether they are arriving.

R & M-R p215

(50) ba=leh-i ren-te des=hlau
2S:1=see-DS time-SUB 3P:1=arrive

Bae yu go luk taem oli kamtru.
You’ll see when they arrive.

R & M-R p215

You will recall from §6.4.1 above that te-complements cannot co-occur with an object marker –i:

(51) s=rŋɔ-i — ..
3P:R:=want-3S

They wanted it,

s=rŋɔ (*-i) te negɾεl de=taɔ
3P:R:=want SUB exchange 3S:1=be

they wanted an exchange to take place.

Since the object marker cannot co-occur with a direct object complement (§3.3.3), nor a sentential complement, I suggest that the marker that occurs in quasi-complement constructions is not an object marker. In fact, there is evidence that the marker functions as a different-subject (DS) marker. It is present when the subject of the
quasi-complement is different to the subject of the matrix verb, and does not occur when the subject of the main and quasi-complement clauses refer to the same entity:

(52) \[ \text{da}=\text{ŋɔ̱}-i \quad \text{ren-te} \quad \text{ba}=\text{sbel} \]

\[ 1S:1^{=}\text{hear-DS} \quad \text{time-SUB} \quad 2S:1^{=}\text{crack.knuckles} \]

*I will hear when you crack your knuckles.*

(53) \[ \text{da}=\text{ŋɔ̱} \quad \text{ren-te} \quad \text{da}=\text{sbel} \]

\[ 1S:1^{=}\text{hear} \quad \text{time-SUB} \quad 1S:1^{=}\text{crack.knuckles} \]

*I will hear when I crack my knuckles.*

(54) \* \[ \text{da}=\text{ŋɔ̱}-i \quad \text{ren-te} \quad \text{da}=\text{sbel} \]

\[ 1S:1^{=}\text{hear-DS} \quad \text{time-SUB} \quad 1S:1^{=}\text{crack.knuckles} \]

Other Vanuatu languages, such as Unua (Pearce 2007b), also have morphosyntax that is sensitive to a switch in subject across clause boundaries.

6.4.4. Multi-predicate constructions with ve and ve
Tirax verbs ve and ve are involved in a range of multi-predicate constructions.

6.4.4.1 Causative constructions with ve
The Tirax verb ve has several functions, each with distinct morphosyntactic behaviour, as summarised in Table 6-5.

**Table 6-5:** Range of meaning, functions and associated construction types for ve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Complement</th>
<th>Construction type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘become’</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Inchoative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘make, do’</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘make (s.t.) into’</td>
<td>(NP) xini NP</td>
<td>Ditransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘make’</td>
<td>realis bare complement</td>
<td>Causative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In §5.2.1 we saw that Tirax has a copula, ve, which is optionally used to link NPs which refer to the same entity:
(55) mar xar i=ve mleun
    man DST 3S:R=COP chief

    That man is a chief.

We also saw that it can be used in inchoative constructions:

(56) ngeh=na nawita ri xan i=ve balxa nxariv
    tentacle=ASSOC octopus(B) FOC 3S 3S:R=become tail rat

    As for that octopus's tentacle, it became the rat’s tail.

Ve can also mean ‘make’, in which case it takes two arguments, a Subject and Object NP:

(57) r=ve nalk vo i=nev
    3D:R=make laplap until 3S:R=finish

    They (two) made laplap until it was done.

Ve ‘make’ can also take an oblique argument, in which case the meaning is ‘make (something) into the NP’:

(58) r=ve xini nalk
    3D:R=make OBL laplap

    They made (the octopus) into laplap.

Ve ‘make’ also forms causative multi-predicate constructions:

(59) ale i=ve sar nmab s=rus
    then 3S:R=make IMPF chestnut 3P:R=fall.down

    Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to fall down.

Causative ve takes a suffix -i, which is suppressed by sar, as is the object marker –i. It follows the pattern described in §6.4.3 above for quasi-complements, whereby the marker co-occurs with the subordinate clause:
(60) \( \text{ale} \quad \text{i=ve-i} \quad [\text{nmab} \quad s=rus ] \)

then \( 3S:R=\text{make-DS} \quad \text{chestnut} \quad 3P:R=\text{fall.down} \)

Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to fall down.

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Causative \( \text{ve} \) can be used with human or animate referents as subject of the embedded clause, to give a meaning of coercion:

(61) \( \text{i=ve-i} \quad \text{n=hlox-i} \)

\( 3S:R=\text{make-DS} \quad 1S:R=\text{carry-3s} \)

He made me carry him.

\( \text{aud ABV1-002-RS.wav \ as 599.134 \ ae 600.661} \)

(62) \( \text{ale} \quad \text{i=ve-i} \quad \text{xɔn} \quad \text{n=tur-tur} \quad \text{na} \quad \text{weri} \)

so \( 3S:R=\text{make-DS} \quad 1S \quad 1S:R=\text{DUP-stand now there} \)

So now he made me stand there.

\( \text{aud ABI-002-A.wav \ as 611.374 \ ae 617.25} \)

As for quasi-complements, the–\( i \) suffix in these constructions appears to mark switch reference, such that the subject of the following clause is different to the subject of the matrix clause. The examples below contrast a DS (Different Subject) versus SS (Same Subject) construction with \( \text{ve} \).

(63) \( \text{xɔn} \quad \text{n=ve-i} \quad (\text{keni}) \quad \text{xar=hvuv} \)

\( 1S \quad 1S:R=\text{make-DS} \quad 2P \quad 2P:R=\text{bathe} \)

I made you all bathe.

R & M p220

(64) \( \text{xɔn} \quad \text{n=ve(\text{-i})} \quad (\text{xɔn}) \quad \text{n=hvuv} \)

\( 1S \quad 1S:R=\text{make(-DS)} \quad 1S \quad 1S:R=\text{bathe} \)

R & M p220

The marker on causative \( \text{ve} \) helps distinguish the causative construction from the copula and transitive constructions, so that the free NP subject of the complement clause is not confused with either a secondary predicate, or direct object in a transitive construction.
6.4.4.2 Multi-predicate constructions with ve
The Tirax verb ve has several meanings and takes part in a range of multi-predicate constructions, as shown in Table 6-6. SS stands for same subject (co-referential) and DS for different subject (disjoint reference) constructions.

**Table 6-6: Range of meanings and associated complements for ve**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Complement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘believe, think’</td>
<td>te-complement, animate subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘try, want, intend’</td>
<td>irrealis bare complement, animate subject,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>co-referential construction (SS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tell’</td>
<td>irrealis bare complement, animate subject,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>disjoint reference construction (DS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘become; should’</td>
<td>irrealis bare complement, inanimate subject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ve ‘think, believe’ takes a te complement:

(65) \( n=ve \) \( te \) \[ mar \ xar \ i=vnax \ brt\&t \ ]

1S:R=\text{think} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{man} \quad \text{DST} \quad 3S:R=\text{steal} \quad \text{always}

*I think that man steals all the time.* 

R & M p219

Ve ‘want, intend’ is distinct from ve ‘think, believe’, in that it takes a bare irrealis complement:

(67) \( n=ve-ve \) \[ da=h\&e \ tuxtxunmalt\&xun \ ]

1S:R=DUP-want \quad 1S:I=tell \quad \text{traditional story}

*I want to tell a traditional story.*
"Ve ‘want, intend, tell’ selects bare irrealis complements, exemplified above. If the subject of the complement clause is the same as the matrix clause, the verb is interpreted as meaning ‘want, intend’. However, if the subject of the complement clause is different to the subject of the main clause, the verb is interpreted as meaning ‘tell’:

(68) n=ve-ve mar xar [ de=hbe tuxtxunaltxun ]
1S:R=DUP-tell man DST 3S:1=tell traditional story

*I tell / told that man to tell a story.*

The sentence ‘I want that man to tell a story’ would be translated with the verb *řŋɔ* ‘want, desire’. *Ve* has a connotation of a want that is being realised, by ‘telling oneself’, in the case of same subject constructions, or by telling another, in the case of different subject constructions.

Complex sentences with *ve* can also express obligation if the subject of *ve* is inanimate:

(69) i=ve de=tɔx navil de=haxal de=ru de=dla xori
3S:R=want 3S:1=be.located moon 3S:1=one 3D:1=two 3S:1=be.thus LOC:DX2

*It (the garden) should be left for a month or two like that.*

The meaning of obligation is also conveyed in impersonal constructions with *ve*:

(70) dek knen, r=ve r=tɔ bo dek knen
security.payment 1PX IMPS:R=want IMPS:R=put DIM security.payment 1PX

*A security payment for us, a security payment had to be put up for us …*
(71) naut i=ve de=nelik sar te plen i=sbul 5
place 3S:R=become 3S:1=be.dark IMPF SUB plane(B) 3S:R=climb.down

*It was starting to get dark when the plane finally landed.*

6.4.5 Negation and complement clauses

Negating a main verb in a complex sentence is different to negating a simple verb, as the negative marker -te and subordinate clause marker te are homophonous. To negate a verb taking a te-complement, a complex negative, such as tevɔr ‘not yet’ follows the matrix verb, and the complement is encoded as irrealis:

(72) i=tdɔɾvŋe tevɔr te de=vi-vial
3S:R=begin not.yet SUB 3S:1=DUP-walk

*She has not yet started walking.*

For negated matrix verbs, the complementiser is obligatory:

(73) n=tebex tevɔr / tɛŋɛ *(te) da=ul resan Tirax
1S:R=decide not.yet not.at.all SUB 1S:1=write language Tirax

*I haven’t decided to write down the Tirax language.*

To express ‘not wanting’, neither rŋɔ ‘want’ nor ve ‘want’ can take the negative marker, and the appropriate form of the anti-desiderative de<n>reh ‘not want’ is used instead:

(74) n=rŋɔ dekreh (te) da=ul resan Tirax
1S:R=feel not.want (SUB) 1S:1=write language Tirax

*I don’t want to write down the Tirax language.*

M & R p217

(75) i=rŋɔ denreh de=tur
3S:R=feel not.want 3S:1=stand

*He doesn’t want to stand up.*

---

5 *Te* here is short for *rente* ‘when’.
6.4.6 Fronting and complement clauses

As for other fronted constituents, if a complement clause is fronted, the object marker functions as a resumptive pronoun. For complements of verbs in subordinate clauses, the fronted complement clause can immediately precede the subordinate clause, as in (77), or the matrix verb, as in the spontaneous example below:

(76) na marbih ŋe i=va “a xain bo xan n=ve-ve da=rŋɔdrɔ-i”
    now child DEF 3S:R=say aha 3S DIM PRX 1S:R=DUP-want 1S:1=know-3S

… “Em ia nao wanem mi wantem save!”

Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha! That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

(77) na marbih ŋe i=va “a n=ve-ve xain bo xan da=rŋɔdrɔ-i”
    now child DEF 3S:R=say aha 1S:R=DUP-want 3S DIM PRX 1S:1=know-3S

Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha! That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

6.4.7 Speech and thought

Table 6-7 lists the common Tirax verbs of locution. They represent a range of semantic specificity, with va ‘say’ having the least specific meaning and the words represented in the bottom half of the table, such as kul, ‘sing’, tev ‘address’, mumudr ‘whisper’ being more specific in their meaning. Generally, the lower the degree of specificity, the more frequent the verb. As discussed below in §6.4.7.2, the most frequent verb of locution, va ‘say’, appears to be on its way to becoming semantically bleached and being reanalysed as a conjunction, encoding direct and indirect speech.
Table 6-7: Tirax verbs of locution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>va</td>
<td>‘say’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ver</td>
<td>‘tell’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hbe</td>
<td>‘discuss’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mex</td>
<td>‘ask’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kul</td>
<td>‘sing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tev</td>
<td>‘call out, address’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ul</td>
<td>‘shout, scream out’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreh</td>
<td>‘shout (sternly)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mumudr</td>
<td>‘whisper’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.7.1 Direct speech and thought

Direct speech and thought are used in storytelling to evoke the characters more vividly. The speech event is reported with a verb of locution, such as *ul* ‘shout’, as in the example below, then the quote is encoded with the inflected form of *va* ‘say’:

(78) vinadr  ne  i=narxat  i=ul  xini  mar  te  i=vnax
    woman  DEF  3S:R=get.up  3S:R=shout  OBL  man  SUB  3S:R=steal

*The woman went and shouted to the man who stole (it),*

i=va  “turtur! levnax!”
3S:R=say  stop  thief

*saying “Stop! Thief!”*

6.2.7.2 *Va* as speech complementiser

*Va* ‘say’ is a fully inflecting verb which can be the sole occupant of the verb slot in a clause. It takes a direct speech complement:

(79) ri=at  na ,  i=va  “bar=titin”
    3D:R=be  now  3S:R=say  2D:R=cook

*Now the two of them were there and (the devil) said “Let's do some cooking!”*
More usually, *va* is used in conjunction with another utterance verb, typically *ver*, to introduce an utterance. *Va* follows the other utterance verb, is fully inflected, but is prosodically marked like a conjunction, such as *ve* ‘and, but’ That is, it is either prosodically weak, or it has falling intonation immediately following the primary peak and an elongated vowel, signalling the end of the IU, as in the example below:

![Example](image)

*She said to the eldest, she said “Oh, those fish...!”*

When following another locution verb *va* is still fully inflected for person, number and mood despite being prosodically weak. For all the instances of *va* encoding direct speech clause in the data, the subject markers of the two verbs of locution match:

![Example](image)

*The chiefs said to him, they said “Which denomination?”*

For verbs of locution, *va* obligatorily precedes the direct speech or thought. *Va* is therefore analysed here as being subcategorised for by the main speech verb. In this role, *va* is semantically superfluous, and so could be a candidate for reanalysis as a complementiser, similar to the Bislama verb *se* ‘say’, which is both a verb and a complementiser introducing direct speech. Its tendency to be prosodically weak when following another verb of locution lends support to this idea. Lord (1993) observes that the process of semantic bleaching and grammaticisation of verbs to become function words is typical of languages which have serial verb constructions, such as Tirax. She notes that in many languages, complementisers encoding speech have derived from the speech verb *say*, for example. If this is to happen in Tirax, then we might expect the process to be that the subject marker on *va* becomes invariably third person singular, and is eventually omitted altogether.
Va ‘say’ encodes the full range of direct speech and thought complements, including singing:

(82) ren-te i=van ade i=kul bo i=sre bo
time-SUB 3S:R=go 3S:R=sing DIM 3S:R=follow DIM

Wherever (the boy) went, the yam just sang and followed him,

i=va baxe navnav nero maddedlen maddedlen
3S:R=say

singing:

\(\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav \<as\> 1837.912 \<ae\> 1848.637}\)

6.2.7.3 Indirect speech and thought
Indirect speech complements are generally introduced by complementiser te, following a verb of locution. The following example comes from an elicitation story, adapted from Vaux & Cooper (1999) and translated from Bislama into Tirax by my consultant:

(83) ale i=ver xin-er te de=hl-hlox deneh na drudruman han
so 3S:R=say OBL-3p SUB 3S:1=DUP-carry soil POSS faeces 3S:POSS

So she told them that she was taking a sample of her stools

\(\text{aud AB1-001-A.wav \<as\> 157.043 \<ae\> 167.055}\)

de=huvian sxi dokta te dokta de=kle-i
3S:1=deliver ALL doctor(B) SUB doctor-B 3S:1=look.at-3S

to give to a doctor for the doctor to examine.

\(\text{aud AB1-001-A.wav \<as\> 167.055 \<ae\> 169.411}\)

It is also possible for the indirect speech to appear as a bare complement introduced by ve, ‘tell’, discussed above in §6.4.4.2:

(84) nevix=nan bo , i=ve-ve vinadr han de=telul
tomorrow=ASSOC.3S:POSS DIM 3S:R=DUP-tell woman 3S:POSS 3S:1=go.to.out

The next day, he told his wife to do the gardening.

\(\text{aud AB1-018-A.wav \<as\> 2152.617 \<ae\> 2156.632}\)
6.5 VP strings

The basis of any narrative analysis, and grammar in general, is the concept of the clause as a unit of discourse. A difficulty with the analysis of Tirax discourse is the problem of defining a Tirax clause. Like many Vanuatu languages, a Tirax sentence can be constructed of a string of VPs, with no morphological markers of clause boundaries. The question arises as to whether the strings of two or more VPs are actually a juxtaposition of clauses, or whether the VPs are more closely bound and contained in the one clause, as in a ‘core-layer serial verb construction (SVC)’.

The phenomenon of VP strings is widespread throughout Oceanic languages. Some Oceanic linguists, such as Crowley (2006a) and Hyslop (2001) analyse a subset of these VP strings as core-layer SVCs, defined as a string of two or more inflected VPs, which agree in mood, and which have no overt morphological or prosodic marking of boundaries between them, and no evidence of ellipsed co-ordinate or subordinate markers. Other linguists, such as Francois, analyse the same kinds of constructions as clause-chains (François 2002), on the grounds that the fully inflected VPs involved are syntactically complete clauses.

All linguists are likely to agree that the constituents of the VP strings in question, whether analysed as VPs in core-layer SVCs or clauses in clause-chains, are more tightly bound than clauses linked by conjunctions or pauses. François, for example, proposes a hierarchy of discourse units in Araki, from predicate phrase through to discourse. According to this hierarchy, his clause-chained clauses, which he calls prosodic super-clauses, are larger units than the syntactic clause (of which they are comprised), but smaller than the sentence, which can be comprised of one or more super-clauses bounded by markers of coordination or subordination or a pause (François 2002:198).

However there is a meaningful difference between the analyses, both at the level of the syntactic structure implied, and also for the purposes of narrative analysis and referent tracking, which traditionally depends on a robust definition of the clause.

Parataxis is widespread in oral communities such as Tirax, and prosodic evidence generally plays a significant role in the syntactic structural analysis. There has been
much work done recently on intonational cues to discourse boundaries in spontaneous speech (eg. Speer et al 2003; Venditti & Hirschberg 2003), and it has been generally found that while there is a relationship between prosodic structure and syntactic structure, the relationship is not straightforward, with different types and different combinations of prosodic phenomena corresponding to the one syntactic structure (Speer et al 2003:4). This also appears to hold for Tirax, where there are several prosodic markers which can correlate to discourse boundaries, though only one or some combination of them may be present in any particular instance. The prosodic cues roughly correspond to those outlined by Chafe as markers of I(ntonation) U(nit) boundaries (Chafe 1994:57-60). The approach taken here is that prosodic cues, such as intonation contour, speed of speech and pauses, as outlined in Appendix IV, can be used as evidence of a clause boundary. This is notwithstanding Crowley’s (2002) caution against relying on intonation for determining serial verb status in foreign languages, on the grounds it is difficult for non-native speakers who are not highly trained in phonetics to accurately recognise prosodic cues to discourse boundaries in that language (Crowley 2002:17).

There is syntactic and prosodic evidence for clause juxtaposition, clause-chaining and core-layer serialisation in Tirax. These are discussed and exemplified in turn below. Inflected numeral phrases are a distinct type of predicate phrase, and the evidence supports a reduced relative clause analysis. Finally, there are several verbs, including *va* ‘say’, discussed above in §6.4.7.2, which are bleached of their full semantic meaning, and have a reduced inflectional range.

6.5.1 Clause juxtaposition
As observed for other oral communities (eg. Fleischman 1990), *parataxis* is the most common way of linking clauses of equal syntactic status in Tirax. Parataxis refers to the juxtaposition of syntactic units within a sentence without using conjunctions. The apposed clauses are each in discreet I(ntonation) U(nit)s, often separated by a pause. The non-final IU(s) have a rising or continuing intonation contour, and the final IU has a falling intonation contour, signalling the end of the sentence. The transcription key is given in at the front of this work.
They stayed in the morning.

and prepared (everything) for her mother to come.

Non-initial clauses in clause-juxtaposition constructions can have overt free NP subjects:

So she was pulling herself along.

and (the daughter’s) husband said:

The criteria of a pause between IUs and / or an overt free NP subject for the non-initial VP distinguish clause apposition from clause-chaining, discussed in §6.5.2 below.

6.5.2 Clause-chaining

Clause-chains are a specific kind of parataxis, comprising clauses that share at least one argument, and for which there is obligatory ellipsis of free NP subjects for non-initial VPs. Not all verbs can take part in clause-chains as VP2s, whereas there are no restrictions on the VP slots in clause juxtaposition. It is these syntactic criteria which distinguish clause-chains from clause juxtaposition in Tirax. As for clause juxtaposition, each clause in a clause-chain comprises a fully inflected VP, with no overt morphological markers of boundaries between them, and no evidence of ellipsed conjunctions. Each clause comprises a sub-IU, having a full intonation contour, and the potential for a pause, although in fluent speech there is rarely a pause

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6 The Tirax word for ‘prepare’ is tutur.
between the juxtaposed clauses in a clause-chain. Each clause is syntactically complete, with its core argument slots filled. For non-initial VP(s), the subject relation is always represented by the subject marker:

(89) *nelaŋ i=her-i /= i=hlau trɛɛɛɛ / 

\[\text{stake} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{spear-3S} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{arrive other-side}\]

*The stake speared him and it came out the other side.*

\[\text{\textbackslash aud ABV1-002-RS.wav\ as 557.165\ \textbackslash ae 560.345}\]

Linked clauses can share both subject and object arguments, as exemplified below. Here, the direct object referent is being introduced into the discourse, and so is represented by a free NP:

(90) \text{i=lev kak}a /= i=kɛs-kɛs-i / 

\[3S:\text{R}=\text{take yam} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{DUP-cut.up-3S}\]

*She took out a yam and cut it up.*

\[\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-009-B.wav\ as 2078.712\ \textbackslash ae 2081.579}\]

Disjoint reference constructions are defined here as complex constructions where the linked clauses do not have co-referential subjects. For disjoint reference clause-chain constructions, the shared argument is an object. Here, the object of the first VP intervenes between the VPs. The object of VP1 is interpreted as the subject of VP2:

(91) \text{i=xɛh-din nxariv nɛ /} /= i=neh \ 

\[3S:\text{R}=\text{bite-dead cat DEF} \quad 3S:\text{R}=\text{die}\]

*He bit the cat to death, and it died.*

\[\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-018-B.wav\ as 436.34\ \textbackslash ae 438.143}\]

Apart from the restriction on free NP subjects for non-initial VPs, the clauses behave syntactically like independent clauses. Each VP is able to be modified by particles and adverbs:

(92) “\text{da=kul na}lxah /= da=srɛ sar nɔx” / 

\[1S:\text{I}=\text{sing slow} \quad 1S:\text{I}=\text{follow IMPF 2S}\]

“And I will sing slowly and be following you.”

\[\text{\textbackslash aud AB1-020-A.wav\ as 1844.237\ \textbackslash ae 1846.348}\]

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\[7\text{ Refer to Appendix IV for a definition of IU and sub-IU in Tirax discourse.}\]
Each VP is able to be negated independently:

\[(93) \quad i=\text{lev-te} \quad \text{kaka} \quad / = \quad \text{de=kəs-kəs-i} \quad / \]
\[3S:R=\text{take-NEG} \quad \text{yam} \quad 3S:1=\text{DUP-cut.up-3S} \]

*She didn’t take out a yam and cut it up.*

\[(94) \quad i=\text{lev} \quad \text{kaka} \quad / = \quad \text{i=kəs-kəs-te} \quad / \]
\[3S:R=\text{take} \quad \text{yam} \quad 3S:R=\text{DUP-cut.up-NEG} \]

*She took out a yam and didn’t cut it up.*

There are restrictions on the VP2 slot in Tirax clause-chains; some verbs cannot take part as non-initial VPs, such as *hab* ‘to hurry’:

\[(95) \quad n=\text{hab} \quad n=\text{van} \quad \text{lain} \quad 1S:R=\text{hurry} \quad 1S:R=\text{go home} \]

*I hurried home.*

\[(96) \quad * \quad n=\text{vial} \quad n=\text{hab} \quad 1S:R=\text{walk} \quad 1S:R=\text{hurry} \]

The clauses linked in clause-chains can be semantically equivalent, with each VP retaining its full semantic value, or they can be semantically asymmetrical, with one VP being more or less semantically bleached. These types of clause-chains are discussed and exemplified below.

6.5.2.1 Chained clauses with equal semantic status

Clauses in clause-chains can represent both sequential events and simultaneous events, where each VP retains its full semantic value.

6.5.2.1.1 Sequential events

VPs in clause-chains can represent different, consecutive stages of the one event. The example below shows the linked clauses relating different stages of the overall event of *growing*. The second clause, *ited ime linha* νωνων, is an example of a core-layer SVC, discussed in §6.5.3 below.
It sprouted and grew higher and higher

and became a coconut tree.

The VPs in clause-chains can also relate different, discrete sub-events, such as in (98) below:

They took their torches again and (they) shined (them) on her.

The same meaning can be simply expressed in English with just one clause: They shined their torches on her. Or, They shined light on her with their torches. The instrument of the VP2 in the Tirax sentence is introduced as direct object of the first clause verb, lev ‘take’. Adding a clause to promote an instrument to core argument is a common device in other Oceanic languages, such as Araki (François 2002:191). (cf. also Pawley (1987) for multi-predicate constructions in the PNG language Kalam) Lev is a frequently encountered verb in Tirax and often involved in VP strings. It is part of a structural pattern, which allows speakers to drip feed new information into the discourse, by introducing new entities in separate clauses to the new event in which they are involved. This pattern is also exemplified by (99) below, repeated from (90) above, for which the simplest free translation would be ‘She cut up a yam’. The additional clause with lev allows the labour of processing new information to be divided between the two clauses:

She took out a yam and cut it up.
The locative-existentials *at* and *txx* can occur as VP2s, where they have the semantic meaning of ‘to stay’ or ‘wait’. The Bislama translation is given for comparison:

\[(100) \text{i=nev } \text{r=nes-nenev } \text{txa } \text{ne } / = \text{ ri=at} \]

\[3S:R=\text{finish} \quad 3D:R=\text{eat}\text{-COMPL} \quad \text{leaf } \text{DEF} \quad 3D:R=\text{wait}\]

Afta, tufala i kakae lif ia, tufala i stap.

*After that, the two of them ate the herbs and they waited.*

6.5.2.1.2 Simultaneous events

Clause-chains can also relate simultaneous events. The syntax is the same as for sequential events. The simultaneous events can be semantically independent of each other:

\[(101) \text{s=tur } \text{s=ri } \text{k-kreh } \text{nabu } / \]

\[3P:R=\text{stand} \quad 3P:R=\text{look} \quad \text{DUP}\text{-through } \text{bamboo}\]

*They stood and peeped in through the bamboo.*

The events related by the clauses can also be semantically connected, as in a cause-effect relationship. My consultants felt the two actions were simultaneous in both the following examples:

\[(102) \text{ale } \text{s=lenlen-i } / = \text{ s=ri } \text{te } \text{... } \text{i=lalum} \]

\[3P:R=\text{lick.lips-3S} \quad 3P:R=\text{taste } \text{SUB} \quad 3S:R=\text{be.sweet}\]

*They licked their lips and tasted that it was sweet.*

\[(103) \text{i=xeh-din } \text{nxariv } \text{ne } / = \text{ i=neh} \]

\[3S:R=\text{bite-dead } \text{cat } \text{DEF} \quad 3S:R=\text{die}\]

*He bit the cat to death, and it died.*

The construction exemplified in (103) above, repeated from (91), would be classified as a switch-subject core-layer SVC by Crowley (2002:41). One argument put forward for a single-clause analysis is that the VPs together represent a unitary concept; the
second clause provides no new information, but is part of the meaning of the first clause. However, this criterion is not used in this work, since there is no independent evidence of how the events are being cognised by the speakers. The above constructions are analysed here as clause-chains on the grounds that each VP represents a semantically and syntactically complete clause, consistent with the structural analysis of the other VP strings where each VP has fully inflectional subject markers and retains its full semantic meaning. The prosodic evidence, as indicated in the above examples, also suggests that the VPs in such sentences comprise separate clauses, since each clause is in its own sub-IU. This analysis is consistent with that of François (2002) and Thieberger (2004) for comparable constructions in other Vanuatu languages, and contrasts with that of Crowley (eg. 2002, 2006a) and Hyslop (2001).

6.5.2.1.3 VP iteration
Tirax discourse makes extensive use of reduplication, such as VP iteration exemplified below. VP iteration iconically reflects the length of time taken to perform the action of the verb. From the point of view of story-telling, it stretches out the moment, delaying the following narrative event, and so creating suspense:

(104) (1.3) a: a: i=vi-vial \ = i=me \ 3S:R='DUP-walk 3S:R='come
HES so

Ah, so she made her way towards them.

(0.5) i=me --- i=me --- i=me --- i=me --- vvvv-vv ---
3S:R='come 3S:R='come 3S:R='come 3S:R='come DUP-DUR

She came and came, closer and closer until

(0.3) i=hedrex bet=nan \ nηa niar \ 3S:R='push head-ASSOC.3S:POSS LOC fence

she pushed her head through the fence.

VP iteration is regarded here as a special type of clause-chaining. The clauses are theoretically of equal syntactic status, however the chain of reiterated VPs is typically pronounced phonologically as a single unit, whereas each VP in a clause-chain is typically in its own IU or sub-IU.
6.5.2.2 Chained clauses with unequal semantic status

Some verbs involved in VP strings are fully inflecting verbs with pronominal subject markers, but are semantically bleached. These verbs include:

- Aspectual VP1s: *van*, *me*, *vla* and *narxat*
- Locative-existentials *at* and *tɔx*

6.5.2.2.1 Aspectual VPs

Many Tirax clause-chains have a directional or movement verb in the first VP slot, which functions as an aspect marker. The VP1 signals the initiation or progression of the event, related by the following VP, which carries the semantic load in the clause-chain.

The verbs which can appear in the aspectual VP1 slot are:

- the generic movement verbs *narxat* ‘get up’, *vla* ‘leave’, and
- the directional verbs *me* ‘come’ and *van* ‘go’.

Each of the above verbs can be the sole occupant of the verb slot of a simple clause:

(105) ale r=van lain
so 3D:R=go home

They (two) went home.

As an aspectual VP1, *van* indicates the initiation of an activity:

(106) ale i=van / = i=hex xini /
then 3S:R=go 3S:R=climb.up OBL:3S

And then he went to climb / started climbing up it.

An alternative sentence with complementiser *te* has a roughly equivalent meaning:
These constructions are reminiscent of Kalam multi-scene constructions, described by Pawley and Lane (1998), where the first verb, usually go, functions as a marker indicating whether or not the entity referred to by the subject has to move to the site of the event, and contrasts with stay in this function (Pawley & Lane 1998:212). At ‘stay’ is not frequently encountered as VP1 in Tirax VP strings, though its function in that slot does appear to be to indicate that the subject remains at a location to perform the action related by the VP2, as discussed in §6.5.2.2.2. However unlike Kalam, when a form of direction / movement verb is in the VP1 slot, the subject does not necessarily have to move anywhere in order to perform the action related by VP2. In the following example, (a) relates the character going to the garden and sentence (b) relates what he did when he got there:

(107) i=van  te  de=hex  xini
    3S:R=go  SUB  3S:I=climb.up  OBL:3S

He went /goes to climb up it.

M-R & R p.233

To negate the expression, a negative expression follows the VP1, with the following VP taking irrealis mood, as for negating other complex clauses:
As for other clause-chain VPs, aspectual VP1s can be followed by adverbs and particles:

(110) \text{bar=an} \quad \text{kle} \quad / = \quad \text{bar=drəl} \quad \text{taweh} \quad /= \\
2D:1=\text{go} \quad \text{again} \quad 2D:1=\text{hunt} \quad \text{another} \quad \\
\text{"Let’s go and hunt another again."}

When a VP string with \text{(v)an} ‘go’ takes the marker \text{sar}, habitual aspect is encoded. The same meaning is encoded regardless of whether \text{sar} follows \text{van} ‘go’ or the second VP:

(111) \text{i=van} \quad \text{sar} \quad i=\text{hex} \quad xini \\
3S:R=\text{go} \quad \text{HAB} \quad 3S:R=\text{climb.up} \quad \text{OBL:3S} \quad \\
\text{He would go climbing up it.}

(112) \text{i=van} \quad i=\text{hex} \quad \text{sar} \quad xini \\
3S:R=\text{go} \quad 3S:R=\text{climb.up} \quad \text{HAB} \quad \text{OBL:3S} \quad \\
\text{He would go climbing up it.}

Aspectual VP1s can also be followed by discourse markers, which typically occur at clause boundaries, and so are evidence of clausal status:

(113) \text{marbih} \quad i=\text{narxat} \quad i=\text{me} \quad — .. \\
\text{child} \quad 3S:R=\text{get.up} \quad 3S:R=\text{come} \quad \\
\text{The boy went and came -}

\text{i=narxat} \quad / \quad \text{ve} \quad .. \quad \text{i=me} \quad \text{salin} \quad /= \\
3S:R=\text{get.up} \quad \text{and} \quad 3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{outside} \quad \\
\text{he went and came out,
and got right away from there.

There are many instances in the data of constructions with three or more movement VPs. In the example below, the VP1 is aspectual, VP2 indicates displacement and VP3 encodes manner of movement:

(114) xno n=van na /= n=ver xini /
    1s 1sR=go now 1sR=say OBL:3s

I went and said to her ...

This juxtaposition of two or more movement verbs found in Tirax recalls Talmy’s (1985) observations about the analysis of movement by languages, into displacement, direction and manner of movement.

6.5.2.2.2 Locative VPs
There are a handful of examples in the corpus with locative-existentials at and tɔx as the VP1 in a clause-chain, giving the position or location for the action of the following verb:

(116) i=tɔx i=trev — .. te de=mraŋ mumux /
    3sR=stay 3sR=wait SUB 3sI=be.dry properly

It (the garden refuse) sits waiting so that it dries out properly.

(117) i=at sar /= i=trev lidax /
    3sR=be.located IMPF 3sR=wait dog

He was (there) waiting for the dog.
The above sentence is equivalent in meaning to the following:

\[(118) \text{i=trev} \quad \text{sar} \quad \text{lidax} \]
\[\text{3S:R=wait} \quad \text{IMPF} \quad \text{dog} \]

*He was waiting for the dog.*

M & R p.244

More frequently the locative existentials *at* and *\( \tau \alpha \)x* occur in the final VP slot of a clause-chain, indicating that the entity referred to by the subject NP remains at the location of the event described by the previous clause:

\[(119) \text{i=leh} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{xair} \quad \text{drl} \quad \text{s} \quad \text{=n\( \varepsilon \)h} \quad \text{drl} \quad / = \quad \text{si=at} \quad \backslash \]
\[\text{3S:R=see} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{3P} \quad \text{all} \quad \text{HES} \quad \text{3P:R=die} \quad \text{all} \quad \text{3P:R=be.located} \]

*She saw that they were all (lying) there dead.*

\(\backslash\text{aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 1962.572 \ae 1966.595}\)

As for all clause-chains, existential-locatives can be involved in disjoint reference constructions, where the object of the first verb is the subject of the following verb:

\[(120) \text{na} \quad / \quad \text{now} \quad \text{3P:R=leave} \quad \text{Sub} \quad \text{3P:R=be.located} \quad \text{Dim} \quad \text{home} \quad \text{/} \quad \text{i=at} \quad \text{bo} \quad \text{lain} \quad \backslash \]

*Now they leave one of them behind at home.*

\(\backslash\text{aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 2190.891 \ae 2201.017}\)

\[\ldots\]
\[\text{i=ve-i} \quad \text{te} \quad \text{s=lixdre} \quad \text{bo} \quad \text{i=at} \quad ^8 \]
\[\text{3S:R=make-3S} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{3P:R=leave} \quad \text{DIM} \quad \text{3S:R=be} \]

*so that they leave him behind.*

\(\backslash\text{aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 2208.35 \ae 2211.154}\)

6.5.2.2.3 Secondary predicate *ve*

Tirax has clause-chain constructions with copula *ve* as VP2 adding a secondary predicate:

---

\(^8\) The diminutive *bo* suppresses the object marker: *s’lixdrei iat* ‘They left him behind’ (M & R p244).
(121) vinadr han ri=ak / = r=ve mlav a ?  
woman 3S:POSS 3D:R=be.born 3D:R=COP twin eh

Was his wife born a twin?

The function of the copula in these constructions is to add a nominal attribute to the subject of VP1. Each VP constitutes a syntactically complete clause.

6.5.2.2.4 Directional VPs

We saw in §6.5.2.2.1, that direction verbs me ‘come’ and van ‘go’ can function as aspectual VP1s in clause-chain constructions. Me and van are also encountered as VP2s in clause-chains functioning as progressive aspect markers. The following two examples are roughly equivalent in meaning. Example (122) below was translated with the Bislama progressive marker: ‘i stap kam … ’ ‘she was coming’:

(122) i=me i=van nja nxadrɛl
3S:R=come 3S:R=PROG LOC supporting.beam

She was coming over to the supporting beam

(123) i=me sar nja nxadrɛl
3S:R=come IMPF LOC supporting.beam

She was coming over to the supporting beam

Movement verbs in Tirax discourse are often followed by a generic movement verb, encoding a progression in a certain direction. The Bislama translations are given for comparison:

(124) n=vi-vial / = n=me erwa /  
1S:R=DUP-walk 1S:R=come down.there

Mi wokbaot mi kamdown.

I was walking coming down.
Without the direction verb, the locative noun *ɛrmarɔŋ* ‘up there’ is interpreted as the location of action, rather than the source or destination:

I was walking (around) up there.

The generic movement verb *vla* similarly appears as a VP2 to encode displacement away from:

They are / were flying away ...

6.5.3 Core-layer serialisation

There is a multi-predicate construction in Tirax in which an intransitive non-initial VP functions adverbially, predicing a property to the previous verb, and does not itself have a nominal argument. Syntactically, these constructions are distinguished from clause-chains by the non-initial VP carrying an invariable third person subject marker, which does not refer to an entity:

Her father, O, and W had to take good care of her

He was making the chestnuts continuously fall.
The adverbial VP agrees in mood with the main verb:

(130) nmab des=rus de=hxalxin
    chestnut 3P:1=fall.down 3S:1=do.continuously

The chestnuts will fall continuously.

The order of VPs in this construction cannot sensibly be reversed:

(131) *tata han O dxī W i=xeiv r=natnat vɔ r xini /
    father 3S:POSS O COM W 3S:R=strong 3D:R=care.for EMPH OBL

These constructions are analysed here as core-layer S(erial) V(erb) C(onstruction)s, as are analogous constructions in related languages by linguists including Crowley (1987, 2002, 2006a) and Hyslop (2001), who both refer to them as ambient core-layer SVCs to reflect the fact that the subject marker of the non-initial VP does not refer to an entity. They are referred to as hierarchized core-layer SVCs in Bril’s (2007) survey of Oceanic multi-predicate constructions, reflecting the head-modifier syntactic relationship of the VP1 to VP2. Other linguists analyse these same types of constructions as clause-chains (eg. François: 2002) or clause juxtaposition, specifically ‘topic-comment juxtaposition’ (Thieberger: 2004). The main reason against an analysis as independent clauses here is the fact that the subject marker on the VP2 in these constructions cannot be pronominal.

We saw in §6.5.2 above that some verbs, such as hab ‘to hurry’ cannot take part as V2 in clause-chain constructions. There are also restrictions on the non-initial VP slots in core-layer SVCs. Hab, for example, is also unable to occur in the VP2 slot in a core-layer SVC. Examples (95-96) are repeated below for comparison:

Clause-chain:

(132) n=hab n=van lain
    1S:R=hurry 1S:R=go home

I hurried home.
**Clause-chain:**

(133) * n=vial \( n=\text{hab} \)  
\( 1\text{S}:R=\text{walk} \)  \( 1\text{S}:R=\text{hurry} \)

**Core-layer SVC:**

(134) * n=vial \( i=\text{hab} \)  
\( 1\text{S}:R=\text{walk} \)  \( 3\text{S}:R=\text{hurry} \)

Like VPs in clause-chains, the VPs which make up core-layer SVCs can each express their full semantic value, or one may be bleached of its semantic value and playing the role of a function word.

6.5.3.1 Core-layer VPs with equal semantic status

In semantically symmetrical core-layer SVCs, each verb retains its full semantic meaning. Constructions comprise VP strings with *manner* VPs.

6.5.3.1.1 Manner VPs

Several one-place predicates can function adverbially in core-layer SVCs, including *nam* ‘good’, *hat* ‘bad’, *lad* ‘big’ and *bih* ‘small’:

(135) \( n=\text{vla} \) \( i=\text{nam} \)  
\( 1\text{S}:R=\text{go} \)  \( 3\text{S}:R=\text{good} \)

*I’m going well.*

Some verbs, such as *mavoh* ‘straight’, and *nalxah* ‘slow’, can participate in both nuclear and core-layer SVCs. You will recall from §4.5, that as nuclear SVCs, the non-initial verb does not carry a subject marker:
Nuclear SVCs:

(136) n=tur -mavɔh
1S:R=stand-straight

*I stood up (ie. an action).

M & R p.145

Core-layer SVCs:

(137) n=tur i=mavɔh
1S:R=stand 3S:R=straight

*I stood straight (ie. a state).

M & R p.145

The difference in meaning between the core-layer and nuclear constructions in this case is that the core-layer predicates a state, ‘standing straight’, and the nuclear construction predicates an action of ‘standing up’. The contrast in meaning may reflect a contrast in the syntactic structure and function of the V2 in the two constructions. Whereas the V2 in the core-layer construction is understood as modifying the V1, the V2 in the nuclear construction could be understood as predicking the property onto the S argument. I suggest that the constituent verbs in nuclear SVCs in Tirax have co-ranking status, leaving core-layer SVCs to express head-modifier relationships.

It was observed in §4.5.1, that some two-place predicates can participate in nuclear SVCs. However two-place predicates cannot be V2s in core-layer SVCs:

(138) n=vla-liخدɾɛ ntaɲ hɔk
1S:R=go.away-leave basket 1S:POSS

*I left my basket behind.

(139) * n=vla i=liҲdɾɛ ntaɲ hɔk
1S:R=go.away 3S:R=leave basket 1S:POSS
This follows from the fact that two-place predicates cannot sensibly modify a verb: in a nuclear SVC, the V2 retains its argument structure, whereas in a core-layer SVC, the V2 functions as a modifier to the VP1.

We saw in §6.4.1 that rŋɔ ‘feel, hear, sense’ takes a realis te-complement clause. Rŋɔ can also form core-layer SVCs with manner VPs, in which case the manner VP functions like a secondary predicate:

(140) s=rŋɔ i=hat xini /
    3P:R=feel 3S:R=bad OBL:3S

    They feel bad about it.

(141) n=rŋɔ i=nam /= tɛ da=ver xini nɔx nelŋ
    1S:R=feel 3S:R=good SUB 1S:1=say OBL 2S today

    I am happy that I could tell it to you today.

To negate a core-layer SVC, either VP can take the negative marker, as for VPs in clause-chains. Unlike clause chains, there is no difference in meaning between the two alternatives:

(142) n=vla i=nam-te
    1S:R=go 3S:R=good-NEG

    I’m not going well.

The negative marker on the V1 triggers an irrealis subject marker on the V2.

(143) n=vla-te de=nam
    1S:R=go-NEG 3S:1=good

    I’m not going well.

Since it is possible for the two subject markers to not agree in mood, it could be argued that such constructions are not strictly core-layer SVCs. I prefer the core-layer analysis, as this construction is morphosyntactically distinct from all other multi-predicate constructions. Semantically, a core-layer SVC describes a single
proposition, unlike all other VP strings. Morphy-syntactically, it differs from a clause-chain, for example, in the following ways:

- the subject marker on the VP2 in a core-layer SVC is non-pronominal and invariably third person singular
- the range of verbs which can participate as VP2s in core-layer SVCs is restricted
- for negative core-layer SVCs the meaning is the same regardless of which VP is negated

These facts can be accounted for if we analyse the second VP in the string as a modifier, with a note that there must be a mechanism which triggers irrealis in the VP2 when the VP1 is negated.

6.5.3.1.2 Simultaneous actions
There is a core-layer SVC which encodes simultaneous action. In this construction, the third person plural realis subject marker occurs on the second verb, rather than the singular marker. The examples below contrast a clause-chain with a core-layer SVC. In the first example, the events are consecutive, in the second, a core-layer SVC, the events are simultaneous:

Clause-chain:

(144) da=vɛ nalɔk da=trev A
1S:1=make laplap 1S:1=wait.for A

_I will make laplap and (then) wait for A._

Core-layer SVC:

(145) da=vɛ nalɔk s=trev A
1S:1=make laplap 3P:R=wait.for A

_I will make laplap while waiting for A._

9 The status of the subject-marker on the non-initial VP in such core-layer SVCs requires further investigation.
6.5.3.2 Core-layer VPs with unequal semantic status

There are several types of constructions involving consecutive VPs in core-layer constructions which are semantically asymmetrical. These are constructions with:

- Aspectual VP2s, such as durative *ihxalxin* and *inev* ‘finished’
- Directional VP2s (functioning adverbially)
- Locative VP2: *sre* ‘follow’

6.5.3.2.1 Durative VP2: *hxalxin*

The verb *hxalxin* functions as a durative aspect marker in core-layer SVCs. The serialised VP follows any core arguments:

(146) \[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{man} & \text{DST} & 3S:R=\text{steal} & \text{pig} & 1S:POSS & 3S:R=\text{do.continuously} \\
\end{array}
\]

Man ia i stap stilim pig blong mi oltæm.

That man keeps stealing my pigs.

\[\text{aud AB1-005-A.wav} \:\text{as} \:1404.389 \:\text{ae} \:1407.077\]

*Hxalxin* is likely to have derived from *haxal* ‘one’ and *lxen* ‘again, back’. It is unusual in that it can fill the same slots as a VP adverb *brtet*, ‘always’, which can be preposed:

(147) \[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{alwaysDIM} & \text{man} & \text{DST} & 3S:R=\text{steal} & \text{pig} & 1S:POSS \\
\end{array}
\]

Man ia i stap stilim pig blong mi oltæm.

That man is always stealing my pigs.

\[\text{aud AB1-005-A.wav} \:\text{as} \:1434.41 \:\text{ae} \:1444.404\]

(148) \[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
3S:R=\text{do.continuously} & \text{man} & \text{DST} & 3S:R=\text{steal} & \text{pig} & 1S:POSS \\
\end{array}
\]

Man ia i stap stilim pig blong mi oltæm.

That man keeps stealing my pigs.

\[\text{aud AB1-005-A.wav} \:\text{as} \:1404.389 \:\text{ae} \:1407.077\]

In this position, the subject marker is still sensitive to mood:
In my opinion, that man will keep stealing my pigs.

M & R p.237

6.5.3.2.2 Directional VP2s

Directional VPs can be the final VPs in a core-layer SVC, giving an adverbial meaning of ‘hither’ (mɛ), or ‘thither’ (van):

(150) nxariv i=vir-vir i=van litan / ..
rat 3S:R=DUP-run 3S:R=go down

The rat ran down ...

They can also be used to encode a destination (van) versus a source (mɛ):

(151) n=tur i=me nŋa naxnel nŋe /=
1S:R=stand 3S:R=come LOC house PART

I come from one of the houses

tɛ r=ve-ve naxnel B xini \ SUB IMP:S:R=DUP-tell nakamal B OBL:3S
called the B house.

Directional VP2s are typically used with verbs of perception such as ri ‘look’ to indicate direction of gaze, and with verbs of exchange, such as lev ‘give / take’, to give the direction of exchange:

(152) mɛ cɛtan s=lev ten paun /=
people here 3P:R=give ten(B) pound(B)

The people here gave ten pounds

i=an sxi tata hɔk dxi lele hɔk xner /
3S:R=go ALL father 1S:POSS COM brother 1S:POSS P
to my papas and brothers.

\aud AB1-002-A.wav \as 767.948 \ae 773.161
(153) \[\text{xnɔ mɾɛ hɔk xner mɾɛ B s=lev ten paun } /=\]
1S people 1S:POSS P people B 3P:R=take ten(B) pound(B)

*Me, my family, the B people, received ten pounds*

\[\text{i=me sxı mɾɛ N } \]
3S:R=come ALL people N

*from the N people.*

\[\text{\`aud AB1-002-A.wav \`as 777.142 \`ae 783.029}\]

If the VP1 has an object, the object intervenes between the VP1 and VP2, making it formally identical to a DS clause-chain construction in the case when the object is third person singular:

(154) \[\text{nas=hlox nvat } /=\ i=van / ..\]
1P:R=carry money 3S:R=go

*We brought money,*

\[\text{\`aud AB1-001-A.wav \`as 879.239 \`ae 886.4}\]

\[\text{nas=hlox nɔdran nge i=van } /\]
1P:R=carry food PART 3S:R=go

*we brought some food.*

Direction verbs can also participate in clause-chains. However, the difference is only evident when there is a non-third person or non-singular subject. The examples below are of a clause-chain construction and core-layer SVC respectively:

(155) \[\text{nas=hlox keni xas=an hospital}\]
1P:R=carry 2p 2P:R=go hospital(B)

*We carried you (all) and (you) went to hospital.*

M & R p.242

(156) \[\text{nas=hlox keni i=van hospital}\]
1P:R=carry 2p 3S:R=go hospital(B)

*We carried you (all) to hospital.*

M & R p.242
For third person singular subjects, prosodic cues to clause boundaries are the only means of disambiguating the structures.

We saw §4.5.1 that directional verbs can participate in nuclear SVCs, in which case the directional nuclear verb precedes an aspect marker:

\[(157) \text{i=hlox} \quad \text{m} \varepsilon \text{ sar} \quad 3S:R=\text{carry} \quad \text{IMPF} \]

\[He \ was \ carrying \ (it) \ hither.\]

\[(158) * \text{i=hlox} \quad \text{sar} \quad \text{m} \varepsilon \quad 3S:R=\text{carry} \quad \text{IMPF} \quad \text{hither}\]

\[M \ & \ R \ p241\]

A subtly different meaning can be expressed using a core-layer SVC. For the core-layer SVC, either order of the VP2 with respect to the particle is acceptable with no appreciable effect on meaning:

\[(159) \text{i=hlox-i} \quad \text{i=m} \varepsilon \text{ sar} \quad 3S:R=\text{carry} \quad 3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{IMPF}\]

\[He \ was \ bringing \ it \ over.\]

\[(160) \text{i=hlox} \quad \text{sar} \quad \text{i=m} \varepsilon \quad 3S:R=\text{carry} \quad 3S:R=\text{come}\]

\[He \ was \ bringing \ it \ over.\]

\[M \ & \ R \ p241\]

Direction verbs can participate in the full range of verbal constructions, from matrix verb, to clause-chained verb, core-layer and nuclear SVC. In each of these constructions the $V_2$ is progressively bleached of its canonical verb meaning and function, until in nuclear SVCs, direction verbs carry no markers and just encode the direction of the motion described by $V_1$, a function typically associated with prepositions. The process of semantic bleaching and grammaticisation of verbs to become prepositions or complementisers is frequently encountered in the world’s languages. Lord (1993) notes that the directional verbs, go and come, typically become prepositions to and from respectively. There is not yet evidence that me and van have acquired the status of prepositions in Tirax.
6.5.3.2.3 Locative \textit{sre}

\textit{sre}, ‘follow’, can participate as a VP2 in core-layer SVCs with a locative verb, in which case it means ‘behind’. Compare (161) and (162) below, showing \textit{sre} substituting for \textit{sitox} ‘behind’:

(161) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{P} & \text{i=at} & \text{sitox} & \text{T} \\
\text{P} & 3S:R=be.located & \text{LOC:back} & \text{T}
\end{tabular}

\textit{P} is behind \textit{T}.

(162) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{P} & \text{i=at} & \text{i=sre} & \text{T} \\
\text{P} & 3S:R=be.located & 3S:R=\text{follow} & \text{T}
\end{tabular}

\textit{P} is behind \textit{T}.

The following example shows that the subject marker on \textit{sre} must be third person singular, as for all VP2s in core-layer SVCs:

(163) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{ni=at} & \text{i=sre} & \text{\textbackslash n=sre} & \text{nvat} \\
1S:R=\text{be.located} & 3S:R=\text{follow} & (1S:R=\text{follow}) & \text{rock}
\end{tabular}

\textit{I am behind the rock}.

\textit{M & R p.245}

6.5.3.2.4 Perfective \textit{nev}

\textit{Nev} is a verb meaning ‘finish’, and can appear as the only verb in a simple clause:

(164) \begin{tabular}{l}
\text{nxa-nevir} & \text{han} & \text{i=nev} \\
\text{wood-flame} & 3S:POSS & 3S:R=\text{finish}
\end{tabular}

\textit{His torch went out}.

\textit{\textbackslash audi AB1-002-RS.wav \textbackslash as 73.745 \textbackslash ae 83.461}

More often though, \textit{inev} signifies the end of an action described by the previous verb, in an core-layer SVC:
They killed him dead.

He killed them dead.

Inev also participates in other kinds of constructions. It can precede a clause, as in (167) below from Cat and Dog, in which case it is translated with the Bislama discourse marker ‘afta’, meaning ‘(and) after that’. It functions as a kind of discourse marker, signifying a temporal juncture between the previous event and the subsequent event:

They (two) again cooked this one through and (left it),

and after that they went back to the garden.

This discourse function of inev resembles the recapitulation clauses of the Amerindian languages, which can involve generic verbs such as ‘do’ to link successive clauses (Stirling 1993:17).

As a verbal discourse marker, inev is frequently isolated in its own IU:

He saw a black snake which was asleep in the branches.
As a discourse marker, signifying a temporal juncture, *nev* also forms clauses with discourse markers *ale* and *na*, as in (169) and (170) respectively:

(169) *i=rub*    xini    *na*    nabatu   *na* 
3S:R=hit OBL now second.one(B) now

*Now she whipped against the second one.*

(170) “ *xas=lixdre-er*    *der=uh-uh-er* ” 
2P:R=leave-3P 3D:1=DUP-take-3P

*(The oldest brother said): “You will let them be, they will be married now.”*

*i=nev*    *na* 
3S:R=finish now

*That's all now. / The end.*

6.5.4 The syntax of numeral phrases

We saw in §3.6, that like many Vanuatu languages, Tirax numerals can function as both adjectives and verbs, as in the following two examples respectively:
For third person subjects, verbal numerals inflect for mood but not number, as exemplified in (169) above. However for first and second person, the verbal numeral inflects for number:

(173) keni xas=lin xas=an laltah
people 2P.R=five 2P.R=go LOC.sea

You five went to the sea.

There is a range of analyses for the comparable constructions in related languages. For example, Naman verbal numeral constructions are analysed as clauses, participating in core-layer SVCs (Crowley 2006a: 189). and those of Araki are analysed as clauses in clause-chains (François 2002:197).

However, there is evidence that Tirax verbal numeral phrases, when functioning as noun modifiers, do not participate in core-layer SVCs or clause-chains with adjacent VPs in Tirax. Verbal numerals have a different distribution to conventional verbs. They precede relative clauses within a NP, whereas canonical verbs cannot:

(174) nevix=na-n —.. i=lixdrɛ nvanu
tomorrow=ASSOC-3S:POSS 3S:R=leave village

The following day she left the village

.. dxi ntaŋ i=ru te i=lonvex xini deneh\textsuperscript{10}
COM bag 3S,R=two REL 3S:R=be.filled OBL soil

with the two bags which were filled with dirt.

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Lonvex} ‘be filled’ typically agrees in number with its subject, so the preferred form is \textit{r=lonvex}, with the dual marker (M & R p.258).
Secondly, the comitative preposition *dxi* takes NP complements, and not clausal complements:

(176) *i=lixdrɛ nvanu dxi ntaŋ te i=bih

3S:R=leave village COM bag REL 3S:R=small

*She left the village with (the) small bag.*

(177) *i=lixdrɛ nvanu dxi ntaŋ i=bih

3S:R=leave village COM bag 3S:R=small

However the NP and numeral can follow *dxi*:

(178) i=lixdrɛ nvanu dxi ntaŋ i=ru

3S:R=leave village COM bag 3S:R=two

*She left the village with (the) two bags.*

The following example, repeated from §3.6.3, shows that VPs in strings with numerals also do not have to agree in mood:

(179) keni xas=lin bas=an laltah

people 2p.R=five 2p:1=go LOC:sea

*You five will go to the sea.*

The fact that numerals behave differently from all other VPs in VP strings supports a *reduced relative clause* analysis for verbal numerals functioning as nominal modifiers. The numeral phrase is part of the NP, and typically does not take a relativiser, although a relativiser is permissible:

(180) na i=leh vemex e - net vemex ri te i=hŋavil

now 3S:R=see dove HES child dove FOC REL 3S:R=ten

*Now then he saw those ground dove chicks, who numbered ten.*
Numerals can also participate in core-layer SVCs, where they predicate the number feature onto the preceding verb. This is most frequently encountered with the numeral ‘one’, haxal. The following sentences exemplify this adverbial function:

(181) here tuɛ / .. mleun i=at i=haxal vɔr / ..
because before chief 3S:R=be.located 3S:R=be.alone EMPH

Because before, the chief lived alone

Because before, the chief didn’t live alone

The core-layer SVC with haxal can be negated in the same way as other complex constructions. You will recall from §6.5.3 above that when the first VP in a core-layer SVC is negated it triggers the irrealis 3s agreement marker on the following VP:

(182) here tuɛ / .. mleun i=at-ɛ de=haxal vɔr / ..
because before chief 3S:R=be.located-NEG 3S:R=be.alone EMPH

Because before, the chief didn’t live alone

The numeral haxal can also participate in clause-chains, in which case the property of ‘aloneness’ is predicated onto an entity, rather than the previous VP:

(183) mrɛ han si=at s=haxal vɔr
people 3S:POSS 3P:R=be.located 3P:R=be.alone EMPH

His people all lived separately (as individuals).

It is also encountered as a VP1 in a clause-chain:

(184) M bo i=haxal i=ŋɔdrɔ mumux tata har
M DIM 3S:R=be.alone 3S:R=know properly father 3P:POSS

M alone really knew their father.
6.5.5 Bleached verbs

Some verbs participate in constructions in which they function as grammatical markers encoding such things as adjunct NPs or subordinate clauses. These verbs include *va* ‘say’, *ve* ‘make’, *sre* ‘follow’, *nev* ‘finish’, *dla* ‘be like’ and *sdr* ‘reach’. The first four verbs are discussed in §6.4.7.2, §6.3.3, §6.5.3.2.3 and §6.5.3.2.4 respectively. The following section looks briefly at the distribution of *dla* and *sdr*.

6.5.5.1 *Dla* ‘like’

*Dla* ‘be like, be thus’ can be the sole occupant of a verb slot in a simple clause, as in (185) and (186) below:

(185) naxɔ=nan i=dla vər naxɔ vinadr han \ 
    face=ASSOC.3S:POSS 3S:R=be.like EMPH face woman 3S:POSS

    Her face really (looked) like the face of his wife.

(186) n=ve navɔn-te xini nte te s=dla xori
    1S:R=make very.much-NEG OBL thing SUB 3P:R=be.like LOC:DX2

    I don't make things like that very much.

However *dla* is most commonly used anaphorically to refer to the action or state described in previous clauses. In *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, the devil exhorts his comrades to gather all their weapons so they can go and kill the boy. The sentence following his speech is:

(187) ale xair drul i=dla
    so 3p all 3S:R=be.thus

    So they (the devils) all (did) so.

In the above example, *idla* functions as an anaphoric pro-form, referring back to the event described in the previous lines. The subject marker does not refer to an entity. This clause can be paraphrased as a core-layer SVC, with equivalent meaning:
(188) ale xair drul s=ve i=dla
   so 3p all 3p:r=do 3s:r=be.thus

   So they (the devils) all (did) so.

M & R p.252

As we saw above, dla can also function as a verb, predicating a property onto an
entity, in which case the subject marker is fully inflecting:

(189) ale xair drul s=dla
   so 3p all 3p:r=be.thus

   So they (the devils) were like that.

M & R p.252

However, a clause-chain construction with dla is not permissible:

(190) *ale xair drul s=ve s=dla
   so 3p all 3p:r=do 3s:r=be.thus

   So they (the devils) all (did) so.

M & R p.252

When functioning as an anaphoric pro-form, the verb dla is typically followed by a
determiner or locative demonstrative: ri, xori, xue, xan xori, xɔtan, xɔtan xan, xɔtaxan,
or ŋe, exemplified below:

(191) s=vial sar = = s=van i=dla ŋe /
   3p:r=walk IMPF 3p:r=go 3s:r=be.thus ANA

   They walked along like that (ie. in birth order), ...

\aud AB1-018-A.wav \as 794.187 \ae 796.48

(192) ve-ve-ve xar=ŋo i=dla ri hxa xar=drodrom i=dla xori
   dup-if 2d:r=want 3s:r=be.thus foc or 2d:r=think 3s:r=be.thus loc:dx2

   But if that is what you want, or if that is what you are planning ...

\aud AB1-001-A.wav \as 1052.72 \ae 1056.741

Table 6-8 shows the full range of expressions with dla that are attested in the data.
There are no instances of dla xar, and only four of dla xan.
Table 6-8: Range of determiners which follow the verbal discourse marker *dla*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Category of (locative) demonstrative / determiner</th>
<th>No. of instances in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>dla nɛ</em></td>
<td>definite article</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla ri</em></td>
<td>anaphoric demonstrative</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xan</em></td>
<td>proximal demonstrative determiner</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xɔtan</em></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; person locative demonstrative</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xori</em></td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; person locative demonstrative</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xuc</em></td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; person locative demonstrative</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xɔxan</em></td>
<td>locative demonstrative</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The complex expression can also be followed by *xan* or *xar*. Attested combinations are shown in table 6-9.

Table 6-9: Instances of discourse marker *dla* followed by two demonstratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>No. of instances in corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xɔtan xan</em></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xɔ(t)a)xan</em> (hybrid form of <em>xɔtan xan</em>?)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xori xar</em></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dla xɔxan xan</em></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dla* can also function cataphorically, taking a *te*-complement clause:

(193) i=tev-kr-kreh  nɛs  nɛ /  
3S;R=be.DUP-deceive  fish  DEF

*Now she tricked the fish by calling out to it,*

\aud AB1-018-A.wav \as 2508.05 \ae 2510.029

a  ..  i=dla  te  xain  i=tev  nɛɛ  na \  
HES  3S;R=be.thus SUB  3S  3S;R=call ANA.PRO now

*just like (the boy) had called to it.*

\aud AB1-018-A.wav \as 2510.029 \ae 2511.402
The interrogative *haxa* ‘what’, discussed in §5.6.2, combines with *idla* to form the ubiquitous interrogative expression ‘how’ or ‘what kind of’. The phrase is pronounced as a phonological unit, *dlahxa*, and is analysed and glossed as partially lexicalised. *Dla-hxa* typically elicits information about manner:

(194) \( s=va \quad o \; a \; a \; x=mɛ \; i=dla-hxa \)

\[ 3P:R=\text{say} \quad \text{oh} \quad \text{HES} \quad \text{HES} \quad 2S:R=\text{come} \quad 3S:R=\text{be.thus-how} \]

*They said “Oh! How did you get here?”*

\( \text{\textbackslash aud \ ABV1-002-RS.wav \ as 584.823 \ \textbar ae 587.188} \)

In the above example, the subject marker on *dlahxa* does not refer to an entity and the expression cannot take a free NP subject. However *dlahxa* can also take NP subject arguments, in which case it means ‘what sort of’:

(195) \( x=\text{mtaxit} \; \text{xini} \; \text{morti} \; tɛ \; i=dla-hxa \)

\[ 2S:R=\text{be.afraid} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{person} \quad \text{REL} \quad 3S:R=\text{be.thus-what} \]

“How kind of man are you afraid of?” (Lit: You are afraid of a man who is like what?)

\( \text{\textbackslash aud \ AB1-002-A.wav \ as 173.227 \ \textbar ae 177.586} \)

The *dla* VP can be given emphasis by fronting:

(196) \( \text{das}=\text{srɛ} \; \text{vɔ} \; \text{nua} \; -- = \; \text{das}=\text{van} \; \text{betulŋa} \; \text{nua} \; -- .. \)

\[ 1P:J=\text{follow} \quad \text{EMPH} \quad \text{river} \quad 1P:J=\text{go} \quad \text{source} \quad \text{river} \]

“We have to follow the river and get to the source of the river.”

\( \text{\textbar aud \ ABV1-002-RS.wav \ as 103.304 \ \textbar ae 107.61} \)

\( \text{ale} \;/ .. \; \text{i=dla} \; \text{vɔr} \; -- = \; \text{s=vla} -- \)

\[ 3S:R=\text{be.thus} \quad \text{EMPH} \quad 3P:R=\text{leave} \]

*So like that, off they went.*

\( \text{\textbar aud \ ABV1-002-RS.wav \ as 107.61 \ \textbar ae 108.465} \)

(197) \( ^{^\text{\textbackslash de=dla-hxa}} \; \text{na} \; ^{^\text{\textbackslash han}} \; -- = \; \text{de}=\text{winim} \; \text{selivan} \; \text{han} \) \( ^{^\text{\textbar}} \)

\[ 3S:J=\text{be.thus-what} \quad \text{now} \quad 3S:J=\text{earn(B)} \quad \text{life} \quad 3S:POSS \]

*How now can he save his life?*

\( \text{\textbar aud \ AB1-002-A.wav \ as 111.676 \ \textbar ae 114.452} \)

*Dla* is also used as a hesitation marker, much like ‘like’ is used in colloquial English:
Like, I want to tell another story.

*Dla* also forms expressions with *lot*, ‘place’, to mean roughly ‘like (similar to) the way …’. *Lot* is preposed, forming a pivot for a relative clause, comprised of VP string ending with *dla*. *Lot* and the relativiser *te* are pronounced and written as a single word, since only one */t/* is pronounced:

(199) i=rʌdrʌ-te lotɛ de=ve de=dla

3S:i=know-NEG place.REL 3S:i=do 3S:i=be.thus

*He didn’t know what to do.*

(200) n=ve da=ve lotɛ r=sbsbax i=dla \ 

1S:i=want 1S:i=talk place.REL IMP:S=i=address 3S:i=be.like

*I want to talk about how people should address each other.*

6.5.5.2 *Sder* ‘until’

*Sder* can function as a transitive verb meaning ‘catch, touch, reach’, and can be the sole occupant of a verb slot in a simple clause. It can take the negative marker, and its subject marker inflects for person and number of the actor:

(201) bar=leh bunxi nanix / = bar=sder-te \ 

2D:i=see nest bird 2D:i=touch-NEG

‘If you see a bird’s nest, don’t touch (it)’!

(202) s=van v-v-v-vɔ

3P:i=go DUP-DUR

*They went on and on until*

s=sder ves-nhal na

3P:i=reach half-road now

*they reached half-way.*
Sder frequently follows a verb of locomotion in clause-chain constructions:

(203) nar=teltax nalxah /=
1D=R=trail.behind do.slowly

*We were slowly walking behind,*

nar=me /= nar=sder sxi lal nani ɛrtval xar /
1D=R=come 1D=R=reach ALL inside coconut over.there DST

*and we almost reached that coconut plantation over there...* 11

11 Sder is a transitive verb, but in this example the argument is an oblique phrase with preposition sxi. Sxi is likely to indicate ‘nearby’, and the expression is translated here as ‘almost reached’.

Sder also participates as VP2 in core-layer SVCs. However unlike other VP2s in core-layer constructions, sder has a NP complement, usually a temporal, locational or goal NP, and the phrase headed by sder effectively functions as a PP:

(204) ale (s=ve — =) s=lav nan- nani Wala \ 
so (3P=R=made) 3P=R=plant HES coconut Wala

Oli gat plantation lo Wala

*So they set up a coconut plantation at Wala.*

s=tax i=sder (/ *s=sder) nelin \ 
3P=R=be.located 3S=R=until 3P=R=until today

Oli stap kasem tede.

*They are still there today.*

Sder can also mark temporal subordinate clauses, similarly to the Naman cognate jober (Crowley 2006a:196). Here it functions as a complex subordinator:

(205) i=nev/= i=van/= nevix=nan kle i=van kle — ..
3S=R=finish 3S=R=go tomorrow=ASSOC.3S=POSS again 3S=R=go again

*After that, he went. The next day he returned again*
when the grass in the garden had grown.

When the grass had grown, ...

6.5.6 Common verbs and construction types

Tirax grammar, as is typical of Vanuatu languages, challenges the notion of the clause as a robust, universal grammatical unit. For paratactic multi-predicate constructions there is a cline from clause juxtaposition on the one hand through to nuclear SVCs on the other, with each non-initial VP becoming less independent and subject to greater restrictions as we move along the axis. Table 6-10 summarises the constructions in which the most common verbs participate. The verbs represented in the table are the frequently attested function verbs and direction verbs, and they represent a range of morphosyntactic behaviour for Tirax verbs, from the most flexible (van ‘go’ and me ‘come’) to the most restricted (narxat ‘get up’).

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
Verb & Clause-chain (VP1) & Clause-chains (VP2) & Core-layer SVC (VP2) & Nuclear SVC (VP2) \\
\hline
\hline
\textit{me} ‘come’ & Yes: aspect marking (inceptive / progressive) & Yes: aspect marking (progressive) & Yes: direction & Yes \\
\textit{van} ‘go’ & & & & \\
\hline
\textit{at} ‘sit, stay’ & Yes & Yes: Location & Yes & No \\
\textit{tɔx} ‘sit, stay’ & & & & \\
\hline
\textit{vla} ‘leave’ & Yes: aspect marking (inceptive) & Yes: displacement & No & No \\
\hline
\textit{narxat} ‘get up’ & Yes: aspect marking (inceptive) & No & No & No \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Common Tirax verbs and constructions in which they participate}
\end{table}
In addition to the verbs represented in the above table there are constructions with semantically bleached verbs, such as va ‘say’, and there are verbs such as hxalxin ‘do continuously’, which are only encountered as VP2s in core-layer SVCs.

Clause is a fuzzy category in Tirax (cf. Pawley’s (1987) observations for Kalam); Tirax clause-chains are almost identical to core-layer SVCs in their appearance and syntactic behaviour, however the V2s in clause-chains have a filled subject argument slot, whereas the V2s in core-layer SVCs function adverbially, and their subject markers are non-pronominal. On the other hand, clause-chains function as a unit for the purposes of syntactic processes which typically operate on single clauses, such as tail-head linkage, discussed in §7.3.1. The following example shows a structurally ambiguous construction, between a core-layer SVC and a clause-chain, functioning as a clause for the purposes of tail-head linkage:

(206) ren-te nŋɛ i=van 3S:R=run 3S:R=go 3S:R=arrive LOC.DX1

the oldest ran up to (her).

The following example shows a clause-chain partaking in a tail-head linkage construction:
Tirax clause-chains therefore appear to be an intermediate status between phrase and clause: at the syntactic level the constituents function as independent clauses, but at a discourse level the constituents function as a single clause. The behaviour of ‘core-layer SVCs’ and ‘clause-chains’ in Tirax challenges the robustness of the clause as a universal unit of discourse.
7 Clause categories in Tirax narrative

The previous chapters have been concerned with Tirax grammatical categories and processes which operate below the level of the sentence, beginning with sounds, words and morphemes, through to phrases, clauses and finally complex clauses. We now turn to categories and processes which operate above sentence-level. The present chapter looks at clauses in Tirax from the point of view of their functional role in narrative. The corpus used in the research for the present chapter is the ten narratives listed in Appendix V. These ten narratives were the focus of the detailed investigation that informs the findings and discussion presented in the remaining chapters. The examples for this and the remaining chapters are written as intonation units, with an indication of intonation contour marked instead of punctuation. Pause length is also given, where relevant to the analysis. The key to transcription is given at the front, and the methodology for identifying I(ntonation) U(nit)s and sub-IUs is given in Appendix IV.

7.1 Introduction

Labov and Waletzky (1967), Labov (1972, 1997), Hopper and Thompson (1980), Du Bois (1980), Polanyi (1989) and countless others have observed that there is a general division of labour between two main types of clauses in narrative discourse: narrative clauses, which further a story, and non-narrative clauses, which provide context and additional descriptive detail to support the narrative. Narrative clauses are understood as being temporally ordered with respect to each other (eg. Labov 1972:360), whereas non-narrative clauses have no temporal restrictions. The present chapter is concerned with the problem of identifying narrative and non-narrative clauses in Tirax.

Labov and Waletzky (1967) define a narrative clause as a main clause which relates a discrete, specific event and moves the temporal reference forward. Non-narrative clauses make up the rest of the narrative, and elaborate the narrative by providing contextual or evaluative information to make the story more engaging and meaningful for the hearer. Hopper & Thompson (1980) describe a similar dichotomy, which they refer to as foregrounded vs. backgrounded clauses, whereby foregrounded clauses roughly correspond to narrative clauses. Foregrounded clauses are sequentially ordered clauses expressing the events which make up the backbone of the story, and
backgrounded clauses provide context and other descriptive information. Hopper and Thompson argue that there is a correlation between the discourse function of *grounding*, that is, distinguishing foregrounded and backgrounded clauses, and a language’s morphosyntactic features, specifically those associated with expressing semantic transitivity. They find that foregrounded clauses are associated with features which express high semantic transitivity, such as realis mode, perfective aspect, and highly individuated O, and backgrounded clauses tend to have features associated with low semantic transitivity, such as irrealis mode, imperfective aspect, negative polarity and non-individuated O (Hopper & Thompson 1980:283-284).

Du Bois (1980), who was concerned with the cognitive processing of narratives, proposed his own version of this dichotomy, which he referred to as *narrative mode* versus *descriptive mode*.\(^1\) The functions of the two modes are comparable with those identified by Labov & Waletzky and Hopper & Thompson, but he distinguishes the modes on the basis of the semantics of the main verb: verbs such as *be, have* and *wear* are associated with descriptive mode clauses, verbs such as *fall, grow* and *ponder* are associated with narrative mode (Du Bois 1980:226-228). Du Bois makes the point that NPs occurring in narrative mode are likely to be referential, which is in line with Hopper and Thompson’s observations that foregrounded clauses have high semantic transitivity, since the referentiality of NPs contributes to the aggregate semantic transitivity of the clause.

Over the past thirty or so years following on from this early work, linguists have explored the relationship between the discourse function of grounding and the associated grammatical features in the narratives of different languages across the world. Most of the work has been on Indo-European languages, with some exceptions: Hooper (1998) looks at the Polynesian language, Tokelauan, and Ballantyne (2005) studies the narratives of the Austronesian language, Yapese. From a functional perspective, either a clause progresses the narrative along the timeline or it does not, giving a *foregrounded* versus *backgrounded*, or *narrative* versus *non-narrative* dichotomy. From a grammatical perspective, since there is a range of morphosyntactic properties associated with grounding, there is the potential for a

\(^1\) Du Bois also identified a third mode, which he termed *defining mode*, used for defining terms in the narrative.
continuum of clause-types. It suggests that grounding must be both a binary opposition and a continuum.\(^2\) Linguists have approached this apparent paradox in different ways, typically by analysing degrees of grounding. Ballantyne (2005), for example, distinguishes strongly and weakly foregrounded clauses, with evidence from the morphosyntactic markers she found to be associated with grounding in Yapese.

This chapter surveys the range of functional clause-types encountered in the Tirax narratives and looks at the kinds of markers which are associated with the different types. The first two sections of the present chapter describe the grammatical features that are associated with joining sentences in a text: discourse markers and other discourse linkages. Section §7.4 then deals with identifying the functional clause-types in Tirax and the distinguishing features specifically associated with each type. The three sections following discuss functional clause-types in relation to three important features of narrative: sequentiality, momentum and prominence.

7.2 Discourse markers

Discourse markers reflect textual cohesion by making transparent the relationships between clauses or sentences that make up the text (see eg. Schiffrin 1987:49). The most frequently encountered discourse markers in Tirax narrative are the Bislama borrowings, *ale* ‘then, so’, and *na* ‘now’, and less frequently encountered is *nate*, ‘then’. The distal demonstrative *xar* and Bislama demonstrative *ia* are also attested as discourse markers, giving prominence to the clauses they mark, as discussed in §7.7. We saw in chapter 6 that the discourse marker *rente* ‘meanwhile’ functions as a conjunction. It also has a role in linking sentences to form a text, and is discussed here in §7.2.4. Table 7-1 summarises the discourse markers which are involved in structuring narrative above the level of the sentence. These discourse markers all occur clause-initially.

\(^2\) Note that this way of framing the problem contrasts with that of Givón (1987), who proposes that grounding is a continuum, which the morphosyntax of a language cuts up into discrete categories.
Table 7-1: Tirax discourse makers which can link sentences in a text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DM</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ale</td>
<td>Marks a logical or temporal relation between events, typically on the narrative timeline</td>
<td>so / then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nate</td>
<td>Marks a temporal relation of sequentiality between events on the timeline</td>
<td>now.then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause-initial na</td>
<td>Moves the temporal reference point forward</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rente</td>
<td>Marks new timeline, typically in conjunction with perfective dax</td>
<td>time-SUB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.1 Ale ‘so, then’

The clause-initial discourse marker ale ‘so, then’, is frequently encountered in Tirax discourse. Ale is a Bislama borrowing, originally from the French, allez, ‘go!’ It has three main functions in Tirax narrative:

1. it optionally marks events which are on the narrative timeline, reflecting a temporal connection of sequentiality
2. it reflects a logical relationship between events of cause-and-effect, or result
3. in conversation or dialogue, it is an interjection signalling agreement or call to action

Ale is most frequently encountered preceding clauses which relate chronological events making up the narrative’s plot. In this situation, ale has a similar function and distribution to the indigenous discourse marker nate, discussed below in §7.2.2.

(1) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 17-19)

17. (0.7) i=hex  xini nmab /=
    3S:R=climb    OBL    T.chestnut

He climbed up (the) Tahitian chestnut,

18. i=an i=at linha \n    3S:R=go 3S:R=be    high

he went up till he reached the top.
Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to drop down.

Another related function of *ale* is as a marker of clauses in a logical relationship, typically cause-and-effect. In this function, *ale* can link sentences to sentences, as well as clauses within a sentence, exemplified below:

(2)  EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 15-16)

15. (0.8) ren-te nmbi i=vu //
   time-SUB chestnut 3S:R=bear.fruit

   *When the tree bore fruit*

16. (1.3) ale i=van i=hex xini \                                                                                       
   then 3S:R=go 3S:R=climb OBL

   *he went and climbed up,*

*Ale* also marks clauses relating events which are the resulting state of affairs due to the events related in the previous clause(s). In this case *ale* is generally translated here with ‘So’:

(3) ale i=vexi xono n=turtur na weri /=
   so 3S:R=make-DS 1S 1S:R=stop now LOC.DX2

   *So he made me stop there now.*

   n=skul temul \                                                                                                        
   1S:R=school(B) no.more

   *I didn’t go to school anymore.*

   n=skul temul /
   1S:R=school(B) no.more

   *I didn’t go to school anymore,*

   .. ale ni=at vv-vv /=                                                                                     
   so 1S:R=exist DUP-DUR

   *So I stayed there and after some time ...*
(4) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Snake and the Coconut (IUs 28-34)

28. (0.9) i=v-va  \( ^*o;^*! \)
   3S:R=say oh

   She said “Oh!”

29. (1.1) n=v\( ^*r \) dax te n=ve-ve: — =
   1S:R=say PERF SUB 1S:R=DUP-want

   “I said that I wanted”

30. ba=van ba=mel-melix ba=\( ^\eta \) nxa te de=mlas ba=ri-te / —
    2S:1=go 2S:1=DUP-wash 2S:1=hear wood SUB 3S:1=break 2S:1=look-NEG

   “you to go and do the washing and if you hear a stick crack don’t go and
   look!”

31. (0.5) ve-te: — x=vla lixdre x\( ^\eta \) na !
    but-SUB 2S:R=go.away leave 1S now

   “But you have gone and left me now.”

32. (1.0) na: x\( ^\eta \) nah=src-te \( ^\eta \) \( ^\eta \) nox \( ^\eta \) \( ^\eta \) \( ^\eta \) /
    HES 1S 1S:1:NEG=follow-NEG PART 2S PART

   “Now as for me, I cannot follow you at all.”

33. (1.8) [clears throat] \( ^\text{ale} \) / 
   so

   So,

34. (1.2) i=van \( ^\eta \) : / 
   3S:R=go ANA

   she went there (like) that, ...

Often the two main narrative functions of ale described above converge. In the example below, there are some clauses which elaborate on the amount of smoke that resulted from a lightening strike, the following clause is marked by ale, and signals a return to progressing the narrative, as well as a logical response to the previous clauses:
There was a huge amount of smoke.

We looked hard but we couldn't see through it.

So we turned back again following behind.

Finally, "ale" is used in dialogue to signal agreement and / or a call to action or attention. This use is reminiscent of its original use in the French, and therefore is likely to pre-date the other functions.

Ale is also used in conversation as an interjection, signalling agreement to some call to action:

"Now let's leave and go home!"

He replied "OK!"

In this function it replaces the indigenous term "deak", exemplified below:
EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 3-4)

3. (0.6) ri=at ri=at ri=at / =  
   3D:R=be 3D:R=be 3D:R=be  DUR-DUR

   They lived together on and on, until (one day)

   lidax i=va-va: \ — = ^ bar=telul lue ! ^
   dog 3S:R=DUP-say 2D:R=go.to.garden away

   the dog said “Let's go away to the garden!”

4. (0.7) ale nxariv i=va-va: \ — = ^ a'a' / = deak ^ ! \n   then cat 3S:R=DUP-say yes ok

   And the cat said “Ok!”

As an interjection, *ale* is extra-clausal.

Each of these functions has a similar theme: to reflect a connection between the event being marked and a previous event(s). When used in speech, *ale* has suggestion of an agreement to do an action, which may be the result of previous speech, or an unspoken shared need to act.

These different functions of *ale* are associated with different structural slots in a narrative. In chapter 8, we discuss constituency in narratives, and find evidence for paragraphs. One piece of evidence is the distribution of *ale*. As table 7-2 shows, *ale* is overwhelmingly associated with paragraph-initial clauses.
Table 7-2: Number of instances of the discourse marker *ale* in the texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>No. of instances of <em>ale</em></th>
<th>Paragraph-initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</em></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Snake and the Coconut</em></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Ten Birds</em></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</em></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Dog</em></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Cordyline Woman</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</em></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Ant</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Old Hag with the Sores</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>148</strong></td>
<td><strong>102</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When *ale* occurs paragraph-initially, it either reflects a cause-and-effect relationship between the event described by the clause it marks, and the event in the previous clause(s), or a return to the timeline following a digression. Of the smaller percentage of *ales* that mark the paragraph-final clause, *ale* reflects a relationship of result, particularly, the summing up of a resulting state of affairs, following the action described in the previous clauses of that paragraph.

For those speakers who frequently use *ale*, around half of the paragraphs in their narratives can begin with *ale*, as indicated in table 7-3.
Table 7-3: Percentage of paragraphs which begin with discourse marker *ale* for three texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>No. of instances of <em>ale</em></th>
<th>No. of para-initial <em>ale</em></th>
<th>Total no. of paragraphs</th>
<th>% with <em>ale</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Snake and Coconut</em></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Ten Birds</em></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.2 *Nate* ‘so, then’

*Ale* has a similar function and distribution to the vernacular word *nate*. *Nate* is much less frequently encountered, with most younger and middle-aged speakers using *ale* exclusively. Only one of the storytellers, a grandfather in his seventies, used *nate*.

Below is an extra-narrative question to his son:

(9)  
*nate*  haxa  *kle*  ?  
now.then  what  again

*Now then, what (am I supposed to do) again?*

In his short narrative (55 IUs) there are five instances of *nate* and six of *ale*, including one instance of *ale* in dialogue. *Nate* is used where *ale* would be used by other speakers, as in the example below:

(10)  EXAMPLE: *The Rat and the Turtle* (IUs 31-36)

31.  (0.8)  
*i=*hlox-*i*;  *i=*me;  *vɔ*  — =  
3S:R=carry-3S3S:R=come  DUR

*He (the turtle) carried him (the rat) on and on until*

*i=*lxɛx  *xr*-xriv  salin  *na*  /=  
3S:R=come  DUP-nearby  outside  now

*he was close to the shore,*

nxariv  *i=*tedxi  nŋa  bet=*na  
rat  3S:R=defecate  LOC  head=ASSOC

*and the rat pooed on (the turtle's) head.*
32. (1.1) **ale**:  
\[i=vxaur \ xini \ \backslash\]  
so \ 3S:R=laugh \ OBL:3S  

*And he (the rat) laughed at it.*

33. (0.8) **ale**:  
\[i=vxaur \ xini \ vɔ \ / =\]  
3S:R=laugh \ OBL:3S \ DUR  

*He laughed and laughed at it,*

**nate**:  
\[i=v-va \ \backslash\]  
and.then \ 3S:R=DUP-say  

*and (the turtle) said*

34. ..  
\[^x=vxaur \ vɛ \ hɛrɛ-te \ i=dla-hxa \ ? =\]  
2S:R=laugh \ but \ because-SUB \ 3S:R=be.thus-what  

“What are you laughing at?”

35. **nate**:  
\[i=va \ / = \ \ ^i=hge \ nηɛ \ \ ^\]  
3S:R=say \ 3S:R=not.be \ PART  

*(The rat) said “nothing at all!”*

36. (1.5) **nate**:  
\[i=van \ e:- .. \ r=van \ vɔ \ / =\]  
and.then \ 3S:R=go \ HES- \ 3D:R=go \ until  

*And the two continued on*

\[r=van \ \ salin \ \]  
3D:R=go \ outside  

*toward the shore.*

As indicated in the glosses, **nate** appears to mark relationships that are exclusively temporal in this narrative, whereas **ale** tends to mark logical relationships, either cause and effect or result. It is possible that **nate** originally was used in all contexts, then **ale** replaced it as a marker of logical relationships, later replacing it in all contexts for most speakers.
7.2.3 Clause-initial *na* ‘now’

We saw above in §4.6.2, that when *na* occurs clause-finally, it marks the persistence of the state or activity encoded by the clause at the current temporal reference point. When it occurs clause-initially, it moves the temporal reference point forward, following the event or state described in the previous clause:

\[(11)\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mr} & \quad \text{i=} & \text{lin} & \quad \text{s=} & \text{ve} & \quad \text{des=} & \text{an} & \quad \text{laltah} \\
\text{people} & \quad 3S:R= & \text{five} & \quad 3P:R= & \text{want} & \quad 3P:1= & \text{go} & \quad \text{to.the.sea}
\end{align*}
\]

*Five men wanted to go to the sea.*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{na} & \quad s= & \text{lixdr} & \quad \text{n} & \quad \text{ŋ} & \quad \text{ɛ} & \quad \text{haxal} & \quad i= & \text{at} & \quad b & \quad \text{lain} \\
\text{now} & \quad 3P:R= & \text{leave} & \quad \text{ANA.PRO} & \quad \text{one} & \quad 3S:R= & \text{be} & \quad \text{DIM} & \text{home}
\end{align*}
\]

*Now they leave one of them behind at home.*

Clause-initial *na* is far less frequently encountered than either *ale* or clause-final *na*.

As indicated in table 7-4, clause-initial *na*, like *ale*, is typically associated with paragraph-initial clauses.

**Table 7-4:** Distribution of clause-initial *na* in the ten texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P-initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following example contrasts the use of *ale* and clause-initial *na*. *Ale* marks the main narrative events which comprise the plotline, whereas *na* marks a clause which encodes information that only the protagonist is privy to, and does not forward the plotline.

\[(12)\] **EXAMPLE:** *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 78-89)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{78. (0.6)} & \quad \text{ale} & \quad i=m- & \text{mex} & \quad \text{xini} & \quad \text{tnah} & \quad \text{—} \\
\text{so} & \quad 3S:R= & \text{DUP-ask} & \quad \text{OBL.} & \text{devil}
\end{align*}
\]

*So he asked (the) devil,*
79. (0.4) i=v-va ^e ^—
3S:R=DUP-say hey

hee said “Hey!”

80. (0.2) be: —
but(B)

“Hang on -”

81. (0.2) ^ dar=at xan nɔx x=mtaxit xini morti te i=dla-hxa \  
1D:i=be PRX 2S 2S:R=be.afraid OBL person REL 3S:R=be.thus-what

“Wait! What kind of man are you afraid of?”

82. (0.6) morti  te i=vkɔr //  
person SUB 3S:R=white

“A light-skinned man?”

83. (0.4) haxa morti  te i=net ^ \  
or person SUB 3S:R=black

“Or a dark-skinned man?”

84. (0.4) tnah i=narxat i=va ^° ^° —
devil 3S:R=get.up 3S:R=say oh

(The) devil went and said “Oh!”

85. (0.5) ^^ xɔnɔ: n — ^^  
1S HES

“Me,”

(0.5) ^^ n=mtaxit xini morti te i=net ia ^ ^ \  
1S:R=be.afraid OBL person REL 3S:R=black that(B)

“I’m afraid of a dark-skinned man!”

86. (1.0) na marbih  ᇠ  i=va ^ a: ^ ! =  
now boy DEF 3S:R=say aha

Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha!”

^ xain  bo xan n=ve-ve da=ŋòdrɔ-i ^ \  
3S DIM PRX 1S:R=DUP-want 1S:I=know-3S

“That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

87. (0.6) ale: —
so

And he said
“OK, let’s take (these) chestnuts.”

And the two of them got going, carrying the chestnuts.

7.2.4 Rente ‘meanwhile’

We saw in chapter 6, that *rente* is a conjunction which marks temporal relations between consecutive clauses. *Rente* is used in combination with the perfective marker *dax* to mark clauses relating events which have taken place prior to the current temporal reference point:

(13) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 18-25)

18. (1.8) i=me \salin /= te de=van de=das xini: naxda-n //
3S:R=come outside SUB 3S:R=go 3S:R=search OBL wings-3S:POSS

She came out to go and look for her wings

19. (0.7) be: — ...(0.8) i=leh temul \  
but(B) 3S:R=see no.more

But she couldn’t see them anymore.

20. (0.2) naxda-n i=sal \  
wings-3S:POSS 3S:R=be.lost

The wings were gone.

21. (0.8) ren-te morti hxal i=me \ dax /= i=lev-i //  
time-SUB person INDEF 3S:R=come PERF 3S:R=take-3S

A man had come and taken them

22. (0.4) i=van /= i=to-huwex-i \  
3S:R=go 3S:R=put-hide-3S

and went and hid them.

23. (1.1) i=van /= i=to-huwex /= nṣa blɔ nvat hxal \  
3S:R=go 3S:R=put-hide LOC hole stone INDEF

He went and hid (them) in a hole in a rock.
Now he came

and he saw that the little white one was there now.

Although the clause in line 21 is marked with *rente ...dax*, the following clauses carry no marking to indicate they also take place prior to the current temporal reference point, in the way that an English pluperfect marks each past-in-the-past clause. This is the typical pattern in Tirax narrative structure; only the first clause in a sequence is encoded with a marker indicating the sequence is set in the narrative past. Therefore Brotchie (in prep.) argues for multiple timeline analysis, such that *rente ...dax* encodes clauses which initiate new timelines, set in the past relative to the current temporal reference point. The following clauses in the sequence carry the same marking as any other clause which progresses a narrative. The return to the previous timeline is then typically marked by *ale*, as in line 24 in the above example.

7.3 Discourse linkages

This section briefly looks at some common discourse linkages which operate at sentence level, and which give the text cohesion.

7.3.1 Tail-head linkage

Tail-head linkage refers to the phenomenon of starting a sentence with part or all of the previous clause. It is a cohesive devise common to Austronesian languages, such as Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001:426), South Efate (Thieberger 2004:324), Naman (Crowley 2006a:215) and Tetun (Williams-van Klinken, Hajek & Nordlinger 2002). It is widespread in Tirax discourse. The definition here is slightly narrower than those in the literature. *Tail-head linkage*, as defined here, excludes exact copies of the clause, which are referred to here as *clause iteration*, discussed below.

Tail-head linkage is a similar phenomenon to the recapitulation clauses found in Amerindian languages, which tend to be associated with switch-reference devices.
Recapitulation clauses often involve a generic verb, such as ‘do’, rather than a repetition of the VP in the previous clause (Stirling 1993:17).

In the following example of tail-head linkage, an entity is introduced into the discourse, *dravo* ‘tropical almond’. In the repeated material, *dravo* is coded with the definite article, signifying *discourse-old* information:

(14) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 30-33)

30. (0.9) i=van i=sla x=tan /=
   3S:R=go 3S:R=be.thus LOC.DX1

   She went like that

   be i=dis nηa —
   but(B) 3S:R=land LOC

   and landed on

   (0.2) dravɔ hxal \ tropical.almond INDEF

   a tropical almond tree.

31. (0.6) i=dis nηa dravɔ nɛ /
   3S:R=land LOC tropical.almond DEF

   She landed on the tropical almond tree

32. (0.5) ren-te nunu han /= i=xes-xesir sar \
   time-SUB mother 3S:POSS 3S:R=DUP-sweep IMPF

   while her mother was sweeping.

33. (0.4) nɛlvɛ dravɔ nɛ \ \
   underneath tropical.almond DEF

   - underneath the tropical almond tree.

7.3.2 Clause iteration
Clause iteration is a type of tail-head linkage, where an exact copy of the whole clause is repeated. If a new referent is introduced with an indefinite marker, the indefinite marker is repeated in the iterated clause, as in the following example:
(15) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 20-23)

20. (1.0) \( \text{nma} \text{b} \quad \text{s=rus} \quad \nu\nu\nu\nu \text{ na} / \)  
\( \text{T.chestnut} \quad 3\text{P:R=drop.down} \quad \text{DUP-DUR} \quad \text{now} \)

Now (the) chestnuts were dropping down,

21. (0.4) \( \text{tnah haxal} \quad \text{i=me} \quad \backslash \)  
\( \text{devil INDEF} \quad 3\text{S:R=come} \)

and a devil came along.

22. (0.6) \( \text{tnah haxal} \quad \text{i=me} \quad // \)  
\( \text{devil INDEF} \quad 3\text{S:R=come} \)

A devil came,

23. (0.2) \( \text{i=rng} \quad \text{t} \text{e} \quad \text{nma} \text{b} \quad \text{s=rus} \quad \backslash \)  
\( 3\text{S:R=hear} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{T.chestnut} \quad 3\text{P:R=fall.down} \)

and he heard the chestnuts dropping down.

It is only when there is an indefinite NP introduced into the discourse that the difference between tail-head linkage and clause iteration has the potential to show up. However this distinction in the coding of information status between tail-head linkage and clause iteration is likely to be associated with other functional differences. Du Bois observes for English, for example, that new characters tend to be introduced in presentative-type clauses in narrative, and if they are introduced in clauses denoting an event, then there is often additional coding dedicated to setting up the referent (Du Bois 1980:248). Similarly, a new character is typically introduced in a presentative clause in a Tirax narrative. However the new referent in the example above occurs in a clause relating an event. Clause iteration is a form of additional coding, giving prominence to the discourse-new NP and ensuring it is registered in the discourse model.

---

3 Du Bois (1980) referred to these two types of clauses as *descriptive mode* and *narrative mode* respectively, each defined above in §7.1. His work looks at the interaction of a number of formal and functional features involved in tracking referents through narrative, including salience, definiteness and grammatical function of the NP.
7.3.3 Recapping
Another cohesive device in discourse is recapping. A recap clause is defined here as a clause which paraphrases previously related action. We saw above that tail-head linkage and clause iteration, are discourse devices linking contiguous clauses. Recap clauses, by contrast, often occur after a digression in the narrative, marking a return to the narrative timeline. Their function is to reorient the audience to a particular time, place or character. In the example below, the original clause is in line 109, and the recap is in line 123. Between the two clauses is a long passage of text relating the actions of the protagonist. The recap clause returns the narrative to the antagonist’s storyline.

(16) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 108-23)

108.(0.8) ale: —

So,

109.(0.2) [xain iv-] tnah ηε i=van \ 3s HES devil DEF 3s:r=go

the devil went.

110.(0.4) ale marbih ηε i=at \ so boy DEF 3s:r=be

And the boy stayed behind.

111.(0.6) i=delex nadxan \ 3s:r=light fire

He lit a fire.

112.(0.3) i=tin o nmab ηε \ = 3s:r=cook HES chestnut DEF

He cooked the chestnuts.

113.\ i=tin i=tin v-v-v-v vο s=xebu we s=xebu ^ \ = 3s:r=cook 3s:r=cook DUP-DUR 3p:r=burnt so 3p:r=burnt

He cooked them and cooked them on and on until they were really burnt
and they turned black.

So he gets up

and takes the chestnuts and rubs them all over himself.

His body became black all over.

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

So, now he goes

and stands in the entrance of the cave.

He was standing, blocking the stone doorway

facing outside.

So the devil went off.
He went to (get) the others.

7.4 Narrative clause-types

We now turn to an analysis of the types of clauses which make up the Tirax narratives, in terms of their role in telling the story. The section begins with a description of the methodology of identifying the various categories, and some background on the criteria used and the difficulties encountered in the analysis. An overview of the clause categories identified is given in §7.4.2, and the following sections give a brief description of each of the categories in turn. Section §7.4.6 is a discussion of the criterion of sequentiality in distinguishing clause categories, and §7.4.7 is a discussion of the relationship between the functional clause-types and Tirax grammar. This section concludes with a summary of the grammatical markers associated with each functional category, given in §7.4.8. The format for the examples in the remaining section are as follows: the IUs are each numbered. Some IUs are comprised of smaller units with their own contours. These sub-IUs are sometimes given a separate line if they correspond to a clause, in which case they are not numbered. The definition of IU and sub-IU used in this work is given in Appendix IV.

7.4.1 Background and methodology

The analysis of functional clause-types in narrative is fundamental to an understanding of such features as prominence marking and the distribution of anaphora. Du Bois (1980), for example, found that the coding of new referents in English narratives varied depending on which functional type of clause they were introduced in. The ten narratives listed in Appendix V formed the database for the present study. Potential clause categories were identified in the first instance in terms of their function in the narrative, such as whether or not the clause furthered the narrative along the timeline. Criteria were drawn from Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) definition of narrative clauses, Labov’s (1997) definition of sequential clauses, and Hopper and Thompson’s (1980) definition of foregrounded clauses and Thompson’s (1987) definition of temporally sequenced clauses. The position taken in this work is that ideational content, discourse function and morphosyntax are mutually
independent realms of language with patterns of correlations and associations occurring between them. This approach somewhat contrasts with that of Labov (1972), for example, who gives a mixture of formal and functional criteria in his definition of narrative clauses. The consequences of the approach adopted here are discussed further in §7.4.3.4

Once a range of potential clause-types were identified, the morphosyntax associated with the functional categories was studied, to determine which of those categories are grammatically distinguished in Tirax. There is some unavoidable circularity in the method, since the function of each clause is reflected in part by the morphosyntax, although the function is also given by its lexico-semantics and context, and the analysis relied on those features to support the initial categorisations. This approach, and the definition of narrative clause is discussed in §7.4.3. Using this method, several functional clause categories were identified, with evidence from morphosyntax for the distinctions.

There were several issues encountered when trying to identify different functional clause categories in the Tirax narratives using the criteria proposed by the researchers listed above. The first issue was the definition of the clause itself. As discussed in chapter 6, there is a continuum of multi-predicate construction types moving from single clause nuclear SVCs to co-ordinated clauses. Core-layer SVCs are analysed as comprising a single clause, and clause-chains are analysed as multi-clause constructions. However the difference between these two constructions is subtle: a V2 in the former has an invariable third person, non-pronominal subject marker, whereas the corresponding subject marker in the latter is pronominal. For third person singular subjects, the surface forms of core-layer SVCs and clause-chains are identical. Also, discourse processes such as tail-head linkage, which typically operate on clauses, often have chained clauses within their scope, as in the following example. The

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4 A related issue not addressed in this work is the extent to which the perception of a real world event is influenced by the (lexicon and) grammar of a language. This issue, famously addressed by Benjamin Lee Whorf, is taken up in Pawley’s (1987) paper on encoding events in the PNG language Kalam. There is a parallel concern in literary theory, as to the extent to which story, or ideational content, is independent of narrative, or textual representation. The terms story and narrative are used in this work to refer to ‘ideational content’ and ‘textual representation’ respectively, and I do not intend to make an assertion about their mutual independence nor interdependence.
The arrowed line in the example below has a repetition of a chained clause, as the iterated material of a tail-head linkage construction.

(17) EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog (IUs 7-9)

7. (0.5) r=van  vvvvvvv-vɔ — =
       3D:R=go  DUP-DUR

   The two of them went on and on,

   r=van  vɔ  r=sder  lanih /
   3D:R=go  until  3D:R=reach  bush

   they went on until they reached the garden.

8. (0.7) r=van  r=sder  lanih na: / =
       3D:R=go  3D:R=reach  bush  now

   Now they went and reached the garden,

9. i=va-va: — =  ...  
   3S:R=DUP-say

   and (Dog) said ...

The concept of ‘clause’ in Tirax is not as robust and well-defined as that in Indo-European languages. Pawley (1987) comes to a similar conclusion regarding the extent to which a clause is a universal and clear-cut category with evidence from the PNG language Kalam. He concludes that the category of ‘clause’ is to a certain extent language-dependent, and is non-homogenous category with prototypical and peripheral members. The Tirax data provides further support for these conclusions.

A second issue is that most clauses in a Tirax narrative are basic realis clauses, and it is clear from an understanding of the lexico-semantics and context of each clause that realis clauses can sometimes function as narrative clauses and other times as non-narrative: the distinction between narrative and non-narrative is often not marked by the morphosyntax in Tirax. This in itself challenges the robustness of the dichotomy between narrative and non-narrative clauses, and is discussed in §7.4.7. A final issue, is that Tirax narratives are often non-linear, as is typical of narratives in oral traditions (cf. Fleischman 1990, Ong 1982, Brotchie forthcoming). This challenges the criterion of sequentiality, fundamental to the definition of narrative clause-hood for Labov &
Waletzky (1967) or *foregrounded* clauses (Hopper & Thompson 1980). Section §7.4.8 has a critical discussion of the key criteria for determining narrative clausehood as defined by Labov & Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972, 1997) and others: *sequentiality* and *temporal juncture*.

7.4.2 Overview of clause categories
There are nine categories of clause that appear to be distinguished in Tirax narratives, and they can be represented hierarchically in a tree diagram, given in figure 7-1. The majority of clauses in a typical narrative are *story clauses*, with some *non-story clauses*, in which the story-teller introduces the story, or concludes or comments on it. Story and non-story clauses are distinguished from each other by the location of their *deictic centre*: the deictic centre is located in the story world for story clauses, and in the real world for non-story clauses.

Non-story clauses can be divided into two classes on the basis of function, and location in the story: *story frame* clauses occur at the periphery of the story and serve as a gateway into and out of the story world. *Narrator asides* are interruptions to the story, with commentary or editorialising by the narrator.

Story clauses can be divided into *narrative* versus *non-narrative* clauses. Narrative clauses encode the temporally ordered or causally connected events that make up the backbone of the narrative. The term *narrative clause* is from Labov and Waletzky (1967) and those following, such as Labov (1972, 1997) and Polanyi (1987), though not all of Labov’s (1972) criteria for narrative clause-hood is applicable in Tirax, as discussed in §7.4.8. Non-narrative clauses encode states, conditions, contexts and on-going events which are not on the narrative timeline. Their function is to provide additional descriptive information to flesh out the narrative and make it more evocative. This cleavage of story clauses into narrative and non-narrative clauses reflects the dichotomy discussed in §7.1, referred to in grounding theory as *foreground* versus *background* clauses.

We will see in §7.5, that there is a strong argument for a multiple timeline analysis for Tirax narratives. On this analysis, narrative clauses in Tirax are divided into two subcategories, reflecting whether they are sequential or whether they are initiating a new timeline, located prior to the current temporal reference point. Put another way,
the two types of narrative clauses can be distinguished on the basis of the location of their temporal deictic centre relative to previous narrative clause: for sequential clauses, the temporal deictic centre moves forward on the timeline relative to that of the previous narrative clause. For clauses which initiate new timelines, the temporal deictic centre is in the past relative to that of the previous narrative clause.

Non-narrative clauses can be divided into three subcategories, on the basis of the location of the point of view along the axis between narrator and character. Direct discourse clauses are from the character’s point of view. Descriptive clauses are from the external, third person perspective of the narrator. There is a third category encountered in Tirax narratives which has features of both descriptive and direct discourse categories. These kinds of clauses have been identified in the literature as Free Indirect Discourse (eg McHale 1978, Rimmon-Kenan 2002). FID is discussed further in §7.4.5.

The Descriptive subcategory can itself be subdivided on the basis of the relationship of the clause to the narrative events. Presentative clauses are temporally independent of narrative events. Contextualising clauses encode events which occur simultaneously to events on the timeline, and descriptive-durative clauses encode events and states which are enabled by narrative events. Recapitulative clauses is a fourth subcategory, comprising the second part of clause iteration or tail-head linkage, as well as recap clauses, seen above in §7.3. Each of these subcategories tends to be associated with different grammatical features, and is discussed in §7.4.3.

Figure 7-1 gives a taxonomy of clause categories in Tirax narrative. Each node represents a syntactic or discourse-semantic cline. The non-narrative clauses node, for example, represents the location of point of view along the axis between narrator and character.

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5 The super-ordinate term Descriptive is represented with upper case D, to distinguish it from the narrower category of descriptive-durative.
The hierarchy is reasonably subjective and does make any cognitive claims about how clauses are processed or their relative salience, such as the psycholinguistic evidence Erbaugh (1987) gives for a cognitively-based Foregrounding Hierarchy. It is meant to be a useful starting point to convey the different functions of clauses and means of distinguishing them. Of particular interest is where to put the discourse categories: as sisters to narrative clauses, or lower in the tree, as sisters to other non-narrative clause as in figure 7-1. Discourse clauses are discussed in §7.4.5.

7.4.3 Narrative clauses
There has been much research on functional clause-types in discourse, and the terminology and definitions tend to differ from work to work. As discussed in §7.4.1 above, the Labov & Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972) definition of narrative clause-
hood comprises a mixture of functional and formal criteria: a narrative clause relates a discreet event which moves the temporal reference forward on the narrative timeline. A narrative clause contains a temporal juncture encoded by, for example, the simple past tense of an accomplishment verb phrase, as in *Kaspar ate a mouse* (my example). Formally, a narrative clause is an affirmative realis clause, and a main clause. The status of a clause, that is, narrative versus non-narrative, depends on how a speaker chooses to encode the event. A speaker can choose to encode an event as non-narrative, for example, by expressing it in a subordinate clause, as in *Missy found out that Kaspar ate a mouse*.

Labov (1997) refines and further formalises the definition of *narrative clause*, and introduces a term, *sequential clause*, which is a clause which can be temporally ordered with respect to another sequential clause, with a *temporal juncture* between them. A *temporal juncture* is defined by the criterion of *reversibility*: there is a temporal juncture between two clauses if reversing the order of the clauses implies reversing the order of events encoded by those clauses. A *narrative clause* is defined by Labov (1997) as comprising a sequential clause, which is the ‘head’ of the narrative ‘clause’, and any dependent clauses, meaning a narrative clause can be a complex sentence according to Labov’s (1997) definition. Labov (1997) defines a sequential clause as being an independent clause, as opposed to a subordinate clause, on the grounds that any subordinating conjunction encodes either a temporal relation of the subordinate clause to the matrix clause, or implies simultaneity. In either case, reversing the order of the clauses will not imply a reverse in the order of events encoded by those clauses. The criterion of main clause-hood has been critically evaluated by Thompson (1987) and others, on the grounds that some subordinate clauses encode events that appear to be temporally ordered. Thompson shows that sentence-initial adverbial clauses in English texts are temporally ordered, for example.

Other linguists have different criteria for identifying clause-types. Tomlin (1985) for example, uses sequentiality as the principle criterion to distinguish *foreground* clauses and importance of the event as a criterion to distinguish *pivot* clauses. He
distinguishes four categories: pivot, foreground, background and other, and includes negative clauses in the foreground category.\footnote{Tomlin’s categories form the basis of Erbaugh’s work mentioned in §7.4.2 above.}

In this work, the term narrative clause roughly corresponds to the following terms in other works:

- narrative clause (Labov & Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972)
- foregrounded clause (Hopper and Thompson 1980)
- narrative mode (Du Bois 1980)
- temporally sequenced clause (Thompson 1987)
- sequential clause (Labov 1997)

The criteria for determining narrative clause-hood in Tirax is adapted to accommodate the Tirax data. For the purposes of the present research, the definition used in this work for narrative clause excludes reference to morphosyntax, so that the morphosyntax associated with clause-types can be independently assessed. Narrative clause is defined here as a clause which encodes a story event which is on the narrative timeline, that is, it is in a temporal sequence with other narrative clauses. A narrative clause encodes an event with a defined end-point, and narrative events do not overlap temporally. These criteria are adapted from Labov and Waletzky (1967). The criterion of the end-point in particular is adapted from Labov and Waletzky’s criterion of a temporal juncture, discussed further in §7.4.7. The definition is also analogous to Thompson’s (1987) definition of temporally sequenced clauses. Thompson’s temporally sequenced clauses contain predicates encoding punctual events, and which are preceded and followed by other sequenced events (except, presumably, for the first and final temporally sequenced event in the narrative). Thompson’s definition differs from mine, in that she excludes durative events altogether, whereas I include durative events which have a defined endpoint.

The following short excerpt is comprised of a string of realis clauses with no aspect marking. Only one of the clauses is classed as narrative. The reasons the remaining clauses are not defined as narrative are given next to them.
(18) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 26-29)

26. \(i=\text{ŋɔ} \text{nalxah} \// 3S:R=\text{feel} \text{cold} \)

\(\text{She felt cold.}\)

27. \((1.8)i=\text{mɛ} \text{salin} /——=N \)

\(3S:R=\text{come} \text{outside} \)

\(\text{She came out (of the water)}\)

28. \((0.7)\text{be:} — …(0.8)i=\text{leḥ} \text{temul} \\text{}\)

\(3S:R=\text{see} \text{no more} \)

\(\text{But she couldn't see (them) anymore.}\)

29. \((0.2)\text{naxda-}\text{n} \)

\(\text{wings-3S:POSS} \text{}\)

\(3S:R=\text{be.lost} \)

\(\text{The wings were gone.}\)

Where protagonists and antagonists are not in the same location, Tirax narratives often move back and forth between them to relate their actions. In this case there are multiple timelines, one for the protagonist(s) and one for the antagonist(s) or fellow protagonist(s). The first clause in a new timeline is often marked, typically by the discourse marker \(\text{rente} \) ‘meanwhile’ in conjunction with the perfective marker \(\text{dax} \).

The embedded timelines, such as in the example below, typically involve a disruption to sequentiality, as the events related in the embedded timeline take place prior to the temporal reference point set by the main timeline. There is a evaluation of the criterion of sequentiality in the definition of narrative clause-thood, in §7.4.7. In the following example, the embedded timeline is initiated by the clause in the fourth sub-IU in line 102. It is marked with a subordinate clause marker \(\text{te} \). In all respects it meets the criteria for narrative clause-thood: it encodes a narrative event with a defined end-point which is part of a sequence of narrative events (which follow). Other clauses are also marked with \(N\) if analysed as narrative. A slash is used for a
clause-chain, such as in 100, where the first clause is understood as displacement away, and is analysed as narrative, and the second is understood as the purpose for going, and so is not narrative.

(19) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 100-103)

100.(0.6) \text{i=dram xin-ɛr} / = N \ (\text{assuming action, not internal state})
\begin{align*}
\text{3S:R=agree} & \quad \text{OBL-3P} \\

\text{He agreed with them,}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{xair \ dr-druenar} & \quad \text{s=van s=rub-din marbih} \ \etae \ \ N \ / \ \text{purpose} \\
\text{3P} & \quad \text{DUP-others} \quad \text{3P:R=go} \quad \text{3P:R=hit-dead child} \ \text{DEF} \\

\text{and he and the others went to kill the boy,}
\end{align*}

101.(0.2) \text{tete tax nar} \ \etae \ \ \text{child last} \ \text{ASSOC.3P:POSS} \ \text{DEF}

\text{their little brother.}

102.(0.5) \text{s=rub-din-i} / = \text{i=nev} / = N \ \\
\begin{align*}
\text{3P:R=hit-dead-3S} & \quad \text{3S:R=finish} \\

\text{They killed him, (but) after that}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{vinadr} & \quad \text{s=rub temul} \quad \text{—} \quad \text{state, with no defined end-point} \\
\text{woman} & \quad \text{3P:R=hit} \quad \text{no.more} \\

\text{they could no longer kill the woman,}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{te xain i=haxra xini narit} / \\
\text{3S:R=knot OBL rope} \\
\text{N (initiate embedded timeline)}
\end{align*}

\text{because she had knotted a rope}

103.(0.4) \text{i=lxe betixdrälɛ=na} / = N \ \\
\begin{align*}
\text{3S:R=tie throat=ASSOC} \\

\text{and tied it around her neck}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{i=lilix linha} \ \ \etae \ \ \text{3S:R=hang high} \\

\text{and hanged herself.}
\end{align*}
Clauses which initiate embedded timelines are regarded here as a special kind of narrative clause, provided they satisfy the requirements of narrative clause-hood given above. However many clauses which initiate embedded timelines are marked with a subordinate clause marker, as in the above example. In a Labovian framework, these clauses would be classed as non-narrative, as narrative clauses are defined in Labov (1972) and Labov & Waletzky (1967) as main clauses. However, these morphosyntactic constraints were omitted from the definition in this work in order to assess the relationship between discourse function and morphosyntax. Therefore, in Tirax, there is evidence that narrative clauses can be marked with subordinating conjunctions in the case where their functional role is to initiate a new timeline.

A study of the ten narratives used in the research found that the functional category of narrative clause is associated with several morphosyntactic features. Narrative clauses are affirmative realis clauses. They can be marked with clause-initial discourse markers *ale*, ‘and then’, *na* ‘now’, and *inev* ‘after (that), and can also be marked with the perfective marker *dax*. A subset of narrative clauses are those that initiate an embedded timeline. These narrative clauses are often marked with some kind of marker, such as subordinator *te*, or *rente* ‘meanwhile’ combined with the perfective *dax*.

The remaining clauses which make up a narrative are not registered on a narrative timeline. They comprise Descriptive clauses (§7.4.4 below), direct discourse and F(ree) I(ndirect) D(iscourse), each discussed in §7.4.5.

7.4.4 Descriptive clauses
Labov (1997) defines three kinds of temporal relationships that exist between clauses in a narrative, giving three kinds of clauses. A bound clause is one which has no overlap with any other narrative clause. A narrative clause, as it is defined in this work, is a bound clause. The remaining two types of clauses are Descriptive clauses. A free clause is one which encodes a proposition that holds true for the duration of the narrative, and a restricted clause is one which overlaps temporally with one or more narrative clauses, but with a start or end point within the narrative. Taking the analysis a step further, there are two ways a restricted clause can temporally overlap with a narrative event: it can encode an ongoing event or state of affairs, which occurs prior to and simultaneously with a narrative event, providing a context for that event.
Or it can be enabled by a narrative event, and elaborate on the narrative event, such as a clause describing a house that a character has built. There are potentially three kinds of Descriptive clauses, based on the types of temporal relations encoded by free and restricted clauses, which can be labelled *presentative*, *contextualising* and *descriptive-durative* respectively, the last term taken from Polanyi (1989). These three possible clause-types can be distinguished in Tirax narrative on the basis of their grammatical profiles.

*Descriptive-durative* clauses provide additional detail about events and characters and their inner life. They are the most frequently encountered of the Descriptive clauses, and have the widest range of grammatical marking. They can be both realis and irrealis, main clauses or subordinate. If the elaboration on the narrative event is temporal, the clauses take aspect markers: most commonly durative *vɔvɔ*, continuous *hxalxin*, and / or reduplication of verb complex. Descriptive-durative clauses can have negative marking, including negative existential *hge*. They are often marked with the VP-anaphoric marker *dla DEM*, discussed in chapter 6. When descriptive-durative clauses relate a resulting state of affairs, they usually take the discourse-marker *ale*. A range of descriptive-durative clauses (D-D) is exemplified in (20) below, an extract from the narrative *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*. There is also a presentative clause (Prs) in line 23, introducing a principle characters.

(20) **EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores**  (IUs 21-7)

21. (0.5) s=vla
    3P:R=go.away

    s=me
    3P:R=come

    N / D-D

    *They left and were coming (home).*

22. (0.5) s=me
    3P:R=come

    V-V-V-V-V-V-V-V-ɔ

    nŋa nhal

    / = ren-te: N

    DUP-DUR

    LOC road

    time-SUB

    *They walked on and on until (they reached) the road. Meanwhile*

23. (0.5) vinadr
    woman INDEF

    hxal

    / = xain i=at nŋa nhal

    3S 3S:R=be LOC road

    / =

    *a woman was standing on the road*
with her small daughter.

24. (0.6) net-in vaven bih ñe te: —
    child-3S:POSS female small DEF SUB

The young daughter of hers -

25. (0.3) i=nxav v-v-v-v-v-v-ɔ = i=nxav /
    3S:R=covered.in.sores DUP-DUR 3S:R=covered.in.sores

was completely and utterly covered in sores,

26. (0.5) te r=uh drul temul =
    SUB 3IMPS=hold all no.more

so that there is no longer any place to touch her,

lotɛ ba=uh txun i=hge /
    place 2S:i=hold very 3S:R=not.be

there was no place you could touch her.

27. (0.3) i=nxav we i=nxav ! /
    3S:R=covered.in.sores so 3S:R=covered.in.sores

She was completely covered in sores.

Presentative clauses are either verbless clauses or contain one of the existential verbs at, or tɔx. They also contain free NPs introducing referents, as in example (21) below.

Contextualising clauses are always in realis mood. They describe ongoing states or activities, and can be marked with imperfective sar and / or reduplication of verb complex. They can be also marked with rente ‘meanwhile’, to encode simultaneity with a narrative event. The example below is from the set up of the story, The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores. It shows presentative and contextualising clauses, Prs and Cxt respectively.
(21) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 1-4)

1. (2.4) i=va-hxal
   $3S:R=\text{MULT}-\text{one}$
   
   *Once,*

2. (0.5) niakan / = xair $i:=\text{lin}$ khek \ $3p$ $3S:R=\text{five}$ together
   $\text{siblings}$
   
   *there were five brothers.*

3. (0.8) a xair $i=\text{lin}$ khek $s{i=\text{at}}$ v-v-v-v-v-v / =
   $3p$ $3S:R=\text{five}$ together $3p:R=\text{be}$ $\text{DUP-DUR}$
   $\text{HES}$

   *The five brothers lived together*

   tete amu $i=\text{v-va}$ \ $3s:R=\text{DUP-say}$
   "child" in.front

   *(then one day) the oldest brother said*

4. (0.8) ^ bas=an lu=laltah ^ !
   $2p:J=\text{go}$ away to.the.sea

   *"Let's go down to the beach!"*

The categories of *contextualising* and *descriptive-durative* are not orthogonal: some clauses which elaborate narrative events also provide a context for following narrative events. The clauses which function as both can have markers associated with either category.

A subset of Descriptive clauses are the repeated clauses of clause-reiteration and tail-head linkage, as well as recap clauses, all seen above in §7.3. These clauses, named *recapitulative* clauses in this work, are defined as Descriptive clauses, as they do not further the narrative along the timeline; they overlap temporally with another clause, and part of the definition of narrative clause in this work, following Labov & Waletzky (1967) and others, is that the narrative event is temporally discrete. Tirax *recapitulative* clauses are not equivalent to the recapitulation clauses, typically found in switch-subject languages. One point of difference, for example, is that Tirax recapitulative ‘clauses’ can actually be comprised of a clause-chain, as discussed and
exemplified above in §7.4. Recapitulative clauses are typically repetitions of narrative clauses, in which case they have grammatical marking associated with narrative clauses: they are realis, affirmative clauses, and can be marked with *ale* ‘then’ or clause-initial *na* ‘now’. Recapitulative clauses can also be marked with clause-final *na* ‘now’, and clause-final *inev* ‘it finished / after that’ and the anaphoric VP *idla dem* ‘like that’. The following example has a recapitulative clause in a tail-head linkage construction (arrowed):

(22) **EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 42-43)**

42. (1.0) *ale tete-sre i=me! —*  
    *then child-follow 3S:R=come*

    *Then the next child arrived.*

43. (0.5) *tete sre i=me na: —*  
    *child follow 3S:R=come now*

    *The next brother arrived and*

    *i=v-va: \ — …*

    *3S:R=DUP-say*

    *(the woman) said*

The four subcategories of clauses discussed in this section are Descriptive clauses, expressed in the third person. The remaining non-narrative clauses are direct discourse clauses and FID, described in §7.4.5 below.

7.4.5 Direct discourse and FID

The broad category of discourse clauses traditionally includes direct and indirect speech and thought. A fifth subcategory, *F(ree) I(ndirect) D(iscourse)*, has also been discussed in the literature, though has had much less attention than the other categories. These various subcategories of discourse each have different functions in narrative and so fall into different functional categories to each other. *Direct discourse* and *FID* each constitute their own subcategory of Descriptive clause, distinguished by their function and associated morphosyntax.
Direct discourse advances the narrative insofar as it takes up real time, and by analogy takes up real time in story world. Following Labov (1972), the clause with the speech verb is counted as a narrative clause. Labov classifies the actual speech or thought as an elaboration on the narrative clause. In this work a somewhat different approach is taken: the direct speech or thought is analysed as in a category of its own, as it is grammatically distinct from other non-narrative clauses. Direct discourse contains deictic markers, such as first and second person pronouns, anchored in the story world. Direct speech is often comprised of imperatives, hortatives or questions, and both speech and thought often have interjections and exclamations, such as exclamatory ale, signalling agreement or a call to action. Prosodically, direct speech is usually higher pitch than surrounding prose. All these features distinguish it from other non-narrative clauses.

(23) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 30-33)

30. (0.8) i=ver xi(ni) tete amu / = i=va: — = N
   33:R=say OBL child first 33:R=say

   She said to the eldest she said

31. ^ o nes xar ^ !
   oh fish DST

   “Oh, those fish!”

32. (0.2) ^ (u)sa ! = ba=lev bo nes xar nẹ xini: ^ — =
   please 2S:1=take DIM fish DST PART OBL

   “Please could you give some of those fish to”

33. ^ net-uk vaven xan de=wës-i ^ ?
   child-1S:POSS female 3s 38:1=eat-38

   “my daughter here to eat?”

Before we turn to the category of FID, we will briefly look at the analysis of indirect speech and thought. Indirect discourse is not included in the discourse categories. Unlike direct speech, indirect speech is entirely in the third person. For indirect discourse, the speech verb is analysed as being in a narrative clause, and the indirect discourse an elaboration, so a descriptive-durative clause:
101. (0.8) i=veve:  

(The husband) told  

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{vinadr} \quad \text{han} \quad \text{de=telul} \\
\text{woman} \quad 3S:POSS \quad 3S:1=go.to.garden
\end{array}
\]

his wife to do the gardening.

102. (0.6) de=van \quad \text{de=kih} \quad \text{nag} \quad \text{drar} \quad \text{lanih} \quad \text{D-D}  

\[
\begin{array}{l}
3S:1=go \quad 3S:1=pinch \quad \text{vegetables} \quad \text{PC.FOOD.3P.FOSS} \quad \text{bush}
\end{array}
\]

to go and pick their vegetables in the bush garden.

*FID* is distinct from other types of indirect discourse, as it has features of direct discourse as well as indirect discourse. The term FID is from McHale (1978:258-259) and adopted by Rimmon-Kenan (1983:110-111), (Li 1986:41), Fludernik (2001) and others. It is referred to as *style* or *discours indirect libre* in French, with the novelist Flaubert typically cited as an early exponent. FID is expressive of the character, without being grammatically direct speech. The grammatical features associated with distinguishing FID include the tense, pronominalisations, deictics, epistemics and the presence of vocatives and interjections. Each of these features can be manipulated to reflect the perspective of the character, while FID typically has no speech verb introducing it. Lines 47 and 48 below are an example of FID:

(25) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 46-48)

46. (1.0) \(^\text{marbih} \quad \eta \quad \text{i=at} \quad \text{linha} \quad /=\)  

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{boy} \quad \text{DEF} \quad 3S:R=sit \quad \text{high}
\end{array}
\]

The boy sat above (in the tree),

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{ve} \quad \text{i=drodotrom} \quad \text{dax} \quad ^\wedge \\
\text{but} \quad 3S:R=think \quad \text{PERF}
\end{array}
\]

and he wondered

47. (0.3) \(^\wedge \wedge \text{de=dla-hxa} \quad \text{na} \wedge \quad !\)  

\[
\begin{array}{l}
3S:1=be.like-what \quad \text{now}
\end{array}
\]

Now in what way would he
48. (0.2) \(^{\text{de=winim}}\) selivan han^?\(\backslash\)
3S:1=earn(B)  life  3S:POSS

*be able to save his life?*

The discourse in lines 47 and 48 has the following features, typical of direct speech:

- it is syntactically a question
- it is an exclamation
- prosodically it is in a high pitch, typical of direct speech
- there is a deictic marker, *na*, ‘now’, which is typically associated with direct speech in conjunction with question or exclamation syntax and prosody

Unlike direct speech:

- it is not encoded with the generic speech verb *va*
- the pronominal markers used to refer to the boy in line 49 are third person

Grammatically and prosodically, lines 47 and 48 are an example of an intermediate status between narration and direct discourse.

This completes the description of story clause categories encountered in Tirax narrative. The remaining clause categories are non-story clauses, discussed below in §7.4.6.

7.4.6 Non-story clauses

There are often clauses in narratives which are not part of the story world, that is, the deictic centre of these clauses is in the real-world here-and-now and not the story world. *Non-story clauses* include *story frames* and the narrator’s *asides*. These non-story clauses can involve first and second person pronouns, referring to the narrator and interlocutor, as in the clause in line 76 below:

(26) **EXAMPLE: The Story of the Coconut** (IUs 74-78)

74. (1.2) ale —
so

*So,*
she had come,

Hm, I'm telling a rather long story!

Ah, so she had now come.

She pushed her head through the fence

Story frames are associated with stock phrases, such as *ivahaxal* ‘one time, or ‘once’, *inev na* ‘the end’ and a version of *salbas mare salbas drav sr sxim*, which is a stock phrase that is often used at the end of a story to pass the turn of telling a story to the next person:

(27) EXAMPLE: *The Chief’s Wife and the She-devil* (IUs 239-242)

*He (the chief) ordained his son that*

*his wife had given birth to in the bush.*

*He took his (rightful) place as chief.*

*This is the end of the story.*
A coral tree stalk, a vine leaf stalk and now it’s your turn.

7.4.7 Temporal junctures and sequentiality

In §7.4.3 a narrative clause is defined as encoding an event on the narrative timeline, in a sequence with other narrative clauses. This definition implies that sequential, or iconic ordering of clauses is fundamental to the definition of narrative clause-hood. However there are issues with the criterion of sequentiality for narrative clauses in Tirax, and this section explores some of the problems encountered when identifying clause-types.

Sequential ordering is widely considered to be fundamental to narrative, and several theorists, such as Labov & Waletzky (1967), Labov (1972), Genette (1972) and Hopper & Thompson (1980), propose that iconic ordering of clauses is a defining characteristic of narrative. Labov observes that the order of narrative clauses in a text implies the same order of events in the story world:

- the clauses are characteristically ordered in temporal sequence; if narrative clauses are reversed, the inferred temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation is altered: I punched this boy / and he punched me instead of This boy punched me / and I punched him.

Labov 1972:360

Central to the notion of sequencing is the concept of a temporal juncture between events. The presence of a temporal juncture between events clearly distinguishes a narrative event from a non-narrative one, as this latter type of events does not have a defined endpoint. The criterion of a temporal juncture excludes for example negative clauses, clauses which refer to on-going or habitual activities, and clauses which refer to states, both psychological or physical. The sentence Missy ate a mouse and came inside contains a temporal juncture between the two clauses, encoded by the simple past tense, and so the two events are coded as consecutive narrative events. However the sentence Missy was eating a mouse when she came inside has no temporal juncture between the clauses, and the first clause is encoded as additional descriptive
information to the event of Missy coming inside; the events are coded as happening simultaneously.

A temporal juncture appears to be integral to the notion of sequencing and vice versa. However storytellers can choose to narrate events out-of-sequence, as in the following example from English:

(28) Kaspar got onto the neighbour’s roof. He had got through a hole in the fence and had climbed up a tree and had jumped across from one of the branches.

This excerpt would not qualify as a narrative by Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) definition, as the clauses are not temporally ordered. In this case, the first clause registers the T(emporal) R(eference) P(oint) and the subsequent clauses relate events which took place prior to the TRP, as indicated on figure 7-2.

Figure 7-2: Order of events on a timeline and location of TRP for example 28

```
[ Clause 2] [ Clause 3 ] [ Clause 4] [ Clause 1]
```

The English morphosyntax in the above example reflects the relationship of each clause to the TRP. The clause which advances the narrative is in the simple past, which typically expresses a perfective event, and the clauses relating the events that took place prior to the TRP are in the past perfect. The first clause is analysed as a narrative clause and the subsequent clauses are non-narrative because they do not advance the storyline along the timeline.

The same example can be expressed in English with each clause encoded as simple past:

(29) Kaspar got onto the neighbour’s roof. He got through a hole in the fence and climbed up a tree and jumped across from one of the branches.

In this case, the four clauses are expressed as perfective with the simple past, and the morphosyntax of each clause does not reflect its relationship to the TRP. Our world knowledge allows us to infer the order of events, rather than relying on clause order or morphosyntax. Although the events are coded the same way as each other, only the
first clause is a narrative clause by Labov’s definition since sequentiality is a fundamental defining feature of narrative clauses.

This technique of narrating an event, then going on to elaborate its internal structure is a relatively common device in Tirax narratives. The morphosyntactic pattern in Tirax resembles that in example (29) above, that is, the clauses are coded the same way, whether or not they are in sequence. In the Tirax example below, the clauses which relate narrative events are in bold. These clauses are marked the same as each other, as basic realis clauses, however only those in lines 35 and 38 (arrowed) advance the story along the timeline, the remaining clauses elaborate the internal structure of the events in lines 35 to 38; the events in those clauses take place prior to or simultaneously with the current temporal reference point (which is set in line 38).

(30) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 35-44)

35. (0.7) r=das r=das r=das vɔvɔ-ɔv /=
    3D:R=search 3D:R=search 3D:R=search DUP-DUR

    They looked and looked and looked on and on

    i=hge /=
    3S:R=not.be

    (but found) nothing.

    na  i=va  \ now  3S:R=say

    (The man) said

36. (0.2) [clicks]
    tch

    “Tch!”

37. (0.5) naut i=nelik na ! =  O=me ba=an lain !
    place 3S:R=dark now 2S:IMP=come 2D:I=go home

    “It's getting dark now, let's go back to my place!”

38. (0.8) ale r=vla  \ so  3D:R=go.away

    So they left.
39. (1.0) e: ...(0.6) e: vin=bɔ \njɛ \ni=ŋɔ \ndenreh \nHES HES white.one=DIM DEF 3S:R=want 3S:not.want

(The flying fox) didn't want to (go),

40. (0.4) ale: .. i=fosem — =
so 3S:R=force(B)

but (the man) forced her.

i=va — =
3S:R=say

He said

41. ^ e bar=vla ^ !
hey 2D:1=leave

“Hey, let’s go!”

42. (0.5) naut i=nelik na!
place 3S:R=dark now

“It's dark now!”

43. .. Ø=me\n bar=an lot hɔk \n2S:IMP=come 2D:1=go place 1S:POSS

“Come and we’ll go to my place.”

44. (0.8) ale ...(0.7) vin=bɔ \nje i=akseptem ia /=
so white.one=DIM DEF 3S:R=accept(B) there(B)

So now the little white one agreed

ale i=srɛ-i \nso 3S:R=follow-3S

and she followed him.

45. (1.0) r=vla r=van lain /
3D:R=leave 3D:R=go home

So they went to his house

This type of example is reminiscent of those encountered by Thompson (1987) for English. Thompson identifies clauses in English written narrative which ‘preview’ upcoming elaborations, so by Thompson’s analysis, the clauses in lines 35 and 38
would not be regarded as temporally sequenced (narrative) clauses. This is the inverse of a Labovian analysis, which would exclude the clauses following line 38 as being narrative, as they are an elaboration and do not advance the narrative. Neither approach fits the Tirax data very well, for two reasons. The first is that the clauses which are involved in these kinds of constructions, both in the preview and elaboration, are marked the same as other narrative clauses, so there is no grammatical evidence to suggest that they should be analysed as belonging to different clause categories. In addition to this, these kinds of disruptions to sequentiality are pervasive in Tirax narrative, and not restricted to the odd clause with cataphoric reference to an event sequence, as it is in Thompson’s data.

Section §7.5 summarises the conditions under which there are disruptions to sequentiality in Tirax narratives. Clauses encoding events which take place prior to the TRP are typically unmarked in Tirax texts. In this work and elsewhere, (Brotchie forthcoming), I suggest that the criterion of sequentiality is therefore not as fundamental to a robust definition of narrative as a logical connection of some sort between events. That is, the short text: Missy ate a mouse. Kaspar got onto the neighbour’s roof. does not constitute a narrative, as the events, while they may be sequential, are not logically connected. Example (28) above, which relates the events which led up to Kaspar jumping onto the roof, could be analysed as a short narrative with an embedded timeline, since each clause is encoded as perfective, and does not relate to the TRP set by the first clause. The first clause establishes a temporal reference point on timeline A. The second clause then establishes a new timeline B, and each clause following furthers the narrative along that embedded timeline. A multiple timeline analysis best fits the Tirax data: narrative clauses on an embedded timeline are not distinguished grammatically from those on a main timeline, while clauses which initiate embedded timelines in Tirax narrative are often marked with some kind of subordinate clause marker, such as rente, which typically combines with perfective dax, as discussed §7.2.4 above:

(31) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 18 - 24)

18. (1.8) i=me salin / — =
38:r=come outside N

She came out
She came out to go and look for her wings

19. (0.7) be: — (0.8) i=leh temul \ \nBut she couldn't see them anymore.

20. (0.2) naxda-n i=sal \ \nThe wings were gone.

21. (0.8) ren-te morti hxal \ 3S:i=me \ dax / = N-New timeline \\nA man had come

i=lev-i / 3S:i=take-3S

and taken them

22. (0.4) i=van i=to-huwex-i \ 3S:i=go 3S:i=put-hide-3S

and went and hid them.

23. (1.1) i=van i=to-huwex nja b\lo nvat hxal \ 3S:i=go 3S:i=put-hide LOC hole stone INDEF

He went and hid (them) in a hole in a rock.

24. (0.7) ale ...(0.2) i=me na / N
Now he came

In the present work, the criteria for assigning narrative clause status are that the clause encode an event which can be charted on the narrative timeline, and that the clause be bounded by a temporal juncture, or end point. It is not necessary that the clause be sequential.

---

8 The clause in line 29 is not narrative because it encodes a state. Narrative clauses are discussed in §7.4.4.
7.4.8 Discussion: realis clauses and functional clause categories

Hopper and Thompson observe that the functional distinction between *foregrounded* (roughly, narrative) versus *backgrounded* (non-narrative) clauses is likely to help explain many universals in morphosyntax, as the functional distinctions become grammaticalised in the world’s languages (1980:293). The grammar of many languages, including English, for example, obligatorily distinguishes perfective and imperfective aspect, which reflects a distinction between narrative and non-narrative clauses.

Contrary to these observations, the narrative versus non-narrative dichotomy does not, at first glance, appear to make a deep impression on the morphosyntax of the Tirax language. You will recall that the majority of clauses in Tirax narratives are basic realis clauses with no tense-aspect marking. Realis clauses can function as either narrative or non-narrative clauses; that is, they can either relate discreet events which form the backbone of the narrative, or they can provide some kind of contextual or descriptive information. Of the five clauses in the example below, repeated from §7.4.3 above, four are simple realis clauses, but only one of these is a narrative clause. It is marked with an N, for narrative.

(32) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 26-29)

26. i=ɾɔ nalxah //
   3S:R=feel cold

   She felt cold.

27. (1.8) i=mɛ salin / — =
   3S:R=come outside

   She came out (of the water)

   te de=van de=das xini: naxda-n //
   SUB 3S:1=go 3S:1=search OBL wings-3S:POSS

   to go and look for her wings

28. (0.7) be: — ...(0.8) i=leh temul \
   but(B) 3S:R=see no.more

   But she couldn't see (them) anymore.
We saw in §7.4.3 that the realis clause in line 26 is analysed as a non-narrative clause, on the grounds that it describes an internal state, which is the context for the narrative event related in the following line. The main clause in line 27 is analysed as narrative, because it is a discreet event, with the endpoint reached once the little white flying fox is out of the water. The subordinate clause describes a purpose and not an event on the timeline. The following clause is negative and cannot be a narrative clause since there is no end-point, and the final clause in the example describes a state, and so is also not a narrative clause. Each of the main clauses above are basic realis clauses with no tense-aspect markers, but only one is a narrative clause.

It is clear from the above example that the meaning of the verb phrase contributes to its interpretation as a narrative versus non-narrative clause. A clause that contains a highly semantically transitive, telic verb, for example, is a likely candidate for narrative clause-hood. However even a highly semantically transitive, telic verb such as *vin* ‘shoot’, can be the main verb in non-narrative as well as narrative clauses. The following two examples show that a basic realis clause with *vin* can function as either a narrative clause (example 33), or a non-narrative clause (example 34).

In the following example, *vin* is the main verb in a narrative clause. The clause in line 131 describes a single, discreet event which can be marked on the timeline.

(33) EXAMPLE: *The Chief’s Wife and the She-devil* (IUs 129-131)

129.ale / 
so

So,

130.ntebih i=narxat /=
child 3S:R=be.lost

*the child went and*
i=lev nevin han / N
3S:R=take arrow 3S:POSS

got his arrow

131. i=vin klɛ bɔt nxa tawɛh — N
3S:R=shoot again base wood another

and again shot the base of another tree.

Vin also occurs in the text below, where it stands for a continuing event, of shooting fish while following a reef. This clause was translated into Bislama with the continuous aspect marker stap: Oli stap shutum fis. The clause is analysed as a non-narrative clause. However, there are no markers of continuous aspect; the clause is a basic realis clause.

(34) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUS 14-17)

14. (0.4) s=vial sarr — =
3P:R=walk IMPF

They were walking along.

s=van i=dlaŋ / N
3P:R=go 3S:R=be.thus DEF

going along like that,

15. (0.6) s=van vo-vɔ / =
3P:R=go DUP-DUR

going on and on until

s=sder laltah /
3P:R=reach to.the.sea

they reached the sea.

16. (1.0) ale: s=srɛ ntah na ! N
so 3P:R=follow sea PERF

And then they followed the reef.

17. s=srɛ ntah vo-vɔ: / — =
3P:R=follow sea DUP-DUR

They walked on and on along the reef,
Continuous aspect can be indicated by such grammatical features as reduplicating the verb, and the imperfective marker, *sar*:

(35) EXAMPLE: *The Chief’s Wife and the She-devil* (IU 124)

```
124.marbih i=vin-vin sar bot nxa /
child 3S:R=DUP-shoot IMPF base wood

 dxin nevin han /
COM arrow 3S:POSS
```

*(the) boy was shooting the bases of (the) trees*

*with his arrows.*

A second fact about Tirax narratives is that there is extensive clause parallelism, as is typical of Oceanic languages. The overwhelming majority of reiterated clauses and paraphrases are repetitions of narrative clauses in tail-head linkage constructions. However, the iteration of the clause does not advance the narrative, and so is not technically a narrative clause.

These two facts about Tirax narratives, that there is extensive clause parallelism and that tense-aspect is only optionally marked, mean there is often no morphosyntactic evidence distinguishing narrative and non-narrative clauses in Tirax. As we will see in chapter 11, clause parallelism is a stylistic device which reflects coherence and helps manage the flow of new information. It is likely to be an artefact of an oral tradition, where memory plays a central role in the transmission of stories.

We saw in §7.4.1 that Labov (1997) defines a *narrative clause* as comprising a sequential clause along with any dependent clauses of the sequential clause. Markers encoding tense and aspect are fundamental to a definition of sequential clause for Labov:

*For an independent clause to be a sequential clause, its head must include a tense that is not only deictic, indicating a specific time domain, but identify sequential time relations.*

Labov (1997:397)
By this definition, virtually no clauses in Tirax narrative would be regarded as ‘sequential’, since there are no tense markers and few aspect markers. This criteria for narrative clause-hood was therefore not applicable to the Tirax data.

Realis clauses are the building blocks for all genres of Tirax discourse, from storytelling to *how-to* texts. The assumption made in this work is that the temporal relations are read off the genre of discourse. For narratives, the tense is assumed to be some point in the past, set up initially by the story frame *ivahaxal* ‘once’. It is important to acknowledge, however, that languages which routinely do not mark tense or aspect present a challenge to a Labovian narrative structure approach; the concept of a *temporal juncture* as a structuring principle in narrative and even of a narrative / non-narrative dichotomy may not be as salient in such languages as it appears to be for speakers of Indo-European languages.

7.4.9 Summary: morphosyntactic markers and functional clause categories

To summarise, the grammatical features in Tirax which distinguish the different functional categories depicted in figure 7-1 are motivated by the following three discourse-functional features:

- location of deictic centre
- relationship of state or event to the narrative timeline or T(emoral) R(eference) P(ooint)
- degree of differentiation between narrator and character

The location of the deictic centre, in terms of time and place, distinguishes the story clauses from the non-story clauses. The latter have their deictic centre in the real world, the former in the story world. The relationship of the state or event to the narrative timeline distinguishes each subcategory of story clause. A narrative clause is on the timeline, and a non-narrative clause is not. The non-narrative clause categories are distinguished by the degree of differentiation between the narrator and character: the narrator is wholly differentiated from the character in Descriptive clauses, partially differentiated in FID and inhabits the character in direct discourse. Sub-categories of narrative and Descriptive clauses are each differentiated by their relationship to the TRP. A narrative clause sets a new TRP, a descriptive-durative clause does not, but follows or occurs simultaneously to the TRP. A contextualising
clause occurs prior to or simultaneously to the TRP and a recapitulative clause typically occurs at the TRP, when recapping a narrative clause in a tail-head linkage construction for example.

The morphosyntactic markers associated with the functional subcategories of narrative and Descriptive clauses are summarised in table 7-5. These markers are not always present, many clauses are basic realis clauses no matter which clause-category they belong to.

**Table 7-5:** Summary of morphosyntactic markers associated with functional clause categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Irrealis permitted</th>
<th>Aspect markers</th>
<th>Discourse markers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>perfective <em>dax</em>, <em>dax</em></td>
<td><em>ale</em> ‘then’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>inev</em> ‘after that’</td>
<td><em>na</em> ‘now’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>nate</em> ‘now then’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative (begin new timeline)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>perfective <em>dax</em></td>
<td><em>rente</em> ‘meanwhile’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>te</em> subordinate marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive-durative</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>durative <em>v</em></td>
<td><em>ale</em> ‘so’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>idla DEM</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualising</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>imperfective <em>sar</em></td>
<td><em>rente</em> ‘meanwhile’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recapitulative clauses can repeat non-narrative as well as narrative clauses, and so can be associated with the full range of marking.

Having identified the range of clause categories encountered in Tirax narrative, the next three sections look more closely at other related features of narrative.

**7.5 Sequentiality and narrative pressures**

In §7.4 it argued for a multiple timeline analysis. The reason for re-evaluating the role of sequentiality in defining narrative in Tirax, is that there are many instances in the Tirax corpus of parts of a story being told out of sequence, and typically with no morphosyntactic marking to indicate the disruption to chronology. Brotchie (forthcoming) explores the range of conditions which trigger disruptions to
sequentiality, and argues that the disruptions are motivated by narrative pressures.
This section gives a summary of those narrative pressures which appear to influence narrative sequencing in Tirax.

In Tirax, a disruption to sequentiality can be triggered by the following four discourse-functional features:

- a deictic shift, specifically a shift in focus of character
- an elaboration of an event
- relative salience of events
- the need to reorient audience after a digression

Each one is discussed in turn below. This is followed by a discussion of how these four discourse-functional features are driven by pressures associated with engaging an audience.

7.5.1 Shift in focus of character
Disruptions in sequentiality can be triggered by deictic shifts, specifically shifts in focus of character. When a narrator relates the actions of two characters who are at different locations, there is often a disruption in sequentiality when shifting from one character’s story to another. This occurs in the following example, where the focus of character shifts from the four older brothers to the youngest brother and his wife. The shift occurs in line 131 (arrowed), and is marked by a subordinate clause marker, te. The following main clauses are basic realis clauses, but occur prior to the current temporal reference point. The clause in line 135 then marks a return in the narrative to the current temporal reference point. The clauses in bold are narrative clauses on an embedded timeline:

(36)  EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 129 - 135)

129,(0.9) s=van si=at lot har v-v-v-v-v-ɔ / =
3P:R=go 3P:R=be place 3P:POSS v-DUR

They (the brothers) went back to their place, then after a while
they heard that they (the youngest brother and his wife)

had come back to life and were just chatting, as

the woman had untied

the rope that was tied around her neck

and had got down

and taken a leaf

and she had whipped her husband with it,

the youngest brother.

She whipped him

and he came back to life.
And they started chatting.

7.5.2 Elaboration of the internal structure of an event
You will recall from §7.4.7, that an internal event can be elaborated, exemplified by *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* in example 30, where the man forces the little white flying fox to go home with him. It is typical in Tirax narrative to relate a narrative event, and then elaborate the internal structure of that event. Example 31 showed how the components of an event could be elaborated. An event can also be elaborated temporally, by using durative and progressive aspect markers in the following clause, such as in:

(1)  *He sawed through a plank.*
(2)  *He sawed and sawed and sawed and sawed until*
(3)  *he sawed right through the plank.*

This kind of structure, referred to as a *triplet* in Brotchie (In preparation), is frequently encountered in Tirax narrative, as exemplified below. The arrowed clause is the first clause of the triplet.

(37) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks* (speaker 1, IUs 23-4):

23. (0.6) ^ i=ver vo i=hex ^ /=
    3S:R=say DUR 3S:R=not.be

   *He (the devil) said it and said it, but nothing happened,*

   i=tés blang \  
   3S:R=cut plank(B)

   *so he cut through a plank.*

24. (1.1) i=tés v-v-v-v-v-vɔ: — =
    3S:R=cut DUP-DUR

   *He cut (it) and cut (it) until*
he cut right through the plank.

Elaboration of the internal structure of an event gives that event more ‘air-time’, and is therefore a means of giving prominence to that event.

7.5.3 Salience

Another factor influencing the sequencing of clauses appears to be salience of the events, with respect to consequences for the protagonist. In the example below, the narrative events are arrowed.

(38) EXAMPLE: The Five Planks (Speaker 1, IUs 1-15):

1. m reconcile a=lin people 3s:r=five

   There were five people,

2. (1.3) n: … (0.8) s=van HES 3p:r=go to.the.sea

   they went to the seaside.

3. (1.2) so 3p:r=leave Ana.pro one

   But they left one of them behind.

4. (1.1) a=at 3s=be

   He stayed there.

5. a=e: s=to-xrọ HES 3p:r=put-block

   They blocked

   (0.8) n: …(0.8) sɔsɔ HES i=lin 3s:r=five Loc-3s:poss

   (the door) with five planks of wood.
6. (0.8) xɔɔ c nali \= block door
\[\text{Blocked the door.}\]

7. s=lilis xɔɔ c lalvanu \=
3P:R=shut block inside
\[\text{They shut (him) inside.}\]

8. (0.8) ale lalahvuxvux hxal i=van /
then devil INDEF 3S:R=go
\[\text{Then a big-balled devil came along.}\]

9. (0.6) i=ve-ve: de=tɛs-ɛɛ \=
3S:R=DUP-want 3S:R=chop-3P
\[\text{He wanted to chop them down}\]

10. (0.2) de=rub mar ɛɛ \=
3S:R=hit man DEF
\[\text{and kill the fellow.}\]

11. (0.7) s=tux nani /=
3P:R=break coconut
\[\text{(The brothers) had broken open some coconuts}\]
s=tɔ sxi-n ɛɛ: /=
3P:R=put DAT-3S:POSS HES
\[\text{and put them with (the boy)},\]

12. (0.5) i=wɛs sar \=
3S:R=eat IMPF
\[\text{and he was eating them.}\]

13. (1.4) i=wɛs sar lalvanu na: /=
3S:R=eat IMPF inside now
\[\text{He was eating (them) inside the house now,}\]

14. lalahvuxvux i=van na /=
devil 3S:R=go now
\[\text{Now (the) devil came}\]
and said to (the boy), he said ...

The order of events in the story is:

1. The brothers chop open coconuts and put them inside with the boy
2. The brothers block the door with planks
3. The brothers leave the boy alone at home
4. A devil arrives
5. The devil speaks to the boy

Rather than spend many clauses setting up the story before the key dramatic event of the devil arriving, the storyteller relates events out of sequence. Relating the inciting incidents earlier captures the audience attention and imagination more effectively than slowly building up a picture of the boy’s circumstances.

The order of events in the narrative is therefore:

1. The brothers leave the boy alone at home (enables the story) (chronologically the third event)
2. The brothers block the door with planks (key information about his situation) (second)
3. A devil arrives (first dramatic incident) (fourth)
4. The brothers chop open coconuts and put them inside with the boy (detail which function to establish the boy as the deictic centre of the narrative, by building up a more detailed picture of his situation) (first)
5. The devil speaks to the boy (fifth)

The above also exemplifies descriptive-durative clauses functioning as contextualising clauses. The clauses in lines 12 and 13 are enabled by the narrative events of the brothers giving the boy the coconuts, but they also provide a context for the narrative event of the devil arriving.
7.5.4 Re-orientation

Clauses can be out-of-sequence for the purposes of re-orienting the audience to the present situation. The clauses in lines 151 to 153 in the following example are a paraphrase of events described in more detail earlier in the narrative.

(39) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (lines 150 - 153)

150. (0.2) i=at vɔ i=ŋə dax te s=me \ 
3S:R=stay until 3S:R=hear PERF SUB 3P:R=come

*He waited until he suddenly heard that they were coming.*

151. (1.2) ren-te i=s-sɛr-nenev dax xain xini nmab vɔ i=vlxnet \ 
time-SUB 3S:R=DUP-paint-COMPL PERF 3S OBL T.chestnut until 3S:R=turn.black

*When he had finished painting himself with the chestnuts until he turned black,*

152. (0.4) i=an i=tur … (0.2) xɔrɔ nali vɔvho … (0.3) =na nvat / 
3S:R=go 3S:R=stand block door exactly =ASSOC stone

*and he went and stood right in the entrance of the cave.*

153. (0.4) ale i=ri i=me salin \ 
so 3S:R=look 3S:R=come outside

*And he looked outside.*

This narrative is the subject of the case study in chapter 11.

7.5.5 Sequencing and narrative pressures

It is likely that these four circumstances are driven by *narrative pressures* which compete with the principle of (chronological) iconicity in determining the order of clauses. Narrative pressures include:

- conveying the point of an event or story
- creating dramatic tension or suspense
- inciting empathic response in the audience for the protagonist, and
- immersing the audience in the story as deeply as possible
By shifting *focus of character*, a storyteller can increase empathy or create suspense, depending on whether the audience is afforded insight into the protagonist or antagonist respectively.

Elaborating an event gives it *dramatic emphasis*, increasing its prominence and underscoring the stakes, helping ensure that the audience gets the main points of the story.

Ordering clauses according to how dramatic the consequences are for the protagonist, that is, ordering the clauses in terms of *salience*, can help an audience quickly identify the point, and the jeopardy for the protagonist, creating a sense of momentum and suspense.

Storytellers can also use *recapping flashbacks* to reorient the audience to the drama of the narrative present, thereby maximising the impact of the present events.

It appears in Tirax that each of these techniques can contribute to structuring a narrative and ordering events. Where these structuring principles are at odds with the structuring principle of *sequentiality*, the clauses relating the narrative events can deviate from chronological order.

### 7.6 Narrative status and momentum

A clause relating an event which progresses the narrative along a timeline gives the narrative *momentum*. For the purposes of the present work, *momentum* is defined as the proportion of narrative clauses in any passage of text. However narrative momentum could also be defined for oral texts as the number of narrative clauses uttered per unit of real-world time. Non-narrative clauses, on the other hand, enrich a text by providing details about the story world, characters and events that make the story more vivid, therefore more engaging for the audience. Any amount of descriptive detail which takes up real time is going to decrease the narrative’s momentum. Storytelling involves a balancing act between providing enough detail to deeply immerse the audience in the story world and convey the point of the story, and moving the story along to maintain audience interest and increase excitement.
In chapter 11 we will see several examples, where the storyteller manipulates narrative time in order to either create momentum, or create anticipation. Delaying a narrative event can create anticipation and therefore suspense, as in the example below from *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*. N(arrative) clauses, D(escriptive-D(urative) clauses and direct discourse clauses are indicated. It is only the narrative clauses which propel the story, the other two make the story world more vivid.

(40) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 20-26)

20. (0.9) i=rŋ tɛ nmb s=rus na / D-D
   3S:R=hear SUB T.chestnut 3P:R=fall.down now

   Now he (the devil) heard the chestnuts falling down:

21. (0.7) ʰnevṭi tɔdrɔk haxal xan hut-xan^\ Direct Discourse
   smell FOOD:1S:POSS INDEF PRX place-DX

   “The smell of my food is someplace here!”

22. (1.1) ale i=ri i=van linha nŋa nmb \ N
   so 3S:R=look 3S:R=go high LOC T.chestnut.tree

   So he looked up high in the Tahitian chestnut tree.

23. (0.6) i=ri i=van linha nŋa nmb / = D-D
   3S:R=look 3S:R=go high LOC chestnut

   He looked up high in the Tahitian chestnut tree

   i=leḥ tɛ — N
   3S:R=see SUB

   and he saw that -

24. (0.2) i=ri na / = D-D
   3S:R=look now

   now he looked

   i=leḥ tɛ — D-D
   3S:R=see SUB

   and he saw that

25. (0.3) marbih nɛ i=hakɛl linha \ D-D
   boy DEF 3S:R=sit.with.legs.dangling above

   the small boy was sitting high above with his legs dangling.)
He was making the chestnuts continuously fall.

When the two narrative imperatives of progressing the story on the one hand and making it more vivid on the other, are at odds with each other; the narrator expresses additional details, if at all, in a more compact way so as not to distort narrative time, exemplified by the semantically rich verb *hakel* ‘sit with legs dangling’ in line 25 above.

Of the ten narrative which comprise the database for the narrative analysis in the present work, four were selected for an analysis of momentum. The four represented a range of lengths and narrative styles each from four different speakers. Roughly a third of all clauses in these Tirax narratives are narrative clauses. This ratio of narrative to non-narrative clauses seems to give the narrative enough momentum to keep the story interesting and enough descriptive detail and dialogue to make the story vivid. The results for the four narratives are given in table 7-6. In each of the four narratives, between a third to a half of non-narrative clauses are direct discourse clauses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7-6: Proportion of narrative clauses in four Tirax narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total no. of clauses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Snake and the Coconut</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of narrative and non-narrative clauses in two of these narratives was analysed to reveal how the proportion of narrative clauses varied throughout the narratives, and therefore study the flow of momentum of the narratives. The two narratives are *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* and *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*. The two speakers have different storytelling styles, with
one having a lean style (*Chestnuts*) and the other a discursive style (*Brothers*). The narratives were broken down into sequences, largely on the basis of major shifts in deictic centre as described in the following chapter. The results for *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* are in table 7-7. The shaded rows in the tables show where the narrative clause proportion is forty per cent or greater, that is, above the average of 33%, and therefore representing an increased momentum.

**Table 7-7**: Proportion of narrative and direct discourse clauses per sequence in *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence no.</th>
<th>No. of clauses</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>No. of N clauses in sequence</th>
<th>% of N clauses in sequence</th>
<th>No. of Direct discourse (speech) clauses</th>
<th>% of Direct discourse (speech) clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Father, Mother, Boy</td>
<td>Introduce characters, boy must stay at home by himself while parents go to the garden; boy leaves home and climbs chestnut tree and collects chestnuts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Devil</td>
<td>Devil comes along and discovers boy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Devil, Boy</td>
<td>The devil traps the boy in the tree and makes him throw chestnuts down to him</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The boy asks the devil to collect all their chestnuts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Devil, Boy</td>
<td>The devil gathers the chestnuts and the boy climbs down and they leave</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The boy finds out that the devil is scared of dark-skinned people</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The boy and devil walk to the devils house with the chestnuts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The devil asks the boy to cook the chestnuts while he goes to the toilet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>The boy cooks the chestnuts until they are charcoal and paints himself black with them and stands in the entrance of the cave</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Devils</td>
<td>The devil gathers together his devil friends</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Devils</td>
<td>The devil and his friends take their weapons and go to kill the boy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>Repeated sequence: the boy paints himself with the chestnuts and stands in the entrance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Devils</td>
<td>The devils head towards the cave, see the blackened boy and scatter in fear</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>The boy escapes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, the first two sequences are dedicated to introducing the key characters and setting up the story. There is a low proportion of narrative clauses here. The first two sequences also contain the bulk of reiterated clauses and tail-head linkage constructions. Since these constructions occur as the story is being set up, it suggests there is a low tolerance for new information and a key function of the clause repetition is to manage the information-flow. Once the devil is introduced, there are several non-narrative clauses creating suspense, exemplified above in example 40, before the devil and boy actually meet.

Once the protagonist and antagonist meet, in sequence three, there is a roughly equal proportion of narrative and non-narrative clauses. However almost all of the non-narrative clauses are direct speech, so that almost every non-speech clause progresses the narrative and gives it momentum. In this sequence, the devil puts the boy under pressure, and there is a threat that he will eat the boy. The direct speech makes the threat more vivid and immediate, while at the same time the narrative clauses have a dramatic effect of accelerating the story-telling, towards a dangerous conclusion.

There is a pattern through the development of the story, of a sequence with a high proportion of narrative clauses alternating with a sequence with a low proportion of narrative clauses. The storyteller propels the story along, then takes the foot off the accelerator to build more descriptive detail into the story and bring the characters to life with dialogue.

Sequence nine has a high proportion of narrative clauses and no dialogue, as there is only one character. This high proportion of narrative clauses propels the story forward towards the anticipated climax – a showdown between the boy and the devils. Perhaps surprisingly, the following sequences have a very high proportion of non-narrative clauses, and the narrative appears to grind to a halt. In the first of these sequences, two thirds of the non-narrative clauses are direct speech, and so effectively progress story world time while bringing the characters to life. In the second, sequence eleven, a third of the clauses are elaborations on the weapons to be used to kill the boy. So the climactic showdown is delayed to bring the characters of the devils to life and to raise the stakes, so they have an important narrative function of increasing the sense of jeopardy for the boy, heading into the climax.
The bulk of sequence twelve is a flashback, recapping the events which led to the boy standing in the doorway. The flashback has a twofold effect: it reinvigorates the image of the boy in the doorway, and delays the climax, creating suspense.

The final two sequences, the climax and denouement, have a relatively high proportion of narrative clauses at 57% and 50% respectively, and there is no dialogue. In the climax, the Descriptive clauses build suspense and then emphasise his victory over the devils. The resolution is only one event: that the boy gets away, however the sequence is four clauses long. The event is broken down into two phases in two narrative clauses, and the two Descriptive clauses repeat and elaborate on those clauses. The effect is to slow down the ending of the narrative so it does not end abruptly.

Therefore in *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, there is a low proportion of narrative clauses while the story is being set up. Once the protagonist and antagonist meet, the narrative clauses propel the action through the development of the story. There are a high proportion of non-narrative clauses in the first few sequences, where they serve to set up characters and control the flow of new information, and in the final few sequences, where they increase the jeopardy and suspense.

The pattern for *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* is somewhat different, as shown in table 7-8.
Table 7-8: Proportion of narrative and direct discourse clauses per sequence in *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence no.</th>
<th>No. of clauses</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>No. of N clauses in sequence</th>
<th>% of N clauses in sequence</th>
<th>No. of Direct discourse (speech) clauses</th>
<th>% of Direct discourse (speech) clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Five brothers (home)</td>
<td>Introduce five brothers, decide to go to the beach to fish, with their bows and arrows.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Five brothers (en route to and from the beach)</td>
<td>Brothers catch their fish and on the way back each encounter an old woman with her diseased daughter.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Old woman &amp; oldest brother</td>
<td>The woman asks the first brother for something to eat for her daughter, but he refuses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Old woman &amp; next three brothers</td>
<td>Each brother encounters the woman in turn and each refuses to give her any fish, then the youngest brother arrives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Old woman &amp; youngest brother</td>
<td>The youngest brother agrees to give her his one small fish, and in return she gives him her daughter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Youngest brother &amp; wife / other brothers</td>
<td>The older brothers overhear the youngest brother talking to his new wife and decide to investigate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Other brothers</td>
<td>They spy on the youngest brother and his new wife and decide to kill him and take her for themselves</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Youngest brother &amp; wife</td>
<td>Wife instructs her husband how to survive the brothers’ attack</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Four brothers</td>
<td>The four brothers kill their little brother and discover the wife has hanged herself</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Four brothers / Youngest brother &amp; wife</td>
<td>The four brothers overhear that the youngest brother and his wife are alive again</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Four brothers</td>
<td>The four brothers see that the brother and his wife are alive again and decide to let them live, because it is clear that the two of them belong to each other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The *Five Brothers* narrative begins with a high proportion of narrative clauses, propelling the audience into the story. There is some elaboration, describing how the five brothers are walking along in birth order. Birth order is significant in Tirax culture, as different duties and obligations fall to different family members depending on gender and birth order. The elaboration on birth order in the beginning of the narrative reflects the significance of birth order in the narrative, and in Tirax culture generally. Following this are four sequences with a low proportion of narrative clauses. Sequence two has no dialogue, and the non-narrative clauses are dedicated to the introduction of two new key characters and elaborating three important aspects of the story: There is a description of how the brothers are carrying fish they have just caught, skewered on the ends of their spears. There is a description of how the brothers are walking along for the return journey, in birth order, and there is a lengthy description of how diseased the daughter is. The speaker spends time making clear the main points of the story. The following three sequences also have a low proportion of narrative clauses, but here the speaker uses extensive dialogue to bring the characters to life and progress time in the story world. Sequence 5 contains the pivotal event of the youngest brother giving his fish to the diseased girl and then taking her as his wife. There are no Descriptive clauses in this sequence; there is an average proportion of narrative clauses, at 35%, while the rest are speech clauses. This sequence marks a new direction in the narrative, and an increased momentum in its telling. Once the youngest brother takes the girl as his wife, the story picks up momentum and maintains that momentum right through the development of the story through to the denouement, which has a low proportion of narrative clauses, so the story does not end abruptly, similar to *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*.

Analysing the proportion of narrative to non-narrative clauses gives an insight into how a storyteller juggles the dual imperatives of propelling a story forward on the one hand, and creating a vivid story world on the other. Of the narratives studied, it was found that around a third of all the clauses were narrative clauses, suggesting that this proportion gives a narrative enough momentum to make the story engaging for an audience. The results from the two narratives suggest that there is a relationship between flow of momentum and content, such that dramatic peaks occur in sequences with high momentum and the introduction of characters tends to occur in sequences of low momentum. However no conclusions can be made at this stage about the
organization of Tirax narrative with respect to the flow of momentum until more narratives are analysed. Some questions for further research include the relationship between momentum and content, and the extent to which there are similar patterns of flow of momentum in the narratives of other languages.

7.7 Markers of discourse prominence

According prominence to certain features of the narrative is an important strategy that storytellers use to ensure the point of the story is well-grasped. There are several markers of discourse prominence encountered in Tirax narrative, such as elaboration of the internal structure of an event, discussed in §7.5.2. This section looks at the use of aspect markers in encoding discourse prominence. The most frequently encountered markers of prominence are given in table 7-9.

**Table 7-9:** Tirax aspect markers and their functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Grammatical function</th>
<th>Discourse function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dax</td>
<td>PERFective</td>
<td>strong prominence (narrative clause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sar</td>
<td>IMPerFective</td>
<td>strong prominence (contextualising clause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na</td>
<td>PERFective</td>
<td>weak prominence (typically narrative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(marks following clause if rising intonation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vo</td>
<td>DURative ‘on and on until’</td>
<td>weak prominence (typically descriptive-durative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These markers are discussed in the following sub-sections.

7.7.1 Strong prominence (narrative clauses): perfective dax

The perfective dax is used in dialogue to give an event extra emphasis. In the following example, from *the Story of the Snake and the Coconut*, a woman resists being with a man because her mother is a snake, and she knows the mother will come to harm if she marries him. The man insists on her marrying him, saying that it does not matter that the mother is a snake. Then when the mother-in-law visits them, she is killed by the husband and his family. The wife is distressed to learn that her mother is dead, and says to the husband that she told him she could not come with him, emphasising the importance of the event by using dax:
In narrative, the perfective marker *dax* is similarly used to give prominence to narrative clauses, as in the example below. The storyteller uses *dax* to highlight the events of the cultural items being tossed out of a cordyline plant. These narrative events build towards an important narrative peak, where the man encounters the woman, who then becomes his wife.

(42) EXAMPLE: *The Cordyline Woman* (IUs 64-69)

64. i=at-druŋ vɔ / = i=leh dax tɛ: —
   3S:R=be-hide DUR 3S:R=see PERF SUB

   then he hid until he saw that

65. ɛ: rɔ-kareh / = i=vel sar i=dla xue \ 
    HES leaf-cordyline 3S:R=sway IMPF 3S:R=be.thus DX3

   there was a cordyline leaf swaying like this (demonstrating the movement)

66. i=ve  i=dla xɔxan — [singsong voice as she sways showing movement]
   3S:R=do 3S:R=be.thus LOC.DX1.PRX

   it was moving like that,

67. i=ve  sar i=dla xɔxan vvvvvvvvvvvv-vɔ: —
   3S:R=do IMPF 3S:R=be.thus LOC.DX1.PRX DUP-DUR

   moving like that on and on and on and on and on

68. i=leh dax tɛ — … i=serex dax a:—
   3S:R=see PERF SUB 3S:R=throw PERF HES

   and then he saw that it threw

69. mŋɔ ntŋ dax i=me salin \ 
    shabbybasket PERF 3S:R=come outside

   an old basket suddenly appeared.

Table 7-10 shows that most instances of *dax* occur in narrative clauses, with some also occurring in dialogue. Some instances of *dax* are used in establishing new timelines, as discussed above in §7.4.7. And there are a few instances of *dax*
encountered in the story frames, specifically in the beginning a story, when a speaker recounts the number of tales they have already told.

Table 7-10: Incidence and distribution of the perfective marker *dax*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Narrative clauses</th>
<th>Initiate timeline</th>
<th>Direct discourse</th>
<th>Story frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with Sores</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Snake and the Coconut</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Old Hag with the Sores</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ten birds</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Dog</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Cordyline Woman</em></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Ant</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wherever *dax* occurs in a narrative clause, it coincides with a dramatic peak, as in example 42 above. The conclusion is that the perfective aspect marker *dax* is associated with marking strong prominence in narrative clauses.

7.7.2 Strong prominence (contextualising clauses): imperfective *sar*

Where *dax* marks narrative clauses for prominence, the imperfective marker, *sar*, is used to give prominence to events or states in Descriptive clauses, and typically contextualising clauses.

Table 7-11 shows the distribution of *sar* in the ten narratives.
Table 7-11: Incidence and distribution of the imperfective marker *sar* in the ten narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Contextualising clauses</th>
<th>Direct discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with Sores</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Snake and the Coconut</em></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</em></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</em></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Old Hag with the Sores</em></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Ten birds</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Dog</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Cordyline Woman</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Ant</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like *dax*, seen above in §7.7.1, imperfective *sar* tends to be associated with dramatic peaks. The following example shows how *sar* marks clauses as imperfective to give prominence to those on-going events at a dramatic point in the narrative. The text below is from the climax of the narrative, where the mother is slowly sinking back into the earth:

(43) **EXAMPLE: The Cordyline Woman** (IUs 140-143)

140. *i=*lev nebe ɲe *i=*dla ɲe ɲ-v-v-ɲ-v-v-v-ɲ: / =
   3S:R=take song DEF 3S:R=be.thus DEF DUP-DUR

   *She (the mother) sang the song like that on and on until*

141. *male=na i=*van *sar* litan na Ɂ\ 
   leg=ASSOC 3S:R=go IMPF down now

   *her legs began to go down into the ground.*

142. *male=na i=*van litan \ = =ɲa ntan \ = =
   leg=ASSOC 3S:R=go down LOC ground

   *Her legs went down, into the ground*
They went sinking and sinking lower and lower...

Sar is also encountered marking contexts for dramatic narrative events, such as the arrival of a devil. The narrative clauses are often themselves marked with the perfective dax. In The Old Hag with the Sores, for example, the old woman has tied up the protagonist in a bag, and has gone out to collect vegetables to cook him with. While she is gone, the boy escapes. The clauses which lead up to the key dramatic event of escaping are marked as prominent. There is a double reference expression for the boy in line 51, which, as discussed in chapter 10, is a marker associated with prominence of a NP.

(44) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 50-51)

50. (0.9) i=lıɛξ sar / = lıxen / =
   3S:R=turn.back IMPF back

   She was coming back

   i=mɛ / = i=sder lebo ves-nhal /
   3S:R=come 3S:R=reach first half-road

   and had got half way

51. (0.3) ntebiḥ xain ir- ...(0.2) i=rɔdɔ dax !
   child 3S HES 3S:R=know PERF

   but the child, he already knew.

This narrative is interesting, in that there is evidence that the character of the hag is the protagonist. She is the first character encountered, and more importantly, the last character we see; the story finishes with her. It recalls the dual nature of the character of Baba Yaga in Russian and Slavic folk-tales, who is typically the feared antagonist as well as the central character. Sar typically marks clauses relating the actions of the protagonist, prior to some dramatic event, and in this story, each occurrence of sar marks a clause relating the activities of the hag. The first three occurrences of sar mark clauses relating how the hag is picking up fruit to eat. They provide a context for the first dramatic event: the introduction of the boy. The second time sar marks a clause it provides the context for the boy’s escape.
7.7.3 Markers of weak prominence: clause-final na and durative ʋɔ

We saw in chapter 5 that clause-final na is a marker of perfect aspect. It is also associated with discourse prominence. When it occurs in a clause with a falling or exclamatory intonation contour, it gives prominence to the clause it is part of. The event may either be narrative or descriptive, as in the clause in line 141 exemplified in (43) above, where it occurs in tandem with imperfective marker sar to give additional prominence to the climactic event.

Most commonly, clause-final na occurs on the second clause in tail-head linkage constructions, defined in §7.3.1. In this case the clause it is in typically has a rising intonation contour, to prime the audience for a following narrative event. Clause-final na therefore gives prominence to the following narrative event when it is associated with rising intonation. In the example below, the clause following na introduces the character who forcefully takes the protagonist as his wife. This clause is dramatically important to the story, and the na cataphorically marks it as prominent:

(45)  EXAMPLE: The Snake and the Coconut (IUs 14-15)

14. (1.1) ale xain i=an / = i=mel-melex / =
   so 3s 3s:R=go 3s:R=DUP-wash

   So she went and did the washing,

   i=ɾŋɔ te nxa i=mlas / =
   3s:R=hear SUB wood 3s:R=break

   and she heard a stick break,

   ve-te i=ri \  but-SUB 3s:R=look

   but she looked.

15. (1.0) i=ri  na / =
   3s:R=look now

   She looked

   i=le horti hxal \ 3s:R=see person INDEF

   and she saw a man -
The analysis of clause-final *na* is partly reliant on prosodic cues, and a purely text-based study would not readily distinguish the two uses of *na* as a prominence marker.

Clause-final *na* has a different, and wider, distribution to the other aspect markers associated with prominence marking. Clause-final *na* occurs frequently in the corpus of ten traditional narratives, a total of 119 times, compared with a total of 39 occurrences of the perfective *dax*, and 42 for *sar*, as shown in table 7-12.

**Table 7-12**: Distribution of perfective markers *dax* and clause-final *na* in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>na (pf)</th>
<th>dax (PERF)</th>
<th>sar (IMPF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</em></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Snake and the Coconut</em></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</em></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Old Hag with the Sores</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Ten birds</em></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Dog</em></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Cordyline Woman</em></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cat and Ant</em></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike *dax*, clause-final *na* tends to occur in chains of cause-and-effect in a narrative plotline, exemplified in the narrative *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, discussed in chapter 11. *Dax* and *sar*, by contrast, are more frequently encountered at dramatic peaks. So clause-final *na* is more involved in the structuring of a narrative backbone, whereas *dax* marks strong prominence in narrative clauses.

Since clause-final *na* is frequently encountered in narrative compared with the other markers of prominence, *dax* and *sar*, and is encountered throughout a narrative and not merely at dramatic peaks, clause-final *na* is analysed as marking weak prominence.
7.7.4 Unexpected marking and dramatic peaks

In her doctoral thesis, Ballantyne proposes that prominent events in narrative will be associated with morphosyntactic marking that reflect the experience of the real-world here-and-now. This view is expressed as her *situated foreground hypothesis*:

> The more prominent an event in the imagined world of narrative, the more likely that the clause which expresses it will employ morphosyntax that indexes the experience of events which occur in the here-and-now of the real world.

Ballantyne 2005:52

Ballantyne refers to extensive psycholinguistic research, such as that of Ohtsuka and Brewer (1992), Zwaan et al (2000) and van der Meer et al (2002), which suggests that clauses which are temporally ordered, and clauses which are coded with markers representing the experience of the real-world here-and-now such as progressive aspect, are more easily processed than those which are not. These findings complement Ballantyne’s hypothesis by correlating a psycholinguistic imperative, that of ease of processing, with a story-telling imperative, that of immersing the audience in a narrative.

As Ballantyne observes, events in the real world here-and-now are experienced as both sequential and on-going. Sequentiality is associated with perfective aspect, and on-goingness is associated with imperfective aspect. This points to a paradox in the hypothesis: both perfective and imperfective marking are predicted to be associated with ‘foreground’ prominence. She suggests this plays out in language by a combination of perfective and imperfective aspect used to mark different degrees of foreground prominence.

Ballantyne’s hypothesis ties in with Schiffrin’s (1981) observations on the use of the *historic present* in oral narrative. Schiffrin finds for English that storytellers switch to present tense to refer to past events when relating dramatic plot points in their narratives, then switch back to past tense following the dramatic peak. Fleischman (1990) similarly finds ‘unexpected marking’ with respect to tense / aspect correlates
with ‘unexpected events’ in Old French narratives, a pattern she refers to as 
pragmatic reversal. Ballantyne’s hypothesis provides some insight into the pattern of 
distribution of aspect marking in Tirax, and in particular an apparent anomaly, 
exemplified above in (43), an extended version of which is repeated below. Generally, 
the perfective marker dax is associated with highlighting a narrative event, and the 
imperfective marker sar is associated with highlighting a contextualising event. 
However, in The Cordyline Woman narrative, as the speaker approaches the climax 
where the Cordyline Woman sinks back into the earth, she marks several of the 
clauses with the imperfective marker, elongating the moment as the husband tries to 
prevent her from disappearing. The storyteller speaks in a fluent, excited tone, and 
switches between the narration and the song without the usual direct speech marker. 
Thus the excitement of the build towards the climax is dramatised, by the use of 
features simulating the real life experience:

(46) EXAMPLE: The Cordyline Woman (IUs 140-147)

140. i=lev nebe ŋe i=dla ŋe vvvvvvv-vo: / =
3S:R=take song DEF 3S:R=be.thus DEF DUP-DUR

She (the mother) sang the song like that on and on until

141. male=na i=van sar litan na ! \
leg=ASSOC 3S:R=go IMPF down now

her legs began to go down into the ground.

142. male=na i=van litan \ =ηa ntan \ =
leg=ASSOC 3S:R=go down LOC ground

Her legs went down, into the ground

143. i=van sar = i=tbil i=van — 
3S:R=go IMPF 3S:R=sink 3S:R=go

They went sinking and sinking lower and lower...

See also Ballantyne (2005:125) for a critical discussion of pragmatic reversal.
144.[SONG]: ṛ-karcs velve:1 ṛ-vesid velve:1
leaf-cordyline  ? leaf- ?  ?

Leaf of cordyline ...

145.[SONG:] ṛ-karcs velvel ṛ-vesid velve:1 — =
leaf-cordyline?  leaf- ?  

Leaf of cordyline ...

146. i=lev nebe ηe
3:S:R=take song DEF

She sang the song...

147. ve i=rsɔ sar xain i=an vɔ-vɔ / =
but 3:S:R=sink IMPF 3S 3:S:R=go DUP-DUR

but she was sinking down, she went (down and down) until

i=xr-xriv xini —
3:S:R=DUP-approach OBL

she she’s up to

[inbreath] a betixdralɛ=na na /
HES neck-=ASSOC now

up to her neck.

The hypothesis also help explain the use of the perspectival use of na ‘now’ in marking clauses which make up the backbone of the narrative, since na is a deictic marker literally indexing the present time.

7.8 Conclusion

This chapter was concerned with identifying the range of clause categories in Tirax in terms of their narrative function, adapting methodology used by linguists such as Labov & Waletzky (1967), Labov (1972), Hopper & Thompson (1980) and Thompson (1987). However there are several problems encountered when identifying the categories. The first issue is the definition of the clause itself. Clause is a fuzzy category in Tirax; core-layer SVCs and clause-chains are almost identical in their

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10 My assistants did not know the translations for these old song words at the time. They are likely to be botanical terms.
appearance and syntactic behaviour, yet the former are analysed as a single clauses and the latter, multi-clausal, since the constituents in clause-chains have a filled subject argument slot. Clause-chains can, for example, function as a unit for the purposes of syntactic processes which typically operate on single clauses such as tail-head linkage. Secondly, a key determining factor in the analysis of functional clause-types is the presence or absence of temporal sequencing, whereas Tirax can have disruptions to sequentiality, and often without any marking of the out-of-sequence clauses. Thirdly, most Tirax clauses are basic realis clauses, and a detailed understanding of the lexico-semantics and context is required in order to determine the function of the clause, such as whether or not it is moving the temporal reference point forward on the timeline. Each of these issues challenge some well-established views about narrative analysis, about the robustness of the clause as a basic unit of narrative, and of sequentiality as a defining feature of narrative or foregrounded clauses.

Despite these concerns, a range of functional clause-types can be distinguished in Tirax. Different clause-types serve different purposes, but work together to achieve an overall aim of immersing the audience in the world of the story. For example, a narrative clause progresses the narrative by relating a new event. It contributes to the momentum, and therefore the excitement of the story. Descriptive-durative clauses elaborate on narrative events, making them more vivid in order to deeply engage the audience and to convey the important points of the story. New referents are introduced in presentative clauses, and story frame clauses are used as a bridge to effect a shift in deictic centre, from the real world to the world of the story and back again. Each of the different clause-types has a different set of grammatical features typically or optionally associated with it. Narrative clauses, for example, are always affirmative realis clauses and can be associated with discourse markers ale, clause-initial na, and the perfective marker dax. The distinction between narrative and non-narrative is not obligatorily marked in Tirax, but it is reflected in the aspectual distinctions available in Tirax grammar, of perfective versus imperfective tense-aspect marking. The optional aspect markers are also associated with marking strong prominence, with the perfective dax and imperfective sar occurring at dramatic peaks, typically marking prominent narrative clauses and prominent contextualising clauses respectively. However the imperfective marker can also be used at dramatic peaks to mark clauses which appear to be on the narrative timeline, rather than contexts. This
pattern of aspect marking provides support for Ballantyne’s (2005) *Situated Foreground Hypothesis*, which predicts that markers which index the experience of the real world here-and-now are likely to be associated with foreground prominence. Ballantyne further predicts that, since events are experienced as both sequential and on-going, both perfective and imperfective markers, associated with marking sequential and on-going events respectively, are likely to be used to mark differing degrees of prominence under certain conditions. This helps explain the range of use of the imperfective marker in Tirax narrative in marking both contexts and elaborations of narrative events at dramatic peaks.

This chapter has examined narrative at the level of the clause. The following chapter looks at narrative constituency, showing how clauses combine to form paragraphs, and other higher level units. It shows how the functions found at clause-level operate at the higher levels, and are one of the key factors involved in structuring narrative.
8 Tirax narrative structure

8.1 Introduction
In the previous chapter we identified several functional clause categories in Tirax narrative, which each have a specific role to play in storytelling. It was observed that there are grammatical features which are associated with the different types of clauses, including mood, polarity and syntactic behaviour. We also saw that discourse markers have a role in reflecting the function of a clause, in addition to reflecting a cohesive tie, and that certain aspect markers are associated with discourse prominence in addition to encoding aspect. The previous chapter therefore represents a study of the interaction of grammatical features in language with discourse-functional roles in narrative. An unanswered question is how the clause categories identified relate to higher level structure in narrative. This question is addressed in the present chapter.

In this chapter we take a holistic approach to narrative analysis, exploring the different levels of structure that make up an oral narrative: prosodic, morphosyntactic, and discourse-semantic. Narrative text structure is understood here as being determined by discourse-semantic content. The thematic building blocks of a narrative text are typically referred to as episodes in the linguistic tradition (eg. Tomlin 1987, Stirling & Barrington 2007, Ji 2002, 2008). An episode is a semantic unit which is governed by a single proposition and an episode boundary reflects a shift in attention, typically reflected in the text as a discontinuity in time, place or participants. The basis of narrative research has traditionally been written texts, and the textual unit corresponding to an episode is typically referred to as the paragraph (eg. Longacre 1980, Ji 2008). Little work has been done to date on the constituency of oral texts in oral traditions, to see to what extent a spontaneous oral text cleaves cleanly into ‘aural paragraphs’ corresponding to episodes. The approach taken in this work was therefore to listen to the ten narratives listed in Appendix V for breaks in the prosodic structure, with a tentative assumption that major prosodic breaks would correspond to episode boundaries. This was followed by a study of the kinds of morphosyntactic markers that are associated with breaks in prosodic structure in Tirax narrative. This method resulted in evidence for a hierarchical structure in narrative discourse, such that oral texts are comprised of sequences, and sequences of one or
more paragraphs. Sequences and paragraphs are units in the prosodic-morphosyntactic structure and are defined in §8.2, which gives the results of the analysis and a discussion of the implications.

Having established the prosodic and morphosyntactic evidence for structural boundaries in Tirax oral narrative, section §8.3 deals with the discourse-semantic structure in the ten oral narratives. A study was made of the kinds of discourse-semantic shifts that can trigger sequence and paragraph boundaries, and these triggers fall into two main categories: deictic shift and a shift in the narrative function of the passage of text, called here discourse mode. The approach of analysing the different levels of structure independently revealed that in many cases there is a misalignment between the different levels of oral narrative structure, that is, the prosodic, morphosyntactic, semantic and discourse levels. This misalignment results in what I have termed transition clauses. Transition clauses are clauses which follow prosodic boundaries, but retain the discourse-semantic features of the preceding paragraph. They are a hitherto undescribed structural phenomenon, the discovery made possible through the holistic approach of studying the different structural layers of an oral text. Transition clauses are discussed in section §8.4, and it is proposed that this phenomenon is likely to be common to narratives in oral traditions. There is a note on speaker styles in section §8.5, looking at the kinds of prosodic, grammatical and structural features which can vary between speakers, and there is a conclusion in §8.6.

8.2 Structural boundaries in Tirax oral narrative

8.2.1 Background: sequences and paragraphs
In this section we look at constituent structure in Tirax narrative. ‘Constituent’ is used here in to mean ‘component part’, and refers to the building blocks of narrative above the level of the sentence. There have been a number of approaches to narrative structure analysis across a range of disciplines, including literary theory, cognitive science and various sub-disciplines within linguistics. Several researchers have demonstrated that narrative yields to a formal analysis, and have formulated ‘grammars’ of narrative, such as Genette (1980) in narratology, Mandler and Johnson (1977) in cognitive science, and Labov & Waletzky (1967) and Talmy (1995) each offer different approaches to narrative structure analysis in the broader field of linguistics. The concern in this work is not with formulating a grammar to account for
well-formed narratives in Tirax, but to study the interrelationship of the different levels of narrative structure: prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic.

Taking a holistic approach and analysing the different levels of structure independently enabled an assessment of how closely discontinuities in the discourse-semantic structure, typical of episode boundaries, are mapped onto breaks in the prosodic layer of structure.

The method for analysing the constituent structure in Tirax narrative involved listening to each of the ten oral narratives listed in Appendix V for prosodic evidence of structural boundaries. This was followed by an analysis of the range of morphosyntactic markers associated with the breaks in prosodic structure. The analyses were supplemented by referring to the discourse-semantic content of the narrative, to confirm that the structural boundaries detected in the prosody were related to discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure; that is, they were meaningful, and not the result of production issues such as problems with word retrieval and associated hesitation phenomena.

The analysis of Tirax narratives shows they are comprised of a hierarchy of constituents, called here *sequences* and *paragraphs*. A *sequence* is a stretch of text between two breaks in the prosodic structure, which have been triggered by a shift, or discontinuity, in the discourse-semantic structure. A sequence is comprised of one or more *paragraphs*. Paragraph boundaries are weaker than sequence boundaries, and are also triggered by shifts in discourse-semantic structure. This definition of sequence contrasts with that of *episode*, (eg. Tomlin 1987:460, Stirling & Barrington 2007:145), which is a semantic concept, defined as a thematic unit governed by a single over-arching proposition. However a sequence typically expresses a single episode, as discussed in the following section, §8.3. The present section looks at evidence for structural breaks encountered in the ten Tirax narratives: looking firstly at the prosodic features associated with structural boundaries, followed by a description of the associated morphosyntactic features.
8.2.2 Prosodic features of structural boundaries

The present section is concerned with defining and describing a structural boundary or break in the prosody of an oral narrative. A break or boundary in prosodic structure is understood here as a meaningful discontinuity in the speech stream, and is indicated by a combination of prosodic features, including intonation patterns, pause length, a change in pitch or voice quality and relative tempo. These features are related to those associated with IU boundaries, described in appendix IV.

A structural boundary is almost always immediately preceded by one or more adjacent IUs which have a falling intonation contour, accompanied by one or more additional features, such as a slowing of tempo and a relatively long pause following the IU. The excerpt below, from The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores, has an example of a structural boundary in the middle of it. This story is relatively long, at 129 IUs, and was told by a female speaker in her mid-fifties who is an articulate, fluent storyteller. The speech stream is fluent and rapid, then slows down during an IU with falling intonation contour, which is followed by a pause, followed by another IU at a lower pitch, again with falling intonation contour. This is followed by another pause. The combination of the slowing down of tempo, lowering of pitch, succession of falling intonation contours and pauses is taken to be an example of a structural boundary. All the structural boundaries in the following excerpt are indicated with a long unbroken line above or below an IU. The IUs preceding the structural boundary in the middle of the text are arrowed:

(1) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 8–12)

8. (1.0) ale / = s=van i=dlə ηɛ: / —
so 3P:R=go 3S:R=be.thus DEF

*So off they went.*

9. (0.2) tete amu / = i=tɛs txan-vivies sar / =¹
child first 3S:R=cut gun-bow IMPF

*The oldest one cut bows and arrows*

¹ *sar* is used here to mark iterative aspect, since to cut a bow is a telic expression. It is one of the few instances in the corpus, where *sar* is not associated with a dramatic peak.
and handed them around until each one had a bow and arrow
to take with him to the beach.

Off they went.

They went off with the oldest leading the

way and the others following him, following him,

with the youngest one walking in the rear.

If there is more than one IU with falling intonation contour preceding a structural boundary, the subsequent IUs with the falling contours express clauses which
typically reiterate or elaborate on the content of the initial IU with the falling contour, as in the above example. Here, the second IU with falling intonation gives more information about the bows which the eldest brother made for himself and his brothers.

Pause length is another important feature of structural boundaries in the Tirax oral narratives. It is well known that intonation units are typically bounded by pauses (e.g. Chafe 1994, Du Bois et al 1993). The average pause length between IUs in *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* is just over half a second, as shown in table 8-1. However pauses at structural boundaries in this narrative are on average twice as long as those which are not at structural boundaries. Since a *sequence* is defined here as a passage of text which is bounded by structural boundaries in the prosodic structure, IUs following pauses which evince structural boundaries are referred to here as *sequence-initial IUs*, and all other IUs are referred to as *non-initial IUs*. The average pause lengths preceding the different types of IUs are given in table 8-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit following pause</th>
<th>No. of IUs</th>
<th>Average pause length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sequence-initial IU</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-initial IU</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Longer pauses can also occur preceding non-initial IUs, and so are not in themselves an indicator of a structural boundary. Reasons for relatively long pauses in non-sequence initial position include hesitation, typically hesitation associated with word retrieval. The following example is told by an older female speaker (70s). She pauses before saying the word *nxadrel*, a supporting beam used in the construction of the traditional A-frame houses which are no longer built. The long pause before IU 92 is clearly not a sign of a structural boundary, since it is not accompanied by any of the other features of prosodic boundaries, and it is not associated with a shift in discourse-semantic structure.
Occasionally there are relatively long pauses preceding sequence-final IUs. This is often the case if the clause begins with the discourse marker *ale*, ‘so’, and encodes the result or culmination, or is otherwise enabled by the preceding clauses, as in the example below from *The Boy the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*.

(3) **EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts** (IUs 17-19)

17. (0.7) i=hex xini nmb / =
   3S:R=climb OBL T.chestnut
   
   *He climbed up (the) Tahitian chestnut,*

18. ^ i=an i=at linha ^ \ 
   3S:R=go 3S:R=be high
   
   *he went up till he reached the top.*

19. (1.4) ale i=ve sar nmb s=rus \ \ 
   then 3S:R=make IMPF T.chestnut 3P:R=drop.down
   
   *Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to drop down.*

Sometimes if the sequence-initial IU comprises the single word *ale*, there is a relatively long pause following this IU.
(4) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (114-115)

114. (1.3) ale / so

   *So then*

115. (1.5) i=me lain ñe: / 3S:R=come home ANA

   *she came home (like) that, ...*

The prosodic features of falling intonation contours, slowing of tempo, change of pitch or voice quality and relatively long pauses, together define the prosodic breaks in the stream of speech.

Sequence-final IUs almost always have falling intonation contours. A different intonation contour in sequence-final position can have a dramatic function in the narrative. For example, the only sequence-final clause in *The Boy, the Devil and the Chestnuts* which does not have a falling intonation contour is in line 45, given below:

(5) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 43-46)

43. (0.9) ale: — so

   *So,*

44. (0.3) i=serex lxen taweh — 3S:R=throw back another

   *(the boy) threw down another one.*

45. (1.1) ale i=dlom-i — so 3S:R=swallow.whole-3S

   *And (the devil) swallowed it whole.*

46. (1.0) 未婚 句 a=at linha ^ / = boy DEF 3S:R=sit high

   *The boy was in the tree,*
As we will see in chapter 11, the case study of this narrative, it is the third time that the devil asks the boy to throw him a chestnut and the boy does and the devil eats it. The continuing intonation contour has the dramatic effect of making the circular chain of events seem like it is never-ending, increasing the jeopardy for the boy. The boy is reintroduced as an active protagonist in the following sequence, and he has to muscle in, interrupt the sequence and change the course of events. This passage of text shows how a speaker can exploit the formalised features of prosodic structure to create additional meaning. It exemplifies the dynamic interaction between formal structures and dramatic functions.

8.2.3 Morphosyntactic features of structural boundaries

Structural boundaries are typically accompanied by one or more morphosyntactic markers. Morphosyntactic cues to structural boundaries generally comprise clause-initial discourse markers, typically *ale* ‘then’, and less commonly, *na* ‘now’, *nate* ‘now then’, *rente* ‘meanwhile’ and *inev* ‘after that’. Other morphosyntactic features of sequence-initial IUs include the anaphoric expression, *idla DEM*, ‘like that’, tail-head linkage, and free NPs in subject position. All these features are frequently encountered at structural boundaries, though they can also occur in non-initial IUs. These features are exemplified in turn below.

In the example below, IU 66 precedes the structural boundary and has a falling intonation contour. IU 67 is sequence initial, and is preceded by a relatively long pause, 1.3 seconds. The clause in IU 67 begins with *ale*. The final vowel in *ale* is elongated, which is typical of sequence-initial *ales*, and further evidence of a structural boundary preceding the IU (67).
EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 64-67)

64. (0.8) i=va ^ i=nam we i=nam we i=nam txun ^ !
   3S:R=say 3S:R=good so 3S:R=good so 3S:R=good very

   *(The girl’s mother) said “Thank you, thank you so much!”*

65. (0.4) ^ da- x=le1v xini xɔnɔ ^ /
   MSTK 2S:R=take OBL 1S

   “You gave (something) to me.”

66. (0.3) ^ da=dram xin(i) net-uk vaven sxi-m ba=uh-i ^ \n   1S:1=allow OBL child-1S:POSS female DAT-2S:POSS 2S:1=take-3S

   “I will let you have my daughter to marry.”

67. (1.3) ale: i=dram xini net-in vaven ɲɛ sxi: tete tax ɲɛ /
   so 3S:R=allow OBL child-3S:POSS female DEF DAT child last DEF

   *So (the woman) let her daughter (go) with the youngest brother.*

Clause initial *na*, ‘now’, is also often associated with sequence-initial clauses, as in the example below.

EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks* (IUs 104-107)

104. (0.5) valax bet nial hxl — … (0.6) i=xaxad i=me: —
   valax.bird head red INDEF 3S:R=fly 3S:R=come

   *A red-head bird flew over*

105. (0.7) i=dis ɲa: — … (0.6) nam- m balbal bxɔh \n   3S:R=land LOC HES HES post pig

   *and landed on (the) pig-post.*

106. (1.3) na i=ʋɛr xin-er \n   now 3S:R=say OBL-3p

   *And now (the bird) said to them*
107. (0.8) i=v-va — =
3S:R=DUP-say

it said:

^ xas=x sar a: haxa ^?
2P:R=eat IMPF HES what

“What are you eating?”

The VP-anaphoric marker, *idla DEM*, also tends to be associated with sequence-initial clauses. It is a cohesive device, which connects the incoming sequence to a previous one, by referring back to a previous event. As we will see, new sequences are triggered by new locations, characters or other changes, and the VP-anaphor *idla DEM* helps cohere the text at a place when there is a rupture in the prosody and discourse-semantic structure. In the example below, the clause in IU 37 refers back to the clause in IU 33 with the expression *idla xɔtan*.

(8) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 23-28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IU</th>
<th>(0.7) ale ...(0.2) i=mɛ na /</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>so 3S:R=come now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Now he (the man) came</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IU</th>
<th>.. i=leh te vin bo ɛ i=at na /</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>3S:R=see SUB white.one DIM DEF 3S:R=be now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and he saw that the little white one was there now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IU</th>
<th>(0.8) i=xar sar \</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>3S:R=cry IMPF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She was crying.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IU</th>
<th>(0.9) i=xar i=xar i=xar i=xar i=xar i=xar — =</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>3S:R=cry 3S:R=cry 3S:R=cry 3S:R=cry 3S:R=cry 3S:R=cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She cried and cried and cried and cried and cried</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| IU | i=das sar xini naxda-n vɔɔɔvɔɔvɔɔvɔɔ /
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>371</td>
<td>3S:R=search IMPF OBL wings-3S:POSS DUP-DUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and she searched and searched for her wings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
but she couldn't find them.

Now the man came and arrived like that

and he said

“Hey!”

The expression idla *DEM* can occur in non-initial clauses. When idla *DEM* occurs sequence-medially, it is more likely to be pointing to here-and-now real-world context, as in the example from *The Cordyline Woman*, from chapter 7, repeated here, where the speaker demonstrates a swaying movement as she narrates:

64. (0.3) i=at druŋ vɔ / = i=leh dax te: —

then he hid until he saw that

65. (0.4) ɛ: ɾɛ-karch / = i=vel sar i=sla xuɛ \ 3S:R=hide DUR 3S:R=sway IMPF 3S:R=be.thus SUB LOC.DX3

there was a cordyline leaf swaying like this: [demonstrating the movement]

66. (0.8) i=xe i=sla xoɛ: — = 3S:R=do 3S:R=be.thus LOC.DX1:PRX

it was moving like that,
moving like that on and on and on and on and on

and then he saw that it suddenly threw

an old basket outside.

Idla DEM in non-sequence-initial clauses can also have cataphoric reference with textual deixis, as in IU 137 in the example below, where it points forward to a song in the text.

(10) EXAMPLE: The Cordyline Woman (IUs 135-139)

And she sang her song.

She sang her song now, she said:

Her song went like this:

She sang:
Table 8-2 shows that *idla DEM* is typically associated with clauses immediately following structural boundaries.

**Table 8-2:** Number of instances of the VP-anaphoric expression *idla DEM* in the ten texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of instances of <em>idla DEM</em></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The discourse marker *inev*, ‘after (that)’, can also be associated with narrative structure boundaries. The pronominal clitic *i=* creates a cohesive tie with the previous event, which it refers to, while the meaning of the verb, ‘finish’, reinforces the idea of a juncture between consecutive events. The broken line stands for a paragraph boundary, as discussed in §8.2.4 below.

(11) EXAMPLE: *The Cordyline Woman* (IUs 71-77)

71. *i=kle vvvvvvvv-vɔ /= i=leh tɛ —*
   
   He watched on and on until he saw

72. *(0.4) i=serex kle: —*
   
   it (the cordyline leaf) threw (out)

73. *(0.3) bɔɾɔθunan \custom.hat
   
   a kastom hat.

74. *(0.5) i=me salin \*
   
   It came out.
75. (0.6) i=nev / = i=kle-i ! —  
   3S:R=finish  3S:R=look.at-3S  
   *After that he kept watching.*

76. (0.2) i=kle-i ! —  
   3S:R=look.at-3S  
   *he kept watching.*

77. (0.2) i=kle  vvvvvvv-vro / =  
   3S:r=look.at DUP-DUR  
   *he watched on and on until*

   i=leh  tة i=serex  vinadr  ṭɛ  i=me  salin \  
   3S:R=see  SUB  3S:R=throw  woman  DEF  3S:R=come  outside  
   *he saw the woman come out.*

When *inev* functions as a verb in its own clause, it can precede structural boundaries, as in the example below.

(12) EXAMPLE: *The Cordyline Woman* (IUs 40-43)  

40. (0.5) i=van ɛ / = ve  ren-tة:  vinadr  ṭɛ / = i= tex-nenev  dax \  
   3S:R=go  LINK  but  time-SUB  woman  DEF  3S:R=burn.off-COMPL  PERF  
   *He went, but when (he arrived) the woman had already finished the burning off.*

41. (0.5) i=tex  vvvvvvvv-vro / = i=nev \  
   3S:R=burn.off  DUP-DUR  3S:R=finish  
   *She burned off on and on until it was finished.*

42. (0.7) i=va  ^ o ^  
   3S:r=say  excl  
   *(The man) said “Oh!”*

43. (0.5) a:  lot  hak  xan / =  
   HES  place,LOC  1S:POSS  PRX  
   *“My garden here!”*
“I burned off yesterday, but half remained.”

Table 8-3 shows that the clausal *inev* is typically associated with clauses following structural boundaries, but the clause-final *inev* is just as commonly found in medial positions in the corpus. The instances which occur in dialogue are given separately.

**Table 8-3:** Distribution of the discourse marker *inev* in the texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Direct speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>inev</em> in own IU</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>inev</em> at end of IU</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is quite common to have tail-head linkage constructions straddling structural boundaries, where they serve to cohere the two sequences as in the example below.

(13) **EXAMPLE:** *The Story of The Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 112-113)

112. (0.2) *i=ŋar*      *i=vla*   *i=me-*  *i=me*  *lain*  
     3S:R=cry  3S:R=go.away  HES  3S:R=come  home  

    *She cried all the way home.*

113. (1.2) *i=me*  *lain*  /=  *i=v-va*  
     3S:R=come  home  3S:R=DUP-say  

    *She came home and said:*  

    ^ *n=vr*  dax  te ^  — =  
     1S:R=say  PERF  SUB  

    “*I TOLD you that*  

    ^ *n=ve-ve*  da=*me*-te  sxii-*ni* ^  — =  
     1S:R=DUP-want  1S:R=come-NEG  DAT-2P:POSS  

    *I wanted to not come with you people*
It has been observed in the literature that free subject NPs are also often associated with structural boundaries (eg. Fox 1986, 1987, Stirling 2001). This is often true of Tirax sequence boundaries. The example below shows that there is a free subject NP following the sequence boundary, despite there being no change in subject, and no other referents which could potentially interfere with interpreting the reference of a proform.

(14) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 11-14)

11. (1.5) i=van i=vle nalxah sar xini /
    3S:R=go 3S:R=gather slow IMPF OBL:3

    She (the old woman) went and was slowly collecting them,

12. (1.2) i=wɛs-i /
    3S:R=eat-3

    and eating them.

13. (2.8) olfala vinadr ɛŋa nŋa male-nan /
    HES old.person(B) woman DEF LOC leg-ASSOC.3S:POSS

    The old woman, her legs

14. (0.4) ngar i=loŋvex nŋa male-nan /
    sore 3S:R=cover LOC leg-ASSOC.3S:POSS

    there were sores all over them.

8.2.4 Sequences and paragraphs
Since structural boundaries are indicated by a cluster of properties, there is a continuum of boundary strength from weak through to strong boundaries, depending on the number and degree of prosodic and morphosyntactic features. The approach taken in this work is to divide structural boundaries into two subcategories: strong boundaries comprise many and/or prominent prosodic and morphosyntactic features typically associated with boundaries and weak boundaries have fewer and/or not as prominent cues. Strong boundaries typically correspond to large shifts in the
discourse-semantic structure, discussed in §8.3, and weak boundaries tend to correspond to more subtle shifts. In the example below, the IU preceding the boundary has falling intonation, and the incoming clause is marked with an elongated ale. However the pause is only slightly longer than a sequence medial pause, and the boundary is analysed as a weak boundary. It corresponds to a shift from direct speech back to narration. Weak boundaries are represented with a discontinuous line.

(15) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 62-63)

62. (0.5) i=va n=ve-ve net-uk vaven xar de=wes-i \ 3S:R=say 1S:R=DUP-want child-1S:POSS female DST 3S:1=eat-3S

She said “I’d like my daughter here to eat it.”

63. (0.7) ale: i=lev xini vinadr nge / = so 3S:R=give OBL woman DEF

So he gave it to the woman

i=lev xini: net-in vaven nge \ 3S:R=give OBL child-3S:POSS female DEF

and she gave it to her daughter.

In the second example, the IU preceding the break does not have a falling intonation contour. This speaker tends to favour rising intonation contours and exclamation intonation contours, and it is an exclamation intonation pattern that precedes the structural boundary in this case.

(16) EXAMPLE: The Ten Young Birds (IUs 15-16)

15. (0.2) s=xaxad s=van a s s=nin lxen kle te: — 3P:R=fly 3P:R=go HES HES 3P:R=drink back again SUB

They flew in and went and drank again,

(0.2) i=bih na! 3S:R=small now

(at the dam) that was small now.
The boundaries identified in table 8-1 above are strong boundaries, with both prosodic cues and usually one or more morphosyntactic cues as well. But there are many more weak boundaries, characterised by fewer and/or weaker prosodic and morphosyntactic cues. Table 8-4 shows the same data as in table 8-1, but with the data from weak boundaries separated out from the sequence medial IUs. There is some unavoidable circularity in determining pause length associated with boundaries, since pause length is also one of the criteria used to identify boundaries and distinguish the type. The results in tables 8-1 and 8-4 are derived from listening to the narrative and noting the prosodic and textual cues, such as the pattern of intonation, tempo and presence of discourse markers in addition to pause length, as well as referring to the meaning of the clauses to assess if there is a marked or subtle discontinuity in discourse-semantic structure triggering the perceived boundary.

### Table 8-4: Average pause length in *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of boundary</th>
<th>No of boundaries</th>
<th>Average pause length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong boundary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak boundary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No boundary</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total IUs</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.52</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So the average pause length for strong boundaries is greater than that of weak boundaries, which in turn is greater than that where there is no structural boundary. This generally holds true across the narratives, but the actual pause length averages differ from speaker to speaker. Different speakers have their own style, pace and rhythm of storytelling. The older lady who told the story of *The Snake and the Coconut* has a slower pace of speech, and her pause lengths are slightly longer for each category compared with the lady who told *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*, as shown in table 8-5. Despite the different tempos, a pause before a strong
boundary is on average double the length of pause before a paragraph-medial intonation unit for both speakers.

**Table 8-5:** Average pause length in two Tirax oral narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of boundary</th>
<th>No of boundaries</th>
<th>Average pause length (Snake &amp; Coconut)</th>
<th>Average pause length (Five Brothers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong boundary</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak boundary</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No boundary</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This distinction between weak and strong boundaries gives a hierarchical structure, with *sequences* being comprised of one or more *paragraphs*. Sequences are bounded by strong boundaries, whereas for *paragraphs*, one or both of their boundaries is weak. The one exception is where a sequence is comprised of a single paragraph, in which case the paragraph has two strong boundaries.

**8.3 Discourse-semantic triggers of structural boundaries**

Having defined structural boundaries in terms of prosodic and morphosyntactic cues in §8.2 above, we now turn to an examination of the discourse-semantic triggers of those boundaries. There are two main discourse-semantic triggers to narrative structural boundaries. These are *deictic shift*, and shift in *discourse mode*, discussed in turn below.

**8.3.1 Deictic shift**

Segal (1995) discusses the principle underpinning the Deictic Shift Theory approach to deixis narrative, that the deixis involved in narrative structure is taken not to be of the real world here and now, but of the abstract world of the narrative (Segal 1995:15ff). In terms of person, for example, a definite subject of a main clause is the default deictic centre of the narrative world, the *deictic WHO* in Deictic Shift terminology. Deictic shift in narrative refers then to a change in the central reference point, the deictic centre, in terms of *place* (*WHERE*), *time* (*WHEN*) and/or *character*.
(WHO), within the narrative world. This common sense notion of how deixis operates in narrative is adopted in the present work.

**Focus of character**

*Focus of character* is the term used in the present work to correspond to the *deictic WHO* in Deictic Shift Theory. The term *focus of character* is preferred over *deictic WHO* since this work is not presented within a Deictic Centre framework, and I do not intend to make claims about the attributes of the *deictic WHO* as a result of the present research into Tirax narrative. The term *focus of character* comes from literary theory, and is defined as the character who is ‘seeing’ the events that are being narrated. It is contrasted in literary theory with *focus of narration*, which refers to who is *telling* the story (Genette 1980:206ff). In Deictic Shift Theory the default *deictic WHO* is taken to be the main clause subject (eg. Segal 1995, Zubin & Hewitt (1995), and this criterion is adopted in the present research as a guideline for identifying the *focus of character*.

A shift in focus of character can trigger a structural boundary in Tirax narrative. The example below is from *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox*. In this excerpt, there is a shift in focus of character from Vinbɔ, the little white flying fox, who is crying because she can’t find her wings, to a man who arrives on the scene, and who happens to have hidden the wings while Vinbɔ was out swimming. The shift in focus of character corresponds to the prosodic and morphosyntactic cues to a structural boundary: falling intonation contour of IU 26, which precedes the break, relatively long pause preceding sequence-initial IU, and the discourse marker *ale*. The prosodic and morphosyntactic cues are in bold.

(17) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 25-27)

25. (0.8) i=ŋar sar \  
3s:r=cry IMPF  
 *(The white flying fox) was crying.*

26. (0.9) i=ŋar i=ŋar i=ŋar i=ŋar i=ŋar  
3s:r=cry 3s:r=cry 3s:r=cry 3s:r=cry 3s:r=cry  
*She cried and cried and cried and cried and cried*
and was searching and searching for her wings

but(B) 3S:R=find-NEG
but she couldn't find them.

Now the man,

he appeared like that and he said

and he said ...

Some apparent shifts in focus of character do not trigger boundaries. In the following example, there are two shifts in deictic WHO, in lines 15 and 18, and neither triggers a structural boundary. In line 15, the incoming subject is an object of the previous clause. In line 18, the incoming subject is co-referential with the subject in line 14.

(18) EXAMPLE: The Ten Young Birds (IUs 14-19)
(at the dam) that was small now.

16. \( (0.2) \text{i=bih} \quad \text{na !} \)  
\[ 3S:R=\text{small} \quad \text{now} \]

And so they drank it,

17. \( \sigma: \quad \ldots(0.2) \text{s=nin} \quad \text{sar} \quad \text{i=dla} \quad \text{xan} \quad \text{xori} / = \)
\[ \text{HES} \quad 3P:R=\text{drink} \quad \text{IMPF} \quad 3S:R=\text{be.thus} \quad \text{DX1} \quad \text{LOC.DX2} \]

and were drinking like that,

18. \( \text{ale} \quad \text{i=van} \quad \text{i=hlau} \quad \text{sx}-\text{n} / \)
\[ \text{so} \quad 3S:R=\text{go} \quad 3S:R=\text{arrive} \quad \text{DAT-3S:POSS} \]

and then (the man) went up to it (the dam).

19. \( (0.6) \quad \text{HES} \quad \sigma:m \quad \ldots(0.2) \text{i=rub} \quad \text{di-din-er} \)  
\[ 3S:R=\text{hit} \quad \text{DUP-dead-3P} \]

He killed them dead.

Following line 19 is a new sequence, triggered by the shift in focus of character from the man to the mother of the birds. Returning to the Deictic Shift Theory terminology, the shifts in deictic WHO exemplified above in lines 15 and 18 are not triggering discourse boundaries. One way of accounting for the lack of structural boundaries is to say that there are no shifts in ‘deictic WHO’ in the above example. Zubin and Hewitt give a list of conditions under which a deictic shift does not occur, such as when the incoming subject is in a subordinate clause. In that case, the previous subject, that is, the subject of the matrix clause, remains at the deictic centre. However in the above example from *The Ten Young Birds*, there is clearly a shift in deictic WHO as defined by Zubin and Hewitt (1995) from the man to the chicks, then back to the man in line 18. I suggest that in the above example there is in fact no shift in focus of character; the man is the character who’s eyes we are seeing the events through throughout this passage of text. That is, for lines 15 to 17, the focus of character is not the deictic WHO. This is enabled by the verb of perception in line 14 *leh* ‘to see’. Line 14 reports that the man sees the young birds, then lines 15 to 17 describe the birds’ actions, and I suggest that the lack of a structural boundary signals that we have not shifted focus of character. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that a pronominal marker rather than full NP is triggered in line 18, since, as we will
see in chapter 9, pronominal markers tend to be associated with a continuity of reference. This is an example of a return pop (Fox 1986:27ff), whereby a pronoun is selected rather than full NP when an embedded structural unit intervenes between two mentions of the same referent. In this case, the embedded structural unit is not associated with boundaries in the prosodic structure. Furthermore, it is an example of the interaction between the conventions of discourse and the speakers manipulation of those conventions, referred to as the context-determines-use versus use-determines-context interrelationship of language and language users by Fox (1996). The convention manipulated in this instance is the association between a shift in focus of character and a structural boundary.

**Temporal deixis**

A shift in time, the centre of temporal deixis, can also trigger a structural boundary, even when there is no shift in focus of character. We saw in the previous chapter that narrative clauses move the temporal reference point forward. This means gives the narrative a forward momentum. Sometimes in narrative there is a ‘time jump’, whereby the narrative moves forward on the timeline over and above the expected normal forward momentum. In the example below from *The Story of the White Flying Fox*, there is a shift forward in time, but no shift in character or place. The shift in time triggers a structural boundary (preceding IU 49, which relates the shift forward in time). The shift forward in time effectively results in a ‘gap’ on the timeline.

(19) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 45-50)

45. \(r=\text{vla} \quad r=\text{van} \quad \text{lain} /\quad 3D:R=\text{leave} \quad 3D:R=\text{go} \quad \text{home}\)

   *So they went to his house*

46. \(r=\text{at} \quad \text{vɔ vɔ vɔ vɔ} : / \quad 3D:R=\text{dwell} \quad \text{DUP-DUR} \)

   *and lived together there and eventually*

47. \(i=\text{ru} \quad \text{net-ir} ...(0.2) \quad i=\text{ru} \quad \text{HES} \quad \text{child-3P.POSS} \quad 3S:R=\text{two} \)

   *they had two children.*
The two children, they both were boys.

The two of them lived there.

and now their children were big.

Similarly, in The Five Planks, there is a structural boundary triggered by a shift forward in time, though there is no shift in place or focus of character. The shift forward in time is indicated by a temporal NP, and the break is indicated by a downward intonation contour followed by a very long pause.

EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks (IUs 44-47)

Then he slowly cut through the plank.

He cut it and cut it.

He cut through one
on the first day.

At dawn the next day

he cut another plank.

Spatial deixis

A shift in place, that is, the centre of spatial deixis, can also be associated with a structural boundary, due to either entailing a shift in focus of character, or a shift in time, as in examples 21 and 22 respectively. In the first example, the scene moves from a group of devils, to the cave where a boy is waiting. This shift triggers a structural boundary.
Clauses containing movement verbs will entail a shift in deictic centre, but this shift occurs during the event encoded by the clause, and there is no sense of ‘jumping’ from one place to another, as happens in a time jump that triggers a structural boundary. In the example below, there are two shifts in place, following a character who moves from one location to another and back again. For the first shift (IU 76) there is a sense of continuity of forward momentum, and no jump in time and space. There is no evidence of a structural boundary associated with this shift. For the second, (IU 81), there is a sense of a jump in space and time; the discontinuity is reflected in the prosodic and morphological cues to a structural boundary.

(22) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 76-81)

76. (0.3) i=kreh bɔ nxariv ńe / = 3s=R=deceive dim cat def

*He (the dog) was tricking the cat.*

xain i=van / = i=telamu / = 3s 3s=R=go 3s=R=go.ahead

*He went off, going ahead*
and went home,

77. (0.3) i=txah nali / 3S:R=go open door
    and opened the door,

78. (0.3) i=van lalvanu: / — = i=lev ə: nte: — 3S:R=go inside 3S:R=take thing
    and went inside and got something -

79. (0.4) e natet btav i=:dles-nenev — = HES juice breadfruit 3S:R=stuck-COMPL
    a breadfruit juice and covered in glue

i=me ə salin / — = i=dles xini \ — 3S:R=come outside 3S:R=stuck OBL
    he came outside he glued over

80. (0.4) nali xar vvvvvvv-vo / = door DST DUP-DUR
    he glued over the door all over until

i=dles ulul-i \ 3S:R=stuck completely-3S
    it was completely glued.

81. (0.7) ale: — = nxariv xain iwa i=vla lxe: — = so cat 3S HES 3S:R=go.away back
    So now the (dog)², he left and

i=van lanih na / 3S:R=go bush now
    and went back to the garden.

² The speaker is still referring to the dog, though she has accidentally used the word nxariv ‘cat’ instead.
To conclude, a shift in either temporal deixis or focus of character can be associated with a structural boundary. A deictic shift in time has to be over and above the normal forward momentum of the narrative, resulting in a ‘gap’ in the timeline, in order to trigger a structural boundary. A deictic shift in space is only associated with a structural boundary when there is also a deictic shift in time or focus of character.

We also saw evidence that the focus of character is not equivalent to the deictic WHO, and that focus of character, unlike deictic WHO, does not have to be encoded in the clause at all; the character who is understood as ‘seeing’ the events can be expressed in a previous clause which is encoded with a verb of perception, and maintained as focus of character in subsequent clauses by the speaker not signalling a structural boundary.

8.3.2 Discourse mode

The other major discourse-semantic trigger of a narrative structural boundary is a shift in discourse mode. The term is taken from Du Bois (1980:227), where it is used to refer to the main discourse function of a clause in a narrative, and is comparable to Labov’s narrative versus non-narrative clauses and Hopper and Thompson’s foregrounded versus backgrounded clauses, discussed in chapter 7. However the term discourse mode is used in the present work to refer to the function of a passage of text in a narrative, rather than a clause.

Any paragraph has a mix of clause-types within it, however the type of clause which predominates determines the discourse mode. A paragraph that is in narrative mode, for example, may have one or more clauses which are non-narrative, but its primary function will be to advance the narrative. Where the discourse mode shifts one mode to another, there is prosodic and morphosyntactic evidence of a structural break.

The paragraph below is an example of narrative mode, although only two of the clauses actually further the narrative, the one in IU 14 and the first clause in IU 16. The other clauses elaborate on or provide a context for the narrative action described in those two clauses. The primary function of the passage as a whole is to further the narrative. A test for narrative discourse mode is whether the state of affairs in the
story world is demonstrably different after the events encoded in the paragraph have taken place. This criterion is adapted from Genette’s (1980) minimal story.

(23) EXAMPLE: The Cordyline Woman (IUs 14-16)

14. (0.6) ale \ i=telul \ N
   so 3S:R=go.to.garden
   (Now one day) he went to the garden.

15. (0.5) i=telul / =
   3S:R=go.to.garden
   He went to the garden,
   i=van lanih / =
   3S:R=go bush
   he went to the bush
   ren-te r=xb-xben \ 
   time-SUB 3D:R=DUP-rake
   when it was time to do the raking.

16. (0.7) i=van / = e: i=xben not han nge / =
   3S:R=go HES 3S:R=rake place 3S:POSS PART
   He went and raked some of his patch,
   i=xben vɔvɔ-vɔ / =
   3S:R=rake DUP-DUR
   he raked and raked till
   hbɔ=na i=sdin \ 
   part=ASSOC 3S:R=remain
   just a part remained (to be raked).

Ten discourse modes were identified in the ten Tirax narratives on the basis of their primary narrative function. The differentiation between modes is supported by evidence from prosodic and morphosyntactic cues to structural boundaries. Like the clause-types defined in chapter 7, the discourse modes can be divided into two main categories on the basis of whether their centre of deixis is in the real world or the
story-world. Real-world modes include Asides and Codas, which relate the moral of the story, and Story Frames, which bridge the gap between the real world here-and-now and the story world. Story-world modes include Narrative, Descriptive and Orientation modes.

Descriptive mode is distinguished from Orientation mode, on the grounds that the former is anaphoric, elaborating on some aspect of the story already set up, and the latter is effectively cataphoric, setting the scene for an event which is yet to be narrated, analogous to the difference between descriptive-durative and contextualising clause categories discussed in chapter 7. There may be times when the two functions are both operating, such as when an elaboration of an event is used to provide a context for a following event. However there are several cases of these two modes adjacent to each other, with a structural boundary between them, and with no other motivation for a structural boundary, such as a shift in deixis. Therefore they appear to function as distinct modes with respect to their potential impact on discourse structure.

There is a separate mode for introducing characters, and two more modes for direct discourse, with evidence of a Thought mode, distinct from a Speech / Song mode. Finally, there is a Recap mode for reiterating passages of events which have been narrated previously. The discourse modes encountered in the data are summarised in table 8-6. The discourse modes identified in the data can be directly related to the categories of clauses identified in chapter 7. The category of clause that predominates in each discourse mode is also given in table 8-6.

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3 You will recall from chapter 7 that F(ree) I(ndirect) D(iscourse) has features of both narration and discourse. There are too few examples of FID in the data to determine which discourse mode it relates to. It is likely to be either narrative mode or thought mode, or a separate mode altogether.
Table 8-6: Discourse modes in Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse mode</th>
<th>Description / Primary Narrative function(s)</th>
<th>Predominant clause category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story frame</td>
<td>Stock phrases opening and closing a story to provide a bridge between real world and story world</td>
<td>Story frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentative</td>
<td>Introduce key characters, locations props etc.</td>
<td>Presentative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Provide descriptive detail</td>
<td>Descriptive-durative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Provide context for action</td>
<td>Contextualising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Relates an event or sequence of events which further the story on the timeline</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech / Song</td>
<td>Strongly evokes characters’ points of view &amp; increases audience engagement</td>
<td>Direct discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought</td>
<td>Strongly evokes characters’ points of view, giving insight into character’s inner world</td>
<td>Direct discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recap</td>
<td>Paraphrases event or events which have been related earlier in the narrative to reorient audience</td>
<td>Recapitulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aside</td>
<td>Meta comment, remarking on either story or some content to enhance relationship with audience and their understanding of the (point of) the text</td>
<td>Aside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>Moral of a story or explanation of how story relates to contemporary behaviour or customs</td>
<td>Story frame</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The functional differences in clause categories that were identified in chapter 7 therefore have their counterparts in the higher level structures of narrative, and shifts in *discourse mode* are associated with triggering structural boundaries in the narrative.
A shift in discourse mode can be sufficient to trigger a structural boundary, even if there is no deictic shift. The following examples show that shifts between discourse modes correlate with structural boundaries.

The example below from *The Snake and the Coconut* shows the modes switching from story frame to presentative mode, to narrative to speech, with a structural boundary marking each shift in discourse mode.

(24) **EXAMPLE: The Story of the Snake and the Coconut** (IUs 1-12)

1. a: n=ve da=vɛɾ bɔ: STORY FRAME
   HES 1S:R=want 1S:I=say DIM
   I just want to tell

2. (1.0) m: … (0.4) rea: resan=na: —
   HES HES speech=ASSOC
   the story of-

3. (0.4) stori\ = stori=na: … (0.4) nani \ stori(B)=ASSOC coconut
   a story, the of the coconut.

4. (0.6) stori=na nani te: m: — PRESENTATIVE
   story(B)=ASSOC coconut SUB
   The Snake and the Coconut

5. (0.6) m: [clears throat] …(0.5) vi- vinadr hxal /
   HES HES woman INDEF
   there was a woman,

6. (0.3) m: …(1.1) m: i=vɛ bo: nmat \! 
   HES HES 3S:R=be DIM snake
   she was a snake.

7. (0.8) i=vɛ bɔ nmat / = NARRATIVE
   3S:R=be DIM snake
   She was a snake,
and she called for her daughter

and told her to go and do the washing.

8. (0.7) lual  \
    river

9. (1.0) ale  i=v-va  \____ =  SPEECH

So she said

10. ^ ba=van  /=  ba=mel-melex ^ /=
    2S:1=DUP-wash  3S:1=DUP-wash

    “Go and do the washing.”

    ba=rŋɔ  veve —
    2S:1=hear  if

    “but if you hear”

11. (0.3) nxa  i=mnas  i=mlas /  
    wood  3S:R=crack  3S:R=break

    “a stick crack and break”

12. (0.3) ba=ri-te  \  
    2S:1=look-NEG

    “don't you go and look (at what's there).”

Thought is analysed as a distinct mode from speech, as there is evidence of structural boundaries between thought and speech, as in the example below.
86. (1.0) na marbih ƞe i=va ^ a ^ !
   now boy DEF 3S:r=say aha
   
   Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha!”

   ^ xain bɔ xan n=ve-ve da=rɔdrɔ-i ^ \n   3S DIM PRX 1S:r=DUP-want 1S:I=know-3S

   “That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

87. (0.6) ale: —
   so
   And

88. (0.7) i=va ^ ale bar=vrakɛ nmab ^ \ =
   3S:r=say okay 2D:I=carry.in.hand T.chestnut
   
   he said “OK, let’s take (these) chestnuts.”

In the next example, from *The Snake and the Coconut*, the speaker remarks on the length of the story in an aside. The aside is isolated from the adjacent narrative modes by structural boundaries. There is a relatively long pause preceding the aside, however the previous IU has rising intonation. This reflects the fact that an aside is an interruption to the narrative, rather than a planned, well-integrated unit of discourse.

The narrative mode is resumed following the interruption, and the boundary is marked prosodically with a relatively long pause, and morphologically, with *ale*. The IU preceding the boundary has an exclamation intonation contour, which is not uncommon for sequence-final IUs.

(25) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 86-88) 

86. (1.0) na marbih ƞe i=va ^ a ^ !
   now boy DEF 3S:r=say aha
   
   Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha!”

   ^ xain bɔ xan n=ve-ve da=rɔdrɔ-i ^ \n   3S DIM PRX 1S:r=DUP-want 1S:I=know-3S

   “That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

87. (0.6) ale: —
   so
   And

88. (0.7) i=va ^ ale bar=vrakɛ nmab ^ \ =
   3S:r=say okay 2D:I=carry.in.hand T.chestnut
   
   he said “OK, let’s take (these) chestnuts.”

In the next example, from *The Snake and the Coconut*, the speaker remarks on the length of the story in an aside. The aside is isolated from the adjacent narrative modes by structural boundaries. There is a relatively long pause preceding the aside, however the previous IU has rising intonation. This reflects the fact that an aside is an interruption to the narrative, rather than a planned, well-integrated unit of discourse.

The narrative mode is resumed following the interruption, and the boundary is marked prosodically with a relatively long pause, and morphologically, with *ale*. The IU preceding the boundary has an exclamation intonation contour, which is not uncommon for sequence-final IUs.

(26) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 74-78) 

74. (1.2) ale —
   so
   
   So,
75. (0.7) i=mɛ na: /  
   3S:R=come now  
   she (the snake) has come,

76. (1.1) m n=res xini stori xar te i=brav ia!  ASIDE  
   HES 1S:R=talk OBL story(B) DST SUB 3S:R=tall there(B)  
   Hm, I'm telling a rather long story!

77. (1.0) a a:le i=mɛ na /  NARRATIVE  
   HES so 3S:R=come now  
   Ah, so she has now come.

78. (0.7) i=hedrəxex bet=nən nə niar na: / =  
   3S:R=push head=ASSOC.3S:POSS LOC fence now  
   She has pushed her head through the fence

   vinadr nɛ i=v-va \ —  
   woman DEF 3S:R=DUP-say  
   and the woman (ie the wife) said ...

The following example from The Chief’s Wife and the She-devil has a longer aside. This time the storyteller gives information for my benefit about how villages were laid out in earlier times.

(27) EXAMPLE: The Chief’s Wife and the She-devil (IUs 154-163)  

154. (1.3) mɛ s=va /  SPEECH  
   people 3P:R=say  
   (The) people said

   (1.4) ^taver ^  
   everyone
   “Everyone!”
155. (0.8) bas=drŋarɔ na xini kulan xar lɔtɛ de=mɛ de=van /
    2P:I=listen now OBL singing DST place 3S:I=come 3S:I=go
    "Now let's listen to that singing where it's coming from and going to."

156. (0.9) ^ here tue / ... (0.3) mлеun i=at i=hxal vɔr ^ /
    because before chief 3S:R=be.located 3S:R=one EMPH
    because before, the chief lived separately

157. (0.4) mʁɛ han si=at i=hxal vɔr /
    people 3S:POSS 3P:R=be.located 3S:R=one EMPH
    and his people lived separately.

158. (0.4) nhal i=ru vɔr /
    road 3S:R=two EMPH
    There were two paths.

159. (0.4) nhal te i=van naxɔ nain sxì mʁɛ / .. i=tɔx vɔr /
    road SUB 3S:R=go front house ALL people 3S:R=be.located EMPH
    There was the road that lead to the front of the people's houses,

160. (0.3) nhal te i=an sxì mлеun hlɛ mлеun i=tɔx vɔr /
    road SUB 3S:R=go ALL chief POSS.CL:PATH chief 3S:R=be EMPH
    and there was the road that lead to the chief - the chief's (path).

161. (0.7) ale mʁɛ s=va — =
    so people 3P:R=say
    So the people said

162. bas=at na /
    2P:1=stay now
    "Now let's wait!"
    bas=drŋarɔ\itter
    2P:1=listen
    "And listen!"
that singing (that) is coming,

de=sre hav nhal \\
3S:1=follow what road

which road will it take?

Some narratives have codas, which are structurally separate from narrative or other modes, such as in the example below from *Cat and Dog*.

(28) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 127-136)

127. (0.4) i=ver i=dla ƞe xini nxariv ƞe / = vē-te: — NARRATIVE
3S:R=say 3S:R=be.thus DEF OBL cat DEF but-SUB

He spoke like that to the cat, and

128. (0.3) i=xeh tutxun betix-drale=na xar / = vē: —
3S:R=bite tight throat=ASSOC DST and

he bit tight his throat there and

129. (0.4) i=xeh-din-i !\\
3S:R=be=dead-3S

he bit him to death!

130. (0.4) i=xeh-din nxariv ƞe / = i=neh \\
3S:R=be=dead cat DEF 3S:R=die

He bit the cat to death, and he was dead.

131. (0.6) i=sdēr nelĩŋ / = ’am: — CODA
3S:R=reach today HES

To this day,

132. (0.5) ’am: ren-te x=vavē lidax nelĩŋ / = x=van lanĩh / 
HES time-SUB 2S:R=take dog today 2S:R=go bush

when you take a dog nowadays, when you go into the bush
As noted above, story frames, codas and asides involve deictic shifts, when adjacent to story-world modes, and there could be an argument that it is the shift in deixis that triggers the structural boundary. However these ‘real-world’ modes can also occur adjacent to each other with evidence of structural boundaries between them. This occurs in the example below. The storyteller shifts from story frame, to coda, where she connects the content of the story to real world occurrences, back to story frame. Both the story frame and coda are anchored in the real world, so a theory explaining narrative structure solely in terms of deictic shift would not easily account for the structural boundary between these modes.

(29) EXAMPLE: Cat and Ant (IUs 74-81)
he left its entrails remaining.

for the ant to eat.

My story finishes here now.

Today if you go wandering along the road

and you see that the ants

have to eat the entrails of (rats) which

a cat kills it with its teeth and leaves (it) in the middle of the road— (the) rat.

That's all now.

The following example shows that the non-narrative modes of description, orientation and presentation are structurally distinct from each other. Each paragraph is made up of only a few clauses. However this passage of text is analysed as comprising paragraphs, rather than clause-types within the one paragraph, since there is evidence for structural boundaries within the text, and those structural boundaries appear to be
associated with shifts in discourse mode. Each of the short paragraphs is potentially expandable should the storyteller want to give more detail.

(30) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 7-19)

7. (2.3) i=vial / = i=van / 3S R=walk 3S R=go

She walked and walked

8. (1.8) i=van i=sdər ə- bət naxtabol həl / 3S R=go 3S R=reach HES base dragon.plum INDEF

She walked and walked until she reached the base of a dragon plum tree.

9. (1.1) te naxtabol ṅę s=nidr we s=nidr we s=nidr \ SUB dragon.plum DEF 3P R=be.ripe so 3P R=be.ripe so 3P R=be.ripe

because the dragon plum tree was laden with ripe juicy fruit.

10. (1.7) nęę s=rus / = s=mę litan / ANA PRO 3P R=fall.down 3P R=come down

Some had fallen to the ground.

11. (1.5) i=van i=vle naxhə sar xini / 3S R=go 3S R=go 3S R=reach slow IMPF OBL 3S

She went and was slowly collecting them,

12. (1.2) i=wəs-i 3S R=eat-3S

and eating them.

13. (2.8) (ə) olfala vinadr ṅę ṅa male=nan / DESCRIPTIVE (HES) old.person(B) woman DEF LOC leg-ASSOC 3S POSS

The old woman, her legs

14. (0.4) ngar i=šonvex ṅa male=nan \ sore 3S R=cover LOC leg-ASSOC 3S POSS

there were sores all over them.
15. (2.4) xain i=drɔx sar \ — = ORIENTATION

3S 3S:R=bend.down IMPF

She was bending down

tɛ i=lev sar naxtabɔl / =
SUB 3S:R=take IMPF dragon.plum

to pick up dragon plums

i=weɔ-i / 3S:R=eat-3S

and eat them.

16. (1.3) be ren-te ntebih hxal xain i=at dax linha nŋa: —

but(B) time-SUB child INDEF 3S 3S:R=be PERF high LOC

But all the while there was a boy already sitting high up in

17. (1.0) n: nul naxtabɔl \ PRESENTATIVE

HES top dragon.plum

the top of the dragon plum tree.

18. (1.4) ntebih nɛ i=leh dax i=dla nɛ / NARRATIVE

child DEF 3S:R=see PERF 3S:R=be.thus DEF

The child had seen (the old woman picking up the plums).

19. (1.3) i=bus luɛ: navŋa naxtabɔl hxal / =

3S:R=pluck away fruit dragon.plum INDEF

He picked a dragon plum

i=weɔ-i \ 3S:R=eat-3S

and ate it.

A story can contain passages which recap earlier events in order to reorient the audience to the current situation. These sequences are distinguished from adjacent narrative sequences, as exemplified by a recap sequence from The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts, given below. The shifts from narrative to recap mode and then back to narrative mode each trigger a structural boundary.
(31) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 154-160)

154. (0.6) ale mar ңɛ: —
s0 man DEF

*Now the fellow,*

155. (0.2) i=at vɔ i=ңɛ̥ dax te ə=s=мɛ \  
3S:R=stay until 3S:R=hear PERF SUB 3P:R=come

*he waited until he suddenly heard that they were coming.*

156. (1.2) ren-tɛ ɾ=i-sɛr-nenev dax xain  
time-SUB 3S:R=DUP-paint-COMPL PERF 3S

*When he had finished painting himself*

xini nmab vɔ i=vlxnet \  
OBL T.chestnut until 3S:R=turn.black

*with the chestnuts until he turned black,*

157. (0.4) i=an i=tur ... (0.2) xɔɾo nali vɔvho ... (0.3) =na vnvat /  
3S:R=go 3S:R=stand block door exactly =ASSOC stone

*and he went and stood right in the entrance of the cave.*

158. (0.4) ale i=ri мɛ salin \  
so 3S:R=look come outside

*And he looked outside.*

159. (0.7) tnah ңɛ xneɾ ə=s=мɛ ə=s=мɛ ə=s=мɛ vvv-ʊɛ / =  
devil DEF P 3P:R=come 3P:R=come 3P:R=come DUP-DUR

*The devils came and came and came*
and then they looked and suddenly saw him.

They all banged into each other as they (tried to) flee.

In the example below, there is a shift in discourse mode, from orientation to speech mode. This triggers a paragraph break preceding IU 78, signalled by the falling intonation contour of IU 77, a relatively long pause, and the presence of ale.

(32) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 74-83)

74. (0.3) ale / so

Now

75. (0.6) marbih ŋə xain ɔ ren-tẽ i=ve i=dla ŋə /

As for the boy, while he was doing this,

(0.3) ve drodroman han klẽ i=vles dax \ but mind 3S:POSS again 3S:R=wander PERF

he had another idea.

76. (0.3) i=r̥o̥d̥r̥o̥-i \ 3S:R=know-3S

He realised

77. (0.2) de=winim selivan han a de=dla-hxa \ how he could save his life.

78. (0.6) ale i=m-mex xini tnah — so 3S:R=DUP-ask OBL devil

So he asked (the) devil,
Many shifts in discourse mode entail some sort of shift in deixis. Even the shift in mode exemplified above involves a shift in degree of penetration into the character, from inside the character to reveal his thoughts, to outside the character for his dialogue. A shift in degree of penetration into the character is a form of deictic shift, specifically a perspective shift. Conversely, many but not all shifts in deixis correlate with shifts in discourse mode. The two phenomena together account for almost all the structural boundaries encountered in the texts, although shifts in discourse mode alone or deixis alone can still trigger boundaries; examples 17, 19 and 20 show structural boundaries which are triggered by shifts in deixis alone, and example 30 has structural boundaries which are triggered by discourse mode shifts without shifts in deixis. There are also several structural boundaries encountered in the ten narratives which do not involve either deictic shift nor a shift in discourse mode, and these are discussed in the following section.
8.3.3 Other triggers of structural boundaries

Structural boundaries can correlate with dramatic peaks, such as in the example below. There is prosodic and morphosyntactic evidence of structural boundary following the primary dramatic peak in the narrative: the discovery by the mother of her ten dead children (line 26). There is no shift in discourse mode, the adjacent paragraphs are both in narrative mode. Neither is there a shift in deixis. There are deictic verbs van ‘go’ and me ‘come’ in the first two clauses of the incoming paragraph respectively, however the main action related in the second paragraph takes place in the same location as the main action of the previous one, and the use of me ‘come (back)’ suggests that the centre of deixis effectively remains at the location with the ten dove chicks throughout, since it places the audience with the doves. The trigger seems to be the degree of drama in the event of the mother finding her children dead (IU 26). The structural boundary reflects the shock of the discovery, thus heightening the drama and emphasising the point of the sequence.

(33) EXAMPLE: *The Ten Young Birds* (IUs 24-31)

24. \(^{^i=van}\) \(^{i=ri}\) \(^{xin-er}\) /  
   \(^{3S:R=go}\) \(^{3S:R=look}\) OBL-3p
   
   *She went and looked for them.*

25. (0.4) \(^{i=leh}\) te xair drul so: / —  
   \(^{3S:R=see}\) SUB 3p all HES
   
   *and she saw that they all*

26. (0.4) a: \(^{s=neh}\) drul / = \(^{si=at}\) \(^{\backslash}\)  
   \(^{HES}\) 3p:R=die all 3p:R=be.located
   
   *were lying there dead.*

27. (0.6) ale: /  
   so
   
   *So*
28. (0.5) i=an i=lev ə: navir hxal / 
3S=r=go 3S=r=take HES wild.cane INDEF

she went and fetched a stick of wild cane,

29. (0.8) ə: …(0.4) e: …(0.5) ə: i=mɛ / 
HES HES HES 3S=r=come

and she came

30. (1.2) i=rub xini ə: …(0.2) nɛ ɛ amu \ 
3S:r=hit OBL HES ANA.PRO FIRST

and whipped against the oldest one,

31. (0.6) ə  net=nan ɛ amu \ 
HES child=ASSOC.3S:POSS DEF first

her firstborn child.

We saw above in §8.3.1 that a speaker can use a structural break to signal a discontinuity in discourse-semantic structure. It has been observed elsewhere that there is a dynamic interaction between speakers and the rules of language, such that conventions become established through frequent use, and once these conventions are established, a speaker can exploit them to effectively communicate their message (eg. Fox 1996, Stirling 2001). Thus speakers both consciously and unconsciously interact with the rules of their language. In the above example, the narrator appears to be exploiting the conventions of structuring narrative to create a dramatic effect. We have seen that a prosodic break is associated with a discontinuity in the discourse-semantic structure, either of discourse mode, or of deictic centre or both. In the above example, where the prosodic break corresponds to a dramatic moment in the narrative, the break in prosodic structure iconically reflects a sense of discontinuity associated with emotional shock, heightening the drama and effectively conveying this important point in the story.

Some structural boundaries are not associated with shifts in either deixis, or discourse mode, nor with dramatic peaks. The only examples occur in narrative mode, which is the most common mode, and so the mode most likely to comprise long passages of text. In this case the structural boundaries coincide with divisions between minimal story units, discussed in §8.3.2 in relation to the definition of narrative mode. The
term is from Genette (1980) and used here to refer to units of narrative which relate a demonstrable change in the state of affairs.

The text exemplified below is divided into three paragraphs. Each paragraph is a minimal story; it begins with one state of affairs, has one main narrative event, that is, an event which affects the key characters or props, and ends with a different state of affairs as a result of that event. The first paragraph describes cooking chestnuts, a key prop, until they turn black. The second describes the boy painting himself with the burnt chestnuts until he turns black, and the third describes him positioning himself in the doorway of the devil’s cave.

(34) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 110-122)

110. (0.4) ale marbih ɛ i=at \ so boy DEF 3S:R=be

   And the boy stayed behind.

111. (0.6) i=delex nadxan \ 3S:R=light fire

   He lit a fire.

112. (0.3) i=tin ŋ nmab ɛ \= 3S:R=cook HES chestnut DEF

   He cooked the chestnuts.

113. ^ i=tin i=tin v-v-v-vɔ s=xebu we s=xebu ^ \= 3S:R=cook 3S:R=cook DUP-DUR 3P:R=burnt so 3P:R=burnt

   He cooked them and cooked them on and on until they were really burnt

114. ^ s=vlxnet ^ \ 3P:R=turn.black

   and they turned black.

115. (0.6) ale i=narxat na / so 3S:R=get.up now

   So he gets up
and takes the chestnuts and rubs them all over himself.

His body became black all over.

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

So, now he goes and stands in the entrance of the cave.

He was standing, blocking the stone doorway facing outside.

The above passage of text represents the build up to the climax of the narrative, and is told from the boy’s point of view. The text cleaves into three narrative paragraphs, the final of which is also a sequence, on the grounds that it is bounded by two strong boundaries. The motivation for the strong and weak boundaries in this passage of text
is discussed further in §8.3.4 below. These three paragraphs in a row give the passage of text momentum, leading up to the climax. Each paragraph only relates actions which are necessary steps in achieving the final state of affairs. In terms of Aristotle’s dramatic principles, the paragraphs demonstrate the principle of unity, each action within the paragraph being necessary to achieve the final state of affairs, and no action being irrelevant. The triggers for the structural breaks are the accomplishment of the task being performed, and the shift to the new task. The structural boundaries also reflect a subtle shift in the boy’s position within the devil’s cave, from (presumably) crouching by the fire, to rubbing the chestnuts over himself, to standing in the doorway of the cave.

The fact that text is spontaneously structured into paragraphs even where there are no major discontinuities in the discourse-semantic structure suggests that there may be a psycholinguistic imperative which underlies narrative structure: a processing constraint whereby information is more easily assimilated by the hearer if broken down into smaller chunks. If there are no obvious discontinuities, text will be structured around more subtle discontinuities, as in the example above. We have seen that sequences are defined as a passage of text between two strong structural boundaries, and a paragraph has at least one weak structural boundary. The following section looks briefly at the relationship of sequences and paragraphs to the thematic entity of episodes.

8.3.4 Discussion: continuity, discontinuity and unity
Breaking down stories into sequences and paragraphs is a means for a storyteller to manage the flow of information, in order to draw the listeners as deeply as possible into the story and engage them with its point. The fact that stories are comprised of smaller units divided by structural boundaries is likely to ultimately reflect processing constraints. The storyteller assumes the hearer to be constructing a discourse model, and controls the flow of information according to the his or her assumptions about that model.

In general, structural breaks in Tirax narratives reflect some kind of discontinuity, typically in deixis or discourse mode. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter,
chunks of thematically unified units are traditionally referred to as episodes in the literature (eg. Tomlin 1987, Ji 2002, Stirling 2007). In an empirical study where participants were asked to divide a large block of English written text into paragraphs, Ji (2008) found that rates of agreement about placement of paragraph boundaries varied, depending on the degree and number of thematic discontinuities between the adjacent sections of text: for major discontinuities in participants, place, time or topic, there was a high rate of agreement. For fewer or less obvious discontinuities there was a lower rate of agreement of where to place the paragraph boundaries. On this basis Ji distinguishes episodes and subepisodes respectively, whereby episodes are expressed by passages of text with a high rate of agreement about location of paragraph boundaries, and subepisodes corresponded to passages of text with a mid to low rate of agreement about location of paragraph boundaries. In this way Ji (2008) finds empirical support for a hierarchical structure in narrative text, such as has been found in the spontaneous oral narratives in Tirax.

The relationship between the thematic units of episodes and subepisodes to the textual units of sequences and paragraphs in the spontaneous Tirax oral narratives is not as clear cut as it appears to be for the empirical study on written English narrative reported by Ji (2008). In accord with Ji’s findings for English, weaker boundaries tend to more consistently reflect less prominent breaks in discourse-semantic structure. We saw that weaker boundaries tend to occur if there is a shift in discourse mode but no deictic shift within the story world, or if there is a shift between focus of character but no shift in time or place. We also find in Tirax that sequence boundaries do typically reflect major discontinuities in the discourse-semantic structure. Discontinuity in more than one area appears to have a cumulative effect, reflected in the strength of the structural boundary. The following text from The Story of the Little White Flying Fox, for example, shows a shift in character and place, from the father at the men’s house, to the mother at home. There is also a shift in discourse mode, from speech to narrative. The prosodic and morphosyntactic cues suggest a strong structural boundary. The event also represents a dramatic peak, and the first clause of the new sequence is an exclamation, reflecting the high degree of drama and therefore the point of the sequence.
EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 79-87)

79. (0.6) i=me salin i=dlia xotaxan i=v=va —  

He (the father) came outside (while they were doing that) like that and he said.

80. (0.6) ^ he ^ !

"Hey!"

81. (0.5) ^ xar=vxaur sar xini haxa ^ ?

"What are you two laughing at?"

82. (1.5) o ^ keni xar=d-dal sxi mre l-lad xar=ve-ve te ^

"You're disturbing the adults! You two think that"

83. (0.5) ^ xar=ak vər sxi dede heni te i=nam a ^ !

"you were born from a proper mother?"

84. (0.5) ^ xar=ak bo sxi: … (2.0) nha te ^ !

"You two were born from an animal no less!"

85. (1.2) ale … (1.1) saye  

So there you have it.

86. (0.7) nunu han i=ŋə i=hat /=

His mother felt bad.

te i=dlia i=v=er lalaxɛ xair te //  

that he had told their children the awful secret.
On the other hand, strong boundaries can also occur when there are only minor discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure. We saw in example 34 above, from *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, that the text cleaved into chunks despite only subtle shifts within narrative mode from one place to another within the same location and following the same character. However although thematically, all three units are subepisodes, one break was reflected as a weak boundary and another was reflected as a strong boundary. So a sequence in Tirax oral narrative can express a subepisode, as well as an episode, while a paragraph typically expresses a subepisode. I suggest that while structural boundaries are motivated by thematic structure, they also provide an opportunity for a storyteller to plan the storytelling. The cognitive effort involved in planning the storytelling is reflected in stronger and/or more prosodic and morphosyntactic cues to structural boundaries. So sequence boundaries do not merely reflect episode boundaries, but can also reflect production issues involved in storytelling. This accounts for strong boundaries between what on thematic grounds appear to be subepisodes.

**Unity**

As much as structural breaks reflect discontinuity in some area of discourse-semantic structure, the internal structure of paragraphs, sequences and narratives reflects the principle of *unity*, operating at the different levels of narrative structure. Appealing to the principle of unity allows us to explain some prosodic phenomena, which are otherwise anomalous. It has been observed, for example, that structural boundaries are preceded by falling intonation contours, or occasionally, exclamations. Both can give a sense of finality to the IU. However some paragraphs and sequences are preceded by rising or continuing intonation contours. By appealing to the principle of unity, these anomalies are neatly explained.

Below is an example with two paragraph-final rising intonation contours in a row. In this story, the storyteller cross-cuts back and forth from the main character to her husband and his family. The woman is on an errand picking vegetables in the garden,
and meanwhile the husband and his family burn her mother to death, who is a large snake. Snakes are not poisonous in Vanuatu, but are generally hated and feared in Mae. There are many anecdotes involving encounters with pythons while in the garden, which often end in the spectacular demise of the snake. In the narrative, the two activities are woven together, so that the storyteller cross-cuts back and forth from one task at one location, to the other. The effect of the cross-cutting is that the drama and suspense is heightened at this highpoint in the story. There are weak structural boundaries reflecting the shift between the two locations. The relatively long pauses following in IUs 104 and 105 each indicate a structural boundary, but there is a rising intonation contour preceding the boundaries. The rising intonation contour is explained by the fact that the story units which lines 103 and 104 each belong too are incomplete, or interrupted, by a passage of text which does not form part of the sequence. That is, it is a disruption to the unity of the sequence, reflected in the rising intonation contour. The rest of the action in the minimal story involving the snake is not narrated, but the results are apparent:

(36)  EXAMPLE: The Story of the Snake and the Coconut (IUs 103-107)

103. (0.9)  i=van  i=kih  nawɛ:ɡ / 3s:r=go  3s:r=pinch vegetables
She went and picked vegetables.

104. (0.9)  s=me  s=tɔ  nadxan  nɛa  ne- nen  nɛ / 3p:r=come  3p:r=put fire LOC HES house DEF
They came and put a fire in the house.

105. (1.2)  xain  i=kih  nawɛg  vɛ-vɛ /  = 3s  3s:r=pinch vegetables DUP-DUR
(The wife) was picking vegetables and after a while

i=ri  tɛ  i=leh  nɛv  nadxan  tɛː — 3s:r=look  sub  3s:r=see  ash  fire  sub
she looked (up)
and saw ash from a fire which was falling on her from the sago palm leaves.

It fell on her.

The Tirax data suggests that the dual principles of discontinuity and unity can be understood as underlying the way an oral narrative is structured.

8.4 Transition clauses

The present chapter has been looking at the different levels of structure in narratives: prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic, itself a complex level of structure. There has been an assumption that the structural boundaries in the prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic levels coincide, that is, boundaries in the oral text coincide with episode or subepisode boundaries. This is the typical finding and assumption reported in the literature (eg. Longacre 1979, Tomlin 1987, Gernsbacher 1990, Ji 2008). However, this is only sometimes the case in the ten Tirax narratives. More often there is a misalignment between the prosodic structure and discourse-semantic structure, with the morphosyntactic structure sometimes aligning with the prosodic structure, and other times aligning with the discourse-semantic structure. Clauses which follow prosodic breaks but which retain the discourse-semantic features of the previous paragraph are called here transition clauses.

8.4.1 Misalignment of prosodic and discourse-semantic levels of structure

Transition clauses occur when there is a misalignment of prosodic and discourse-semantic levels of structure. Typically, the prosodic structural boundary pre-empts the discourse-semantic triggers, as in the example below. In this example, there is a break in the prosodic structure between lines 22 and 23: line 22 has a falling intonation contour, and is followed by a relatively long pause. There is a shift in focus of character between the sequences, from the boy in the first sequence, to the old woman in the incoming sequence. Both sequences are in narrative mode, so the trigger for the boundary is the deictic shift. The shift does not occur until line 24, the second IU of
the incoming sequence. There are two morphosyntactic features typically associated with sequence-initial clauses: the VP-anaphoric expression, idla dem, and a free NP subject. These features are distributed between the two clauses, such that the clause in the sequence-initial IU contains the anaphoric expression, and the free subject NP occurs in the following line (24), with the shift in focus of character.

(37) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores and the Dragon Plums (IUs 20-24)

20. (0.9) i=wes-nenev-i /  
3s:r=eat-compl-3s

He finished eating.

21. (0.8) i=lev-luc navoh=nan /  
3s:r=take-away seed=assoc.3s:poss

and removed the stone,

22. (0.9) i=vnedsdrɔ xini male olfala vinadr ƞɛ \  
3s:r=throw.at OBL leg old.person(B) woman DEF

and threw (it) at the old woman’s legs.

23. (1.2) i=vnedsdrɔ ngaŋ han i=dla ɔtan xan /  
3s:r=throw.at sore 3s:poss 3s:r=be.thus loc.dxf1 prx

He threw (it) at her sores like that,

24. (0.4) olfala vinadr ƞɛ i=drax \  
old.person(B) woman DEF 3s:r=get.a.fright

(and) the old woman got a fright.

8.4.2 Features of transition clauses

Formally, transition clauses are often tail-head linked clauses, or reiterations or paraphrases of previous clauses. In terms of functional clause-type they are Descriptive clauses, typically a recapitulative or descriptive-durative clauses. They always convey old or predictable information. They typically contain several cohesive ties, such as pronominal forms. The transition clause in line 23 above, for example, is a paraphrase of the previous sentence. It has two pronominal forms: 3s subject marker i= and 3s possessive marker han. It also has the anaphoric VP marker idla ɔtan xan.
‘like that’. This transition clause differs from the previous sentence, in that it specifies the woman’s sores as the target. However the sores were set up in previous clauses, which described how the woman’s legs were ‘covered in sores’.

It is possible for a transition clause to drive a narrative forward if it contains an atelic VP, that is a VP which does not specify an endpoint to the action. In The Story of the Snake and the Coconut, the VP *ime* ‘she came’ occurs in a transition clause in five paragraphs. This refrain drives the story forward, reflecting the progress of the snake-mother-in-law who is approaching the village. The following excerpt shows three short sequences, the first and third containing a transition clause with *ime*. The first sequence has a shift in deixis, from the snake to the woman, preceded by two transition clauses which retain the snake at the deictic centre (marked with arrows). The second sequence returns to the snake. There is no free NP associated with the shift in deixis; the reference is inferable due to a pattern having been established of switching focus from the daughter and husband to the snake and back, and the long pause preceding the referring expression indicates the structural boundary, and the reference can be deduced. The third paragraph switches back to the woman and her husband. There is a transition clause repeating the rhythmic refrain, marking the progress of the snake (arrowed), and the shift in focus of character takes place in the following line (86).

(38) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Snake and the Coconut (IUs 78-87)

78. (1.0) a:le: i=mɛ na / na: /  
   HES so 3S:R=come now  
   Ah, so she had now come.

79. (0.7) i=hedrex bet=nan nŋa nyar na: / =  
   3S:R=push head-ASSOC.3S:POSS LOC fence now  
   She pushed her head through the fence

   vinadr  nɛ i=va-va \\ —  
   woman  DEF 3S:R=DUP-say  
   and (the woman) said:
80. (0.3) dede hɔk xan i=dla xɔri na / =
mother 1s:poss 3s 3s:r=be.thus loc.dx2 now

“My mother is here now just like that,"

de=lxa nyar na !
3s:1=go.across fence now

“She’s just about to come over the fence!”

81. (1.0) ale: —

so

And then

82. (1.5) i=va — =

3s:r=say

she (the snake) sang

83. SONG: nevir dedela o, wai-i-a gonsensre gonsensre

84. (0.4) SONG: virdelo nadvleto

85. (0.8) ale i=ev xain i=mc: — =

so 3s:r=pull 3s 3s:r=come

And she (the snake) pulled herself along,

86. lex han i=va \ —

husband 3s:poss 3s:r=say

(The daughter’s) husband said:

87. (0.5) lext er tra des=mc vɔr ɲɛ des=an lalvanu ^ \n
mother-in-law important 3p:l=come emph def 3p:l=go inside

“Mother-in-law, you are very welcome to come inside.”

8.4.3 Discourse function of transition clauses: cohesion and drama

Transition clauses are a means of managing the flow of information at the level of discourse. In this they have two main functions: creating cohesion and enhancing the drama of the story.
Cohesion

Transition clauses provide cohesion by referring back to previous clauses with the same information or same vocabulary and morphosyntactic features. Other cohesive ties in transition clauses include pronominal forms, discourse markers, such as *ale* ‘then’, and the anaphoric VP *idla DEM*. Transition clauses cohere the text at the points in the narrative where there are structural breaks, that is, places of discontinuity in discourse-semantic structure. The cohesive function of transition clauses is exemplified by the excerpt below.

The following example, also from *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut*, shows how the same phrase is repeated in transition clauses in successive paragraphs. These transition clauses do not progress the narrative forward, since the repeated phrase is telic: *ime lain* ‘she came home’. The function of the repeated phrase is purely to cohere the text. The excerpt below has two prosodic boundaries, reflecting two shifts in mode: from narrative to speech, then back to narrative. In the story, the daughter arrives home in tears after discovering that her husband’s family have burned to death her mother (the snake). The first transition clause, in line 113, forms part of a tail-head linkage, the discourse strategy discussed in §7.3.1 for managing the flow of information and providing text with cohesion. The second transition clause, in line 115, is a reiteration of the previous transition clause, with a VP-anaphoric marker, a reduction of *idla ǹe*, typical of sequence-initial clauses.

(39) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 111-18)

111. (1.4) *ale* i=ŋar !\ 
      so 3s:r=cry

    *And so she cried.*

112. (0.2)*i=ŋar* i=vla i=me- i=me lain \ 
      3s:r=cry 3s:r=go.away hes 3s:r=come home

    *She cried all the way home.*
113. (1.2) i=me lain / = i=v-va \ — = SPEECH
            3S:R=come home 3S:R=DUP-say

She came home and said:

\(^n=\ve \, \text{dax} \, \te\)
1S:R=say PERF SUB

“I TOLD you that”

\(n=\ve-\ve \, \text{da}=\me-\te \, \text{sxi-ni}\)
1S:R=DUP-want 1S:1=come-NEG DAT-2P:POSS

“I wanted not to come with you people!”

\(\te \, \text{dede} \, \text{hòk} ^\wedge \, i=\ve \, \text{nha} \, \}\)
SUB mother 1S:POSS 3S:R=COP animal

“that my mother was an animal.”

114. (1.3) ale / NARRATIVE
            so

So

115. (1.5) i=me lain \(\eta: /\)
            3S:R=come home ANA

she came home like that,

116. (0.5) i=netur /
            3S:R=sleep

and she went to sleep.

117. (0.2) nña: ...(0.3) i=netur nña nen taweh /
            HES 3S:R=sleep LOC house another

She slept in another house.

118. (0.6) i=netur borb\(or /\)
            3S:R=sleep dreaming

She went to sleep and had a dream.
Drama

Transition clauses can be exploited by storytellers to create suspense in the narrative. There can be several transition clauses following a structural boundary before there is a shift in the discourse-semantic structure. The most transition clauses following a prosodic break encountered in the data is four, illustrated in the example below. There is a structural boundary between lines 20 and 21, with line 20 having a falling intonation contour, and line 21 having a relatively long pause, and being marked with an elongated *ale* as well as *rente* ‘meanwhile’. The discourse mode switches from narrative to presentative, and the focus of character switches from the brothers to the mother and daughter, but these shifts do not take place until line 23. The transition clauses are arrowed, they relate predictable information, echoing the clauses which describe the walk on the way out to the beach.

(40) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 19-26) 

19. (0.4) s: s=vin nas drar ! / =
   HES 3P:R=shoot fish PC.FOOD.3P.POSS
   *They speared their fish*

   iŋv i=loŋvex nŋa spia har te s=holx-i ! /
   HES 3S:R=be.filled LOC arrow(B) 3P:POSS SUB 3P:R=carry-3S
   *and stacked them on their arrows that they were carrying*

20. (1.0) txan-vivies har ηe 
   gun-bow 3P:POSS DEF
   - their arrows.

21. (0.8) ale: / = ren-te s=lxex lxen dxi-n / =
   so time-SUB 3P:R=turn.back back COM-3S:POSS
   *And when they headed back with them*

---

4 There is also a long pause preceding IU 20, which is a hesitation pause, as the storyteller searches for the vernacular word for ‘arrow’.
the first one lead the way.

22. (0.5) s=vla   s=me   /
3P.R=go.away  3P.R=come
They started to come back.

23. (0.5) s=me   vvvvvv-vɔ   nŋa nhal /= ren-te:
3P.R=come  DUP-DUR  LOC  road  time-SUB
They walked on and on until they reached the road.

(0.5) vinadr  hxal /= xain i=at nŋa nhal /=
woman  INDEF  3S  3S.R=be  LOC  road
A woman was standing on the road

(0.5) dxi  net-in  vaven  bih \  
COM  child-3S:POSS  female  small
with her small daughter.

24. (0.6) net-in  vaven  bih  nɛ  te: —
child-3S:POSS  female  small  DEF  SUB
The young daughter of hers was covered in sores -

(0.3) i=nxav   vvvvvv-vɔ /= i=nxav \  
3S.R=covered.in.sores  DUP-DUR  3S.R=covered.in.sores
completely and utterly covered in sores,

25. (0.5) te  r=uh  drul  temul  \=
SUB  3IMPS=hold  all  no.more
so that there is no longer any place to touch her,

lotɛ  ba=uh  txun  i=hge \  
place  2S:1=hold  very  3S.R=not.be
there was no place you could touch her.
She was completely covered in sores.

The above is an example of how a skilled storyteller can exploit the misalignment of prosodic-morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic structure. The storyteller uses transition clauses here to build up suspense before introducing the new characters. There is no unpredictable and little new information in the transition clauses, but by stretching out this section of the story, where nothing unexpected is happening, the storyteller builds up anticipation. The audience is (consciously or sub-consciously) expecting a shift in discourse mode, or focus of character or degree of drama, because there is a new structural unit, signalled by the prosodic and morphosyntactic cues. However the shift is delayed by the transition clauses, thus building suspense.

In this way, transition clauses function as *deictic evaluators*, using Polanyi’s (1987) term, adapted from Labov (1972). Polanyi defines *deictic evaluators* as linguistic elements which give prominence to another clause by repeating or echoing information in the evaluated clause, or elaborating on it some other way by providing additional descriptive detail.5 The clauses in lines 24 to 26 in the above excerpt deictically evaluate the previous clause introducing the mother and daughter, by providing additional detail about the daughter. Deictic evaluators contrast with *containing evaluators*, such as the perfective marker *dax* discussed in chapter 7, which give prominence to the clause they are in. Transition clauses contrast with other deictic evaluators, in that they can give prominence to the clause following them, which itself typically has no content in common with the preceding transition clause(s) at all. They deictically evaluate the clause, that is, give prominence to it, by delaying it. In the above example, the clause following the four transition clauses introduces the character who eventually becomes the story’s protagonist, the daughter of the woman. The significance of the characters is indicated by the five clauses which follow, all deictically evaluating the clause introducing the mother and daughter. This clause also has a *double reference* expression, which gives further

---

5 The term *deictic* is used in its sense meaning ‘to point to’, and is contrasted with what Polanyi terms *contential evaluators*, which are evaluators which occur within or as part of the clause which is being highlighted.
prominence to the mother by emphasising the shift in focus of character, as discussed in chapter 9. So by delaying the clause with the shift in discourse-semantic structure, transition clauses create suspense and give it further prominence.

8.4.4 Distribution of morphosyntactic cues associated with structural boundaries

We have seen above that the main morphosyntactic features associated with narrative boundaries, discourse marker *ale*, free NP subject and the anaphoric expression *idla DEM*, are actually each associated with a different level of structural juncture, as summarised in table 8-7. *Ale* tends to follow prosodic boundaries, and is often, but not always, associated with transition clauses. *Idla DEM* is typically associated with transition clauses. *Rent* ‘meanwhile’ is typically associated with shifts in focus of character, although it occasionally is encountered also in transition clauses, as in example 40 above. The free NP subject, where it occurs, is associated with the shift in focus of character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8-7: Distribution of morphosyntactic cues to structural boundaries across types of structural junctures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morphosyntactic feature</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ale</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will recall that the verb *nev* ‘finish’ is often associated with sequence initial position. It can also be regarded as functioning as a transition clause in this location, as shown in the example below.

(41) **EXAMPLE: The Ten Young Birds (IUs 73-80)**

73. (0.3) **ale** i=rub xi(ni) nŋɛ xewɛl=nan na ! =

   then 3S=R=hit OBL ANA.PRO eight=ASSOC.3S:POSS now

   *She whipped her eighth one now,*

74. **i=v-va**  

   \[—\]

   3S=R=DUP=say

   *singing*
You will recall from §7.2.3 that clause-initial *na* is also typically associated with paragraph-initial boundaries. In fact, the four medial instances precede clauses which immediately follow transition clauses, suggesting *na* is closely associated with shifts in discourse-semantic structure. Table 8-8 is repeated from chapter 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8-8: Distribution of the discourse marker <em>na</em> in the texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.4.5 Staggering of discourse mode and deictic shifts across clauses
It is not uncommon for discourse mode and deixis to each shift in different clauses following a structural boundary. In the following example, the discourse mode shift from speech to narrative takes place in the sequence-initial clause (line 67), and the deictic shift takes place in the following clause (arrowed), where there is a shift in both focus of character and place.

(42) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 64-70)

64. (0.8) i=va ^ i=nam we i=nam we i=nam txun ^ !
   3s:r=say 3s:r=good so 3s:r=good so 3s:r=good very
   *(The girl’s mother) said “Thank you, thank you so much!”*

65. (0.4) ^ da- x=lev xini xnc ^ /
   MSTK 2s:r=take OBL 1s
   “You gave (something) to me,”

66. (0.3) ^ da=dram xin(i) net-uk vaven sxi-m ba=uh-i ^ 
   1s:r=allow OBL child-1s:poss female DAT-2s:poss 2s:r=take-3s
   “(So) I will let you have my daughter to marry.”

67. (1.3) ale: i=dram xini net-in vaven nɛ sxi tete tax nɛ /
   so 3s:r=allow OBL child-3s:poss female DEF DAT child last DEF
   *So (the woman) let her daughter (go) with the youngest brother.*

68. (0.4) r=vla    r=van lain /
   3d:r=go.away 3d:r=go home
   *The two of them left for home.*

69. (0.5) r=van / = ri=at s sar len har s: /
   3d:r=go 3d:r=be HES IMPF house 3p:poss HES
   *They went and arrived home*

70. (0.3) r=drar sar 
   3d:r=chat IMPF
   *they started chatting.*
The deictic shift can also precede the shift in discourse mode. In the following example, deictic shift takes place immediately following the prosodic boundary, but the discourse mode does not shift until the following line. The prosodic boundary is between lines 43 and 44.

(43) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 39-46)

39. (0.9) m ale: / 
   \[\text{HES} \quad \text{so}\]
   So

40. (1.0) si=at nevihxa / 
   \[3P:\text{be morning}\]
   So in the morning,

41. (0.5) s=reti xini te dede han de=van \ 
   \[3P:\text{prepare(B)} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{SUB} \quad \text{mother3S:POSS} \quad 3S:I=go\]
   they prepared for her mother to come.

42. (0.5) s=titin \ 
   \[3P:\text{cook}\]
   They roasted (some food),

43. (0.8) s=v\ɛ xodran \ 
   \[3P:\text{make food}\]
   and prepared food.

44. (1.8) ale i=r\ŋ dax te: \[=\ xain i=narxat na !\] 
   \[\text{so} \quad 3S:\text{R=hear} \quad \text{PERF} \quad \text{SUB} \quad 3S \quad 3S:\text{R=get.up} \quad \text{PERF}\]
   Now she (the daughter) suddenly heard that she (the snake) was already on her way.

45. (0.2) i=v-va ^ o ^ 
   \[3S:\text{R=say} \quad \text{oh}\]
   She said: “Oh!”

46. (0.5) ^ dede h\$k / = de=me xar / = bas=leh-i / = 
   \[\text{mother} \quad 1S:POSS \quad 3S:I=come \quad \text{DST} \quad 2P:I=see-3S\]
   “My mother is coming, and you will see her”
When the discourse mode and deixis shift in different clauses, the clauses between the shifts have an intermediate status between transition clauses and other text clauses. In both examples above, the clauses are narrative clauses, and transition clauses are not narrative clauses. However they resemble transition clauses in other respects. In the first example (42) above, the narrative clause recaps information that was related in direct speech. In the second example, the clause has features typical of a transition clause, such as cohesive ties and paraphrases of previous clauses. However the perfective marker *dax* encodes it as a narrative clause.

8.4.6 Transition clauses and oral traditions

Transition clauses are likely to be an artefact of an oral tradition. Stories in oral traditions are widely observed to rely more heavily on formulae and repetition to convey complex meaning compared with written stories (eg. Lord 1960, Ong 1982, 1988, Fleischman 1990, following early work by Milman Parry and Albert Lord).

Another feature of Oceanic languages likely to be associated with orality is *tail-head linkage*, defined in the previous chapter. Transition clauses have a similar function at the level of discourse to that of tail-head linkage at the level of syntax, that is, both phenomena manage the flow of information and provide cohesion. As oral languages such as Tirax are written down, features associated with oral performance may be in danger of being lost. The speakers who helped translate the stories, including some storytellers, expressed their preference for certain clauses to be deleted when the stories were transposed to written form, as they were regarded as ‘not necessary’ and repetitive. Those ‘unnecessary’ clauses were either tail-head linkage or transition clauses, or both.

A corollary is that narrative analysis which is based on written texts, or on languages with a literary tradition, is likely to miss linguistic and paralinguistic phenomena which are associated with performance, such as transition clauses. There have been some studies on English narrative which suggest that preposed adverbial clauses, such
as subordinate time clauses and participial clauses can be associated with incoming discourse units (eg. Ramsey 1987, Givón 1987, Prideaux & Hogan 1993). However, transition clauses are not subordinate clauses, and more than one transition clause can precede the shift in discourse-semantic structure, which is not reported in the literature for other languages to my knowledge. Ji (2002), for example, finds evidence that English speakers use discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure to identify structural boundaries:

>This phenomenon proves from a new perspective what has been suggested by many previous studies, namely that temporal, spatial, and thematic discontinuities are natural indicators of transitions of thematic units and they are perceived by language users as such. All the identified sentences are characterized by these discontinuities.

Ji (2002:1270)

While there is evidence that thematic discontinuities are associated with new paragraphs in Tirax narrative, the thematic discontinuities often occur one or two clauses into the new paragraph, and not at the boundary. The identification of transition clauses illustrates the benefits of a holistic approach to narrative analysis, taking into account all levels of narrative structure. As video is used more frequently to record stories in the field, the role of gesture and gaze is likely to be revealed, adding a whole new dimension to our understanding of narrative performance.

8.5 Speaker styles
This section is a brief note on variation in style between speakers. As indicated in Appendix V, the ten narratives were told by seven different speakers, three male and four female, across a range of ages from thirty to late-seventies. Each speaker told one story, and one speaker told four of the stories. We saw above in §8.2.2, that different speakers narrate at different speeds, and so the average pause length between IUs differs between speakers. This is also true of other discourse features associated with structural boundaries. The most obvious variations involve the following features:
• proportion of IUs with rising intonation contours
• pause length between IUs (discussed in §8.2.2)
• relative strength of boundaries
• frequency of discourse markers, such as *ale*
• frequency of transition clauses

These features are briefly discussed and exemplified in turn.

Speakers differ with respect to the breakdown of types of intonation contours in their narrations. Some speakers have proportionally more IUs with rising intonation contours, and some have a relatively greater percentage of exclamations in their narrations for example. A comparison across the total range of narratives in the entire corpus of traditional narratives and anecdotes, revealed the stylistic idiosyncrasies are relatively consistent for each story told by the same speaker. Table 8-9 gives the breakdown of intonation contours in four texts for four different speakers, representing the range of variation. The proportion of rising contours across the four texts ranges from 63% in a young female’s narration, down to 16% in an older male’s narration. Texts with recurring motifs have a higher proportion of IUs with continuing intonation contours, such as *The Ten Young Birds*, where a mother whips each of her ten children in turn to bring them back to life. *The Ten Young Birds* also contains a song, which is repeated nine times.
Table 8-9: Speaker variation in distribution of intonation contour-types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Old Hag with the Sores (F 30yrs)</th>
<th>The Ten Young Birds (M 50s)</th>
<th>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (F 50s)</th>
<th>The Boy, the Devil &amp; the Tahitian Chestnuts (M 70s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total IUs</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising intonation /</td>
<td>56 (63%)</td>
<td>27 (29%)</td>
<td>23 (18%)</td>
<td>26 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42% of non-song IUs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling intonation \</td>
<td>23 (26%)</td>
<td>14 (15%)</td>
<td>47 (36%)</td>
<td>94 (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(22% of non-songs IUs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing intonation</td>
<td>9 (10%)</td>
<td>15 (16%)</td>
<td>32 (25%)</td>
<td>34 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(23% of non-song IUs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclamation !</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>9 (10%)</td>
<td>27 (21%)</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14% of non-song IUs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27 (29%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Features such as the relative proportion of falling intonation contours and pause length can affect the relative strength and clarity of structural boundaries. For speakers who have a high proportion of falling intonation contours, for example, falling intonation contours are a less reliable sign of prosodic boundary. Whereas if a speaker has a high proportion of rising intonation contours, a falling intonation contour is a strong indication of a boundary.

The speaker who told the story of *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* tends to narrate with relatively long IUs, each with embedded contours, exemplified below.
As exemplified above, the non-final contours are almost invariably rising, and the final contour has a falling contour. This means that there is statistically a higher proportion of IUs with falling intonation contours, meaning that pause length and other indicators of structural breaks become more important in identifying boundaries. This speaker also tends to have a relatively high proportion of exclamation contours, giving the narrations a vibrant tone.

It has been already observed that speakers narrate at different speeds. For some speakers, hesitation plays a relatively large role in determining pause length, so pause length becomes less reliable as a cue to prosodic structure. This occurs in the first third of The Ten Young Birds, exemplified below. It suggests that the speaker has not yet settled in to the process of narration. This speaker also has a high proportion of rising intonation contours, particularly in the first half of the narration. The rising intonation contours and sporadic pause length, reflecting hesitation, tend to obfuscate the prosodic structure.

In the example below, there are several discourse-semantic triggers for structural boundaries, and several morphosyntactic cues. The discourse mode shifts from narrative to speech in IU 11, but the rising intonation contour in IU 10, and the very brief pause suggest that there is no break at that point in the prosodic structure. The longer pause preceding the direct speech appears to be associated with hesitation.
Following the speech, the discourse mode returns to narrative mode. There is a falling intonation contour preceding the clause with the trigger, but again the pause is very brief. However, given there are relatively few falling intonation contours in this narrative, the presence of a falling intonation contour is more strongly associated with a structural boundary.

(45) EXAMPLE: *The Ten Young Birds* (IUs 7-14)

7. .. ale mar te nue han i=van / 
   so man SUB water 3S:POSS 3S:R=go
   
   *Now the man whose dam it was came by.*

8. (0.3) i=ri xini / 
   3S:R=look OBL:3S
   
   *He looked at it,*

9. .. i=leh te: — 
   3S:R=see SUB
   
   *and he saw that*

10. (0.4) ε: ... (0.8) ε nua i=tab na / 
    HES HES water HES 3S:R=empty now
    
    *the dam was now empty.*

11. .. i=v-va /= be: — 
    3S:R=DUP-say but(B)
    
    *He said:*

12. (0.9) a: ^ nue hǝk xan haxa i=ve-i i=tab \ 
    HES water 1S:POSS PRX what 3S:R=CAUS-3S 3S:R=empty
    
    *“My dam! What has caused it to empty?!”*

13. .. i=an i=at druŋ / 
    3S:R=go 3S:R=be hide
    
    *He went and hid.*
Hesitation phenomena and the tendency to have rising intonation contours can individually and collectively weaken or obfuscate prosodic boundaries. Strength of boundaries can vary between speakers for other stylistic reasons. Some speakers, such as the teller of *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*, have a fluid, discursive style, with complex IUs and relatively few strong boundaries, as one sequence bleeds into the next. Others, such as the teller of *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, have a lean style, with simple IUs and clearly delineated sequences. The statistics for these two examples, representing the poles of the range of styles, are shown in table 8-10.

**Table 8-10**: Number of boundaries in two narrations with different speaker styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</th>
<th>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of strong boundaries</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of weak boundaries</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of narration (IUs)</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of narration (mins)</td>
<td>6m 28s</td>
<td>5m 24s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speakers also differ to the extent that they use discourse markers. The most frequently occurring discourse marker is *ale*, but there is a large range of distribution across the ten texts. The table below shows that the *Tahitian Chestnuts* text has the most *ales*, with 37, and *The Old Hag with the Sores* has the least, with no instances at all. The other discourse markers found in the texts are less frequently occurring, and speakers differ in the extent to which they choose to use them, as shown in table 8-11.
Table 8-11: Distribution of the discourse markers in the ten texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of IUs</th>
<th>ale</th>
<th>idla</th>
<th>rente</th>
<th>inev</th>
<th>Clause-initial na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tahitian Chestnuts</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Fox</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake &amp; Coconut</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Birds</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl with Sores</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Dog</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordyline woman</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Planks</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Ant</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Hag with Sores</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1304</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We saw above that transition clauses increase text cohesion by referring back to the events and participants in the previous paragraph. The frequency of transition clauses also differs between narrations. The narrator of *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* often uses transition clauses to link adjacent paragraphs. Out of 36 paragraphs, a third of them began with one or more transition clauses. This contrasts with *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, which only had six transition clauses in its 42 paragraphs, as shown in table 8-12.

Table 8-12: Distribution of transition clauses in texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of paragraphs</th>
<th>No. of transition clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Five Brother and the Girl with the Sores</em></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A final note is the degree to which speakers choose to mark minor discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure with structural boundaries. Some speakers choose not to use prosodic boundaries to mark discontinuities such as shifts in focus of character during dialogue if the unit of thematically unified text is relatively small, such as a single line of direct speech. For example, in *The Ten Young Birds*, there are only two instances of direct speech, both monologues, and neither trigger structural boundaries, although they represent shifts in mode from narrative mode to direct discourse and back again. This variation between speakers for minor discourse-semantic discontinuities notwithstanding, each narrative in the corpus reflects the general rules and components of Tirax narrative structure outlined in this chapter.

**8.6 Conclusion**

This chapter was concerned with identifying structural units of Tirax narrative above the level of the sentence. The approach involved isolating the prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic levels of structure in order to determine how the different levels interact in narrative. Prosodic breaks were defined in terms of pause length, one or more downward intonation contours, changes in tempo and voice quality. These prosodic breaks are typically accompanied by one or more morphosyntactic features, including clause-initial discourse markers *na* ‘now’, *inev* ‘after that’ and *ale* ‘so/then’ and the anaphoric marker *idla DEM* ‘like that’. It was found that the strength of structural boundaries varied, and we divided boundaries into two subcategories: strong and weak, determined by the number and degree of prosodic and morphosyntactic features. On this basis we determined that Tirax narrative is comprised of sequences, and sequences are comprised of one or more paragraphs. Sequences are defined as units of oral narrative which are delineated by strong boundaries and which express a thematic unit, or episode. Paragraphs are defined as having at least one weak boundary, except in the case where a sequence is comprised of one paragraph, in which case both boundaries will be strong. The thematic units expressed by paragraphs can be termed *subepisodes*, following Ji (2008).

Having defined structural boundaries in Tirax oral narrative we turned to the discourse-semantic triggers of those boundaries. We found that structural boundaries are triggered by discontinuities in the discourse-semantic structure. The two main
triggers of structural boundaries are shifts in deixis and shifts in discourse mode, defined as the overall function of a passage of text. It was observed that strong structural boundaries typically correspond to major discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure, and weak boundaries typically correspond to minor discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure. Sometimes, minor discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure are associated with strong structural boundaries. This may be the result of the storyteller taking the opportunity of a structural boundary to plan the upcoming section of the narrative.

The major finding of the present chapter was a structural unit which has previously not been identified in the literature: the transition clause. A transition clause is a Descriptive clause which repeats or paraphrases one or more clauses in a preceding paragraph. It is the result of a mismatch between prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic levels of structure. Where there is a mismatch, the prosodic boundary typically pre-empt the shift in discourse-semantic structure. Transition clauses retain the discourse-semantic features of the preceding episode or subepisode. They can be regarded as a cohesive device, reflecting textual coherence at places where there are disruptions to the discourse-semantic structure. They can also be used by storytellers to create suspense by delaying an expected shift in discourse-semantic structure, thereby giving prominence to following event. The pattern of use of transition clauses is another example of the dynamic interaction between the conventions of language use and the speakers’ exploitation of those conventions.

The previous chapter explored a tension that exists in Tirax narrative between the opposing needs of descriptive detail and plot momentum. The present chapter has revealed another tension in narrative structure, between the opposing forces of textual integrity, and discontinuity. As observed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) in their seminal work, textual integrity, reflected in cohesive ties between elements, appears to be fundamental to narrative comprehension. Equally, breaks in the narrative are likely to be necessary for narrative comprehension and processing. We have seen that structural boundaries in the Tirax narratives are triggered by discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure. Since long passages of narrative are also broken down into smaller components when there are only subtle shifts in discourse-semantic structure, it appears that structural breaks are important in helping hearers process the
narrative and build a discourse-model. These findings for Tirax may reflect universal
organising principles underpinning narrative structure in general, and oral narratives
in oral traditions in particular.

The analysis of the Tirax narratives has also revealed symmetries between different
levels of structure. The *functional clause-types* identified in the previous chapter have
counterparts at the level of the paragraph, called here *discourse modes*, which are
involved in structuring Tirax narrative. Similarly, *transition clauses* are a paragraph
level phenomenon which function similarly to the way *tail-head linkage* and other
clause iteration devices function at the level of morphosyntax.

For the present work I used a methodology for analysing the different levels of
narrative structure in order to describe their interaction. Using a holistic approach,
that is, studying prosodic, morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic levels of structure,
revealed structural features, referred to here as *transition clauses*, which would
otherwise have been obscured. Future work on the narratives of other cultures using
this approach could determine whether transition clauses are common to the
narratives of oral traditions, or to Oceanic languages, or whether they are peculiar to
Tirax.
9 Reference tracking in Tirax narrative

In the previous two chapters we have looked at narrative structure from two perspectives: grounding, or the narrative function of clauses, and narrative constituent structure. Both these aspects of narrative have been linked to the speaker’s choice of referring expression (eg. Du Bois 1980, Fox 1987, Hooper 1998, Ballantyne 2005, Nagaya 2006). The present chapter gives an account of the patterns of distribution of anaphoric referring expressions in the ten Tirax narratives listed in Appendix V, looking at narrative structure and other factors, such as topicality, animacy and deictic shift, which have been found to be associated with patterns of anaphora in the world’s languages.

9.1 Background

One of the fundamental tasks facing speakers is to ensure that hearers are able to identify the entities being talked about. All languages have a set of referring expressions that speakers select from each time they refer to an entity in their discourse. There is a vast literature on reference tracking and discourse cohesion, which has collectively detailed a range of semantic, grammatical, cognitive and discourse-pragmatic factors which can influence a speaker’s choice of referring expression, including Givón (1983, 1992), Ariel (1990), Chafe (1976, 1994), Du Bois (1980), Gundel, Hedberg & Zacharski (1993), Fox (1987, 1996), Stirling (1993, 2001, 2008), Huang (2000), and Zubin and Hewitt (1995). One of the most well known factors influencing the choice of referring expression is the topicality of the referent, which roughly equates to its frequency of occurrence in a text, and reflects both its accessibility to the hearer and its thematic importance (Givón 1981, 1983, 1992). The accessibility of a referent is understood to mean the degree of prominence the speaker assumes the entity to have in the mind of the listener.

Givón (1983) proposes a means of measuring the topicality of an entity by looking at the number and pattern of mentions of that entity in the text. For any referring expression, the topicality of the referent is reflected by how recently it has been talked about and how often it is encountered in the upcoming text. There are three indicators
of topicality: the number of clauses since the previous mention (*Lookback*), the number of adjacent clauses immediately following the mention in which a token for the same referent appears (*Persistence*), and whether there is competition for the role of antecedent (*Ambiguity, or Potential Interference*). High topicality is indicated by a low figure for *Lookback* and a high figure for *Persistence*.

It is widely known that languages differ in the set of referring expressions available to speakers, and in the functional range of each of those expressions (eg. Givón 1983, Ariel 1990). However Givón (1983) identifies a universal principle of *iconicity* at work, relating the topicality, or accessibility, of the referent, to the phonological weight and morphosyntactic complexity of the expression used to identify it, such that, the more accessible the referent, the shorter and simpler the expression used to identify it.

Early work in the topicality model of accounting for the distribution of anaphora treats text as a linear stream of clauses, and does not take into account its hierarchical structure. The study of the distribution of anaphora in relation to discourse structure, notably by Fox (1987), and others such as Clancy (1980), Du Bois (1985), and Durie (1988), indicates that in addition to the considerations identified by Givón, heavier and more complex referring expressions can be triggered following structural boundaries, even for otherwise highly accessible referents. That is, the principle of iconicity of form with accessibility does not necessarily hold at structural boundaries in the discourse. Ariel (1990), coming from a cognitive perspective, proposes four factors which contribute to the accessibility of the referent, hence choice of referring expression. The first three correspond to Givón’s measurements of topicality, and a fourth, *Unity*, accounts for the effect of boundaries on choice of referring expressing. The concept of *Unity* applies not just to discourse structure but also to discourse-semantic concepts such as point of view, such that if an antecedent is within the same structural or discourse-semantic unit as the anaphor, a *High Accessibility* marker, such as a zero or dependent pronoun, is more likely to be triggered, and conversely a *Low Accessibility* marker is likely to be triggered if some kind of boundary intervenes between the antecedent and the anaphoric expression (Ariel 1990:28-29).
Other linguists have taken different approaches to the analysis of patterns of distribution of anaphora, adding new insights to the growing body of research. Huang (2000) gives a pragmatic account of anaphora, based on the interaction of ‘neo-Gricean’ maxims of quantity, following Levinson (1995). Zubin and Hewitt (1995) use the principles of Deictic Centre theory in order to explain the patterns of distribution of anaphoric expressions. They propose that deictic shifts, specifically shifts in focus of character, will trigger referring expressions normally associated with less accessible referents. You will recall from the previous chapter that many free NP subjects in Tirax narrative are associated with shifts in focus of character, in line with the predictions of the deictic centre theory. However none of the theories, including Deictic Centre theory, gives a comprehensive account for all the data encountered in Tirax narrative.

The present chapter describes the patterns of distribution of referring expressions in Tirax narrative in light of some of these competing theories of anaphora. The database for the work is ten Tirax narratives given in Appendix V, and listed in table 9-1. This data is augmented with examples from additional narratives where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9-1: Ten Tirax narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Story Clauses (excl dialogue)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of the Snake &amp; Coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy and the Old Hag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ten Birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cordyline Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Ant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section §9.2 summarises the range of referring expressions that are encountered in the ten Tirax narratives. Section §9.3 looks at the interface between narrative structure and the patterns of distribution of anaphora, and shows that free NPs are often associated with shifts in focus of character. The distribution of free pronouns versus lexical NPs versus NP apposition, or ‘double reference’ is discussed in sections §9.4 and §9.5, where the diverse patterns of distribution for the different NP categories are shown to be a reflection of their respective discourse functions. There are some free NPs in the data which are not easily accounted for by any of the prevailing theories, and an examination of the narrative shows that narrative pressures, such as to increase dramatic tension, appear to be influencing the choice of NP category. The role of narrative pressures in the speaker choice of NP is discussed in section §9.6. Section §9.7 then gives a summary and conclusion of the chapter.

9.2 Range of Tirax referring expressions

The range of referring expressions encountered in the ten Tirax narratives is summarised in table 9-2. The term dependent pronoun in table 9-2 is used here to refer to object markers and pronominal subject markers. The italicised categories are not free NPs.

Table 9-2: Range of referring expressions in Resan Tirax

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zero</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP (with modifier)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP (with modifier)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with determiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These reference tracking options available to Tirax speakers are discussed and exemplified in turn below. Proper nouns are also a reference tracking option in Tirax, but are not encountered in these narratives.\(^1\)

The focus of this research is on referential mentions. However zeros, dependent pronouns and bare nouns can be non-referential as well as referential. Non-referential NPs have a different pattern of distribution to referential NPs. In the sentence below, the reduplicated verb is intransitive, and cannot take an object NP if the NP is referential. *Morti haxal ‘a man’*, is always referential, and therefore the sentence is ungrammatical.

\[(1) \quad \text{lidax } \text{xar} \quad \text{i}={\text{xh}}\text{-xh} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{(* morti} \text{hxl)} \end{array} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{dog} & \quad \text{DST} & \text{3S:R=DUP-bite} & \quad \text{man} & \quad \text{INDEF} \\
(\text{The} \text{ dog} \text{ bites (*a man)}. & \end{align*}

However non-referential NPs can follow an intransitive verb. The sentence below is grammatical assuming a non-referential meaning for *morti ‘man’*.

\[(2) \quad \text{lidax } \text{xar} \quad \text{i}={\text{xh}}\text{-xh} \quad \text{morti} \]

\begin{align*}
\text{dog} & \quad \text{DST} & \text{3S:R=DUP-bite} & \quad \text{man} \\
\text{That dog} & \text{ bites people} / \text{*a man}. & \end{align*}

The subject of the present research is referential NPs, and this is the basis for the comments and discussion throughout the chapter.

9.2.1 Zero

Direct objects, but not subjects, can be referred to elliptically. Zeros tend to be used for inanimate entities whose reference is easily recoverable from the text, as in the example below. *Tin ‘cook’* is a transitive verb, and as we saw in chapter 4, transitive verbs in Tirax require an object. However this object is expressed as a zero in the

\(^1\) However, generic animal names in Tirax fables may be tantamount to proper nouns, as discussed in chapter 12.
dialogue below. If the clause were intransitive, the intransitive counterpart to this verb, *tintin* ‘do the cooking’, would appear in place of *tin*. Instead, we have a transitive clause with elliptical reference to the object:

(3) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 91-94)

91. (0.3) mar ȵɛ i=m-mɛx xini tnah \ 
    man DEF 3S:R=DUP-ask OBL devil

    *The fellow asked (the) devil:*

92. (0.2) ^ bɛ bar=tin nmab xan ade ^ ?
    but(B) 2D:1=cook T.chestnut PRX where

    “But whereabouts are we going to cook the chestnuts?”

93. (0.5) tnah i=narxat i=v-va \ 
    devil 3S:R=get.up 3S:R=DUP-say

    *The devil went and replied*

94. (0.2) ^ bar=tin Ø lot hɔk ^ \ 
    2D:1=cook place 1S:POSS

    “We’ll cook (them) at my place.”

We saw in §2.1.5 and §4.1, that the object marker is suppressed with certain grammatical markers, such as perfective *dax*, imperfective *sar* and the negative marker *–te*. In this case, there is no token for the direct object entity, even where the referent is human. The tokens representing the protagonist in the following passage of text are in bold. There is no token in line 154, as the object marker is suppressed due to the presence of the perfective marker *dax*.

(4) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 149-155)

149. (0.6) ale mar ȵɛ: —
    so man DEF

    *Now the fellow,*
he waited until he suddenly heard that they were coming.

When he had finished painting himself with the chestnuts until

he turned black,

and he went and stood right in the entrance of the cave.

And he looked outside.

The devils came and came and came and then

they looked and suddenly saw (him).

They all banged into each other as they (tried to) flee.

This chapter focuses on the patterns of distribution of subject NPs, and subjects cannot be expressed by zeros in Tirax. Whether there is any discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with either the presence or absence of the object marker in VPs where it is grammatically optional is unfortunately beyond the scope of the present work.
9.2.2 Dependent pronouns

We saw in chapter 3 that Tirax has a full set of dependent pronouns for subject function, and a limited set for direct object, marking third person only. Subject dependent pronouns are obligatory and occur with or without a co-referential free NP:

(5) \[(\text{tnah}) \ i=\text{vrak} \ _\text{nmab} \ _\text{n}^\text{ɛ} \]
    devil 3S:S=carry.in.hands Tahitian.chestnuts PART

\textit{(The devil) carried some Tahitian chestnuts (in his hands).}

Dependent object pronouns cannot co-occur with a free NP object:

(6) \[\text{tnah} \ i=\text{vrak}-\text{er} \ (*\text{nmab} \ _\text{n}^\text{ɛ}) \]
    devil 3S:S=carry.in.hands-3P Tahitian.chestnuts PART

\textit{(The) devil carried them (in his hands).}

Dependent pronouns and zeros are the two ways in which a referent can be tracked without using a free NP, and dependent pronouns are the only non-free NP option for subjects. The remaining referent tracking options listed below are all free NPs.

9.2.3 Free pronouns

In chapter 3, we saw that in addition to dependent pronouns, Tirax has a set of free pronouns, which can function as subject, direct object and object of a preposition. Like other free NPs, free pronoun subjects co-occur with dependent pronouns:

(7) \[\text{xain} \ i=\text{vrak} \ _\text{nmab} \ _\text{n}^\text{ɛ} \]
    3S 3S:S=carry.in.hands Tahitian.chestnuts PART

\textit{He carried some Tahitian chestnuts (in his hands).}

9.2.4 Lexical nouns

Lexical nouns can occur as bare nouns, or with a determiner and / or modifiers. The most commonly occurring determiner in narratives is the definite marker \(n^\text{ɛ}\), described in chapter 3. There are several relative clauses in the ten narratives modifying free NPs, and a handful of adjectival modifiers, limited mainly to \(bih\)
‘small’ and tra ‘big, important’. Number is typically not encoded in the NP, although it is optionally encoded with the plural marker xner, or quantifiers, nje ‘some’ and drul ‘all’, or a numeral.

Bare nouns, like all NPs, can stand for singular and non-singular entities. In terms of accessibility (eg. Ariel 1990, Gundel et al 1993), or activation state (eg. Chafe 1994), bare nouns can represent old, new and inferable information, where old and new refer here to information status with respect both to the discourse context and to the hearer’s total knowledge, and inferable, from Prince (1981, 1992) refers to entities whose existence can be deduced from a context or frame established in the discourse. In the passage of text below, the bare noun, nmab, ‘Tahitian Chestnut’, occurs four times. In line 14, it refers to a singular entity that being introduced into the discourse; the bare noun is used to establish this referent in the narrative. Nmab in lines 15 and 17 refer to the same entity, the Tahitian Chestnut tree. Finally, nmab in line 19 refers to the plural entity ‘Tahitian chestnuts’, new to the discourse, but evoked in the text, so the reference is inferable.

(8) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 13-19)

13. (0.9) i=at vɔvɔ-vɔ na: /
    3S:R=be.located DUP-DUR now

    Now he stayed (home) and after a while,

14. (0.4) ren-te nmab i=vu \___
    time-SUB T.chestnut.tree 3S:R=bear.fruit

    (the) Tahitian chestnut tree bore fruit.

15. (0.8) ren-te nmab i=vu //
    time-SUB T.chestnut.tree 3S:R=bear.fruit

    When (the) Tahitian chestnut tree bore fruit,

16. (1.3) ale i=van i=hex xini \___
    then 3S:R=go 3S:R=climb OBL:3S

    he went and climbed up it.
Bare NPs have the widest application of all the NP categories. We saw above that they can encode non-referential NPs, in addition to encoding referents of all degrees of cognitive accessibility. Determiners can encode the information status of a referent; *haxal* encodes ‘new’ and *ŋe* encodes ‘old’, or they can encode distance from speaker, in the case of deictic demonstratives. Determiners are grammatically optional, and their distribution is associated with several discourse-semantic/pragmatic features, such as animacy and prominence. The discourse functions of determiners is discussed in the chapter 10.

9.2.5 Genitive NPs

Entities can be referred to by their relationship to some other entity in the discourse. This is obligatory in the case of kin terms, such as for *nunu har* ‘their mother’, and body parts, as in *naxde he vinbɔ* ‘(the) white’s one’s wings’ or *naxdan* ‘her wings’. The possessor is expressed either as a full NP or a possessive pronoun, as in the two examples given above respectively. There are two sub-categories of Tirax genitive nouns, distinguished on the basis of whether the genitive NP takes a dependent possessive pronoun, such as the first person singular –*k*, or a free possessive pronoun, as in first person singular *hɔk*. The paradigms are given in chapter 3.

We saw in chapter 3, that genitive NPs can occur with an indefinite marker, as in *tuxtuxunmaltxun hɔk haxal* ‘my story’, (gloss: ‘story 1S:POSS INDEF), and a definite marker as in *naxdan ŋe*, ‘her wings’ (gloss: wings-3S:POSS DEF).
9.2.6 Double reference expressions

A fifth reference tracking option encountered in the narratives is what Stirling (2008) refers to as double reference. A double reference construction comprises two nouns or noun phrases in the same clause, both referring to the same entity and in the same grammatical relationship to the verb. The examples of double reference encountered in Tirax almost all involve juxtaposed nouns or NPs, and typically comprise a NP followed by a free pronoun, as in *Tnah ye, xain ivan lanih*, ‘(as for) the devil, he went to the bush’.

The structural analysis of these constructions is beyond the scope of this work, however it can be broadly noted that these constructions could be analysed as either phrase-level phenomena, or clause-level phenomena. The intonation in the example below suggests the double reference expression is a single NP.

(9) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 9-10)

9. (1.5) ntebih net=na ri //
child child=ASSOC FOC

That child of theirs,

10. (0.3) i=ve-ve xair /
3S.R=DUP-want 3p

he wanted (to go with) them.

A suggested tree structure for the above example is given in figure 9-1. Note that this syntactic structure is speculative and has not been tested, for example, by seeing whether any material, such as a relative clause, which typically follows a possessive phrase in the NP, can be interpolated between the nouns.
Figure 9-1: Possible structure of double reference expression in *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*

```
NP
   NP
      N
  ntebih
child
   Poss P
 drip
Foc
neta
child=ASSOC
```

Evidence from intonation patterns suggests that most instances of double reference expressions are actually clause-level phenomena; the juxtaposed NPs typically do not form a single prosodic unit. The most commonly encountered double reference expression involves a subject NP which is in its own sub-IU with rising intonation, followed by a pronoun which is in a sub-IU together with the following VP, as exemplified below.

(10) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IU 11)

11. \text{They went away like this}

   \textbf{tete amu} \quad / = \quad \textbf{xain} \quad \text{telamu} \quad / =
   \text{child} \quad \text{in.front} \quad \text{3S} \quad \text{3S:R=lead}

   \textit{the oldest one, he lead the way}

   \text{tete srɛ} \quad / = \quad \text{i=srɛ-i} \quad / =
   \text{child} \quad \text{following} \quad \text{3P:R=follow-3S}

   \textit{the second born, he followed him, ...}^2

---

^2 The free NP is in its own sub-IU, which I am translating here as a left-dislocated NP.
Stirling (2008) finds the same composition for her Type I double reference expressions in Kala Lagaw Ya, but the order of elements in the discourse of that language is reversed, with a pronoun typically followed by the free NP.

A simple tree structure for the above example is given in figure 9-2. Again this is speculative, and using prosodic evidence for phrase structure boundaries.

**Figure 9.2:** Possible structure of double reference expression in *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*

The discourse function of double-reference is discussed in §9.5.5.

9.2.7 Topic NPs

Topic NP is a discourse-functional category which can be filled by any of the grammatical subcategories of free NP described in the present section, with the exception of double reference expressions, which appear to incorporate a topic NP in their structure, as discussed above, and in §9.5.5. Topic NPs are encountered throughout the Tirax narratives. A topic NP precedes a clause, which relates information about, or relevant to, the NP. In chapter 5 we saw that Tirax has two main types of constructions associated with topic NPs: fronting and topicalisation. Fronting involves a topic NP (or PP) which has a grammatical function within the clause it precedes, while in topicalised sentences, the topic NP has no grammatical function in the clause it precedes. Topics which are fronted NPs have a co-referential marker within the clause in the appropriate grammatical role, either subject marker, object
marker or possessive marker. The topic NP is in its own IU or sub-IU, which distinguishes topics which are also subjects, from non-topic subject NPs.

The following excerpt, coming towards the end of the narrative and describing a homecoming, contrasts a topic NP (line 132), with a subject NP which is part of the clause (line 135). The topic NP nunu han ‘her mother’ is in a clause which is marked as prominent background with the imperfective marker sar. This passage of text cuts back and forth from the mother, who is sweeping underneath a tree, to the flying fox and her children hanging in the tree above.

(11) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 131-135)

131. (0.6) i=dis nŋa dravɔ nɛ /
   3S:R=land LOC tropical.almond DEF

   She (the flying fox) landed on the tropical almond tree

132. (0.5) ren-te nunu han /= i=xes-xesir sar /
   time-SUB mother 3S:POSS 3S:R=DUP-sweep IMPF

   while her mother was sweeping.

133. (0.4) nɛlvɛ dravɔ nɛ \ \n   underneath tropical.almond DEF

   - underneath the tropical almond tree.

134. (1.2) ren-te i=xes-xesir sar i=dla xɔtxan υɔ /= be
   time-SUB 3S:R=DUP-sweep IMPF 3S:R=be.thus DEM DUR but(B)

   While she was sweeping like that for a while, and

135. (2.3) e:nʔnʔʔ? nunu har i=lev ɔ
   HES mother 3P:POSS 3S:R=take HES

   their mother (ie. the flying fox) took a tropical almond fruit

   navŋa dravɔ haxal //
   fruit tropical.almond INDEF

   a tropical almond fruit
Topic NPs are overwhelmingly lexical or genitive NPs; though occasionally pronouns are also encountered as topics.

9.3 Influences on choice of referring expression
The focus of this chapter is the interrelationship of narrative structure and choice of referring expression. Before we look at the influence of narrative structure we briefly discuss two well-documented influences on the choice of referring expression in the world’s languages: information status, and grammatical function, each discussed below.

9.3.1 Information status
Information status, or cognitive accessibility, of a referent is widely observed to influence the form of referring expression (eg. Chafe 1994, Prince 1981, 1992, Ariel 1990, Gundel et al 1993, Du Bois 1980). There have been many approaches to categorising accessibility, or information status, notably Chafe (1976), Gundel et al (1993), Prince (1981), with a revised version in Prince (1992). For the purposes of the present work on the traditional Tirax narratives, the terms *old*, *new* and *inferable*, as defined in §9.2.4 above are satisfactory, since there is no need at this point to distinguish degrees or types of *old* and *new*. For example, there are no unique referents in the data (cf. Prince’s 1982 taxonomy), such as *the sun*, for specific referents which are part of a hearer’s encyclopaedic knowledge (and thus *hearer-old* in Prince’s (1992) terminology), but *new* to the discourse.

Table 9-1 above shows that there is an average of 118 story clauses per narrative, excluding dialogue, and an average of sixty-six free NPs, so that there is approximately one free NP for every two clauses in the ten narratives. Where there are no free NPs, referents are tracked with dependent pronouns or, less commonly, zeros in the case of objects. Of the free NPs, a third are bare nouns, and only a small percentage are free pronouns and double reference expressions. The percentages are given in table 9-3. Note that the NP components which comprise double reference expressions are not included in the independent counts for NPs and free pronouns.
Table 9-3: Number and distribution of free NPs in Tirax narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total free NPs</th>
<th>Free Pronoun</th>
<th>Bare N</th>
<th>Lexical NP</th>
<th>Genitive NP</th>
<th>Double reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just under a third of these 659 free NPs refer to new entities, that is, entities which are being established in the discourse model, and where a free NP is necessary in order to identify the referent. As table 9-4 shows, there are 211 free NPs that refer to new entities.

Table 9-4: Information status and form of referring expression in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total NPs</th>
<th>Free Pronoun</th>
<th>Bare N</th>
<th>Lexical NP</th>
<th>Genitive NP</th>
<th>Double reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of new free NPs</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of old free NPs</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information status of an entity, broadly, old versus new, appears to have some influence over the choice of referring expression. Free pronouns, as expected, are associated exclusively with old information, since their interpretation relies on the previous identification of an entity in the text. Double reference expressions are also strongly associated with old information, with 83% of all double-references representing entities already established in the discourse. Double-reference is discussed below in §9.5.5. A high proportion of all bare nouns refer to entities being established in the discourse, whereas only a third or so of lexical nouns refer to new entities.

3 It is also possible that a pronoun may be used to refer to a discourse-new entity if the referent is identifiable from the context. However this situation does not occur in traditional narratives.
New referents are expressed as free NPs in order for the hearer to be able to identify the entity being talked about and establish it in their discourse-model. However, once a referent is established, there are more economical options for tracking it through the narrative, namely dependent pronouns, and zero, in the case of objects. The focus of the present work is therefore to look at the distribution of markers for old referents, in order to discover the triggers for a free NP.

9.3.2 Grammatical function

Brown (1983) demonstrates that there is correlation of topicality with form of referring expression in English, and that case roles also correlate with topicality indicators, with English genitives found to have the highest topicality, followed by subjects, indirect objects, then direct objects. This suggests there is likely to be a correlation between grammatical function and form of referring expression. Prince (1992) also finds a correlation of grammatical function, specifically subjecthood, and form of referring expression in English. Subjecthood and form of referring expression in the Tirax narratives also appear to co-vary, as indicated in table 9-5. The highlighted boxes indicate a relatively large proportion of the NP category in the grammatical role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total NPs</th>
<th>Free Pronoun</th>
<th>Bare N</th>
<th>Lexical NP</th>
<th>Genitive NP</th>
<th>Double reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of old free NP subjects (main clause)</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of old non-subject NPs / subordinate clause NPs</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of old free NP subjects (main clause) in total old free NPs</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 448 free NPs that refer to discourse-old entities, 186 function as main clause subjects. Table 9-5 shows that the grammatical function of a discourse-old entity...
appears to be associated with the choice of referring expression. Double reference expressions tend to be associated with main clause subjects and bare nouns and genitive NPs tend to be associated with non-subject relations or subordinate clauses. Lexical NPs are evenly divided between subject and non-subject roles, and free pronouns tend to occur more as main clause subjects. The association of referring categories with subjecthood may be direct, or it may fall out from an association of grammatical function to animacy of the referent, as discussed by Prince (1992) for English. Prince shows that animate referents are more likely to occur as subjects than inanimate ones. This holds true for the Tirax data; of the 186 discourse-old free NP subjects, only twenty-four refer to inanimate entities. Since bare nouns tend to be associated with inanimate entities, for example, it is not surprising that only a small proportion of bare NPs occur as subject.

The following study is restricted to main clause subjects in order to control for any direct or indirect effects of grammatical function on the form of referring expression.

9.4 Narrative structure and distribution of free NP subjects

9.4.1 Introduction

Much has been written about the relationship between discourse structure and the distribution of referring expressions, such as Clancy (1980), Fox (1986), (1987) & (1996), Ariel (1990), Zubin and Hewitt (1995), Stirling (2001) and many others. Stirling (1993) gives an overview of the literature on discourse cohesion and observes that it has generally been noted that a discontinuity in time, place, point of view or mood often triggers a referring expression that is associated with first mentions, such as a full NP. The data from Tirax appears on the surface to support this general finding. In the previous chapter it was observed that a paragraph boundary is associated with some kind of discontinuity in the discourse-semantic structure, and that a full NP can also follow a paragraph boundary. Example 14 from chapter 8, repeated below, shows that there is a free subject NP following the paragraph boundary, despite there being no other referents which could potentially interfere with interpreting the reference of a proform, and there being no shift in focus of character.
EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 11-14)

11. (1.5) i=van i=vle nalxah sar xini /

   3S:R=go 3S:R=gather slow IMPF OBL.3

   *She (the old woman) went and was slowly collecting them,*

12. (1.2) i=weš-i \ 

   3S:R=eat-3

   *and eating them.*

13. (2.8) olfala vinadr ɲɛ / = nŋa mæ=nan /

   old.person(B) woman DEF LOC leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

   *The old woman, her legs,*

14. (0.4) ngar i=lonvex nŋa mæ=nan \ 

   sore 3S:R=cover LOC leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

   *there were sores all over her legs.*

This section looks in more depth at the relationship between referring expressions and narrative structure in Tirax. The ten Tirax narratives comprising the database are listed in table 9-6, elaborated from table 9-1 above. The table shows the number of story clauses in each narrative, excluding dialogue, and the number and type of free NPs in each text.
Table 9-6: Number and type of free NPs in each Tirax narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story clauses excl dialogue</th>
<th>Total free NPs</th>
<th>Free Pronoun</th>
<th>Bare N</th>
<th>Lexical NP</th>
<th>Genitive NP</th>
<th>Double reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Snake &amp; the Coconut</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Story of the Little White Flying Fox</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Old Hag with the Sores</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ten Birds</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Dog</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cordyline Woman</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat &amp; Ant</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1177</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.4.2 Paragraph boundaries and deictic shifts

In the ten narratives, approximately 700 discourse-old subjects are expressed as dependent pronouns, and 186 expressed as free NPs. Example 12 above shows that narrative structural boundaries appear to be associated with free NPs. This is in line with the general finding discussed above, that structural boundaries often trigger referring expressions typically associated with discourse-new entities.

Whenever there is a co-occurrence of two phenomena, A and B, in a system, there are several possibilities for logical relationships between the two, the simplest being:

- A causes B
- B causes A
- C causes A and B

The evidence from Tirax suggests that the third option best describes the relationship between structural boundaries and free NPs; a third phenomenon can trigger both of
them. In the previous chapter, we saw that shifts in focus of character can trigger narrative structural boundaries. It appears that a shift in focus of character is also one of the main phenomena associated with free NPs in Tirax narrative, as shown in the example below.

(13) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 51-56)

51. (0.8) ə s=xdrɔ i=dla ɲɛ vvvv-ʊɔ / =
  HES 3P:R=do.over.and.over 3S:R=be.thus DEF DUP-DUR

They did the same thing.

tete tax xain i=teltax \  
child last 3S 3S:R=walk.behind

and then the youngest brother arrived last.

52. (0.4) i=nev / = e xain nes dran / = xain ə: —
  3S:R=finish LIASON 3S fish PC.FOOD.3S:POSS 3S HES

After that, as for him, his fish,

53. (0.2) i=ḥaxal bih bɔ nŋa: — = netur: negvat han ɲɛ \  
  3S:R=one small DIM LOC prong 4.prong.spear 3S:POSS DEF

there was just one small one on the prong of his four-pronged spear.

54. (0.8) i=ḥaxal bih bɔ \ =
  3S:R=one small DIM

Just one small one.

55. i=me vɔ i=sder ɲɔ ʁɔnɔ ṭu ṭu vinaḍr ɲɛ /
  3S:R=come until 3S:R=reach exactly woman DEF

He came right up to the woman.

---

Example 12 above is discussed below in §9.4.3.
In the above example, the NP *vinadr ŋe* ‘the woman’, appears in consecutive clauses (lines 55-6). Neither the topicality approach nor the discourse structure approach as exemplified by Fox (1996) easily account for the form of referring expression for the second mention (line 56); the referent is highly topical and the free NP is not at a paragraph boundary. In line 55, following the paragraph boundary, the free NP, *vinadr ŋe*, occurs as direct object. The likely explanation for the choice of free NP in line 55 is the distance since the previous mention. You will recall from previous chapters that *focus of character* is defined in this work as the character at the deictic centre, and whose point of view is being implicitly represented. There is no shift in focus of character between lines 54 and 55, which straddle the paragraph boundary, and the subject relation is represented by a dependent pronoun; the paragraph boundary does not trigger a free NP for the *youngest brother*. The clause in line 55 is a *transition clause*, defined in chapter 8 as a paragraph-initial clause which retains the discourse-semantic features of the previous paragraph. The shift in discourse-semantic structure actually takes place in the following clause (line 56), where there is a shift in focus of character from the youngest brother to the woman, and this shift is reflected in the *woman* shifting from direct object to subject. The deictic shift triggers a free NP, *vinadr ŋe*. The free NP is associated with the shift in focus of character and not the paragraph boundary itself.

The following example provides further support for free NPs being directly associated with shifts in focus of character rather than structural boundaries. This example comprises four paragraphs of the *Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks*. Here, the focus of character switches from the four older brothers, to the youngest brother and back to the four older brothers. These deictic shifts occur in lines 82, 92 and 97 respectively (arrowed). Each of these shifts in focus of character is associated with a free NP, and each shift is also associated with a paragraph boundary. Lines 82 and 97 are paragraph initial; the free NP occurs in paragraph-initial position. Line 92 follows a transition clause. There is a fourth paragraph boundary, between lines 83 and 84, which is associated with a discontinuity in narrative time. Lines 82-83 relate the
narrative event of the older brothers hearing the youngest brother singing, then line 84 initiates a new timeline for the older brothers, relating their actions before during and after they heard the singing. The paragraph boundary is triggered by a temporal deictic shift, and there is no free NP associated with this boundary.

(14) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks* (IUs 82-97)

82. (3.1) lele han vat-vat si=at laltah /
   brother 3S:POSS DUP-four 3P:R=be at.the.sea

   *His four brothers were at the seaside*

   s=njo dax \ 
   3P:R=hear PERF

   *and they suddenly heard*

83. (2.4) te marbih nc i=kul sar /
   SUB child DEF 3S:R=sing IMPF

   *that the boy was singing.*

84. (2.6) renana xar s=hev nebu ntah /
   at.the.time DST 3P:R=fetch bamboo sea

   *At that time, they had collected the sea-water in the bamboo*

   s=mc sar na \——
   3P:R=come IMPF now

   *and now were coming (back).*

85. (1.1) s=vial vo s=mc /
   3P:R=walk DUR 3P:R=come

   *They walked on until they came*

   s=njo te i=kul sar /
   3P:R=hear SUB 3S:R=sing IMPF

   *and heard the (boy) singing.*
86. (0.5) s=serex drul xini nebu ntah ŋɛ /  
   3P=R=throw all OBL bamboo sea DEF  
   They all threw away the the bamboo waters.

87. (0.8) s=haxra  s=lev nher har /  
   3P=R=grab 3P=R=take spear 3P:POSS  
   They grabbed their spears.

88. (1.1) s=lev netɛ /  
   3P=R=take axe  
   They brought axes.

89. (0.8) s=lev nerid /  
   3P=R=take knife  
   They brought knives.

90. (0.8) s=vir-vir /= s=van ʋɔ /=  
   3P=R=DUP-run 3P=R=go DUR  
   They ran and ran until
   s=sder lain \  
   3P=R=reach home  
   they reached home.

91. (1.2) s=leh marbih ŋɛ na /  
   3P=R=see child DEF now  
   They saw the boy

92. (0.7) marbih ŋɛ i=v=va \—  
   child DEF 3S=R=DUP-say  
   and the boy said

93. (1.0) lahlahvuxvux tra hxal xɔtan \  
   devil big one LOC.DX1  
   “there's a big devil here!”
94. (0.7) keni xas=an laltah / =
   2p 2p:R=go to.the.sea

   “You all went to the sea”

xain i=me — =
   3s 3s:R=come

   “and he came”

tɛ i=ve-ve de=rub xɔnɔ / =
   SUB 3s:R=DUP-want 3s:1=kill 1s

   “because he wanted to kill me”

dε=weɛ xɔnɔ \
   3s:1=eat 1s

   “and eat me.”

95. (0.6) xan xori !
   3s LOC.DX2

   “He's in there.”

96. (1.2) xas=rub-i !
   2p:R=hit-3s

   “Kill him!”

97. (0.9) ale lelε han vat-vat nɛ s=narxat na /
   so brother 3s:POSS DUP-four DEF 3p:R=get.up now

   So now his four brothers got up and

The example above illustrates that the free NPs are associated with shifts of focus of character rather than structural boundaries or interference from other potential referents. As shown in table 9-7, each shift in focus of character is associated with a free NP subject, whereas only some paragraph-initial clauses are associated with free NP subjects.
Table 9-7: Association of free NP subjects with deictic shifts and paragraph boundaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line No.</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>82</th>
<th>84</th>
<th>91</th>
<th>92</th>
<th>97</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free NP subject</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shift in focus of character</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paragraph boundary</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pattern of distribution of anaphora in the above example is accounted for by Zubin and Hewitt’s (1995) deictic centre approach to narrative analysis. This example also illustrates their concept of subordinate clauses as anti-shifters: Zubin and Hewitt propose that subordinate clauses cannot trigger shifts in deictic centre to the time, place or characters referred to in the clause (Zubin & Hewitt 1995:145, 149 & 153). It means that one way a speaker can refer to an entity without that entity ‘pulling focus’, is by expressing it in a subordinate clause. We see above in line 83, that there is a free NP marbih ŋe ‘the boy’ functioning as subject of a subordinate clause. The following clause, which follows a paragraph boundary, retains the older brothers as focus of character, and there is no free NP associated with this boundary, as there is a continuity of character focus over the two paragraphs. If the subordinate clause were not an anti-shifter, then we would expect the mention of the youngest brother in subject relation to trigger a free NP when returning to the four brothers in subject relation.

Another kind of shift that accounts for several instances of free NPs, is a shift in the degree of penetration into a character, discussed in §8.3.2. The example below shows how a free NP is triggered following a paragraph boundary. The trigger for both the NP and the boundary appears to be a shift in the degree of penetration into the character, from an external perspective, to inside the character’s mind.
EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 69-75)

69.  (0.7) marbih  nɛ  i=v-va —
    child  DEF  3S:R=DUP-say

    The boy said

70.  (0.2) məm-^ bar=vrake  bo ^ \n    HES  2D:i=carry.in.hand  DIM

    “We’ll just carry them in our hands.”

71.  (0.3) ale  tnah  i=vrake  nɛ \n    so  devil  3S:R=carry.in.hand  PART

    So the devil carried some,

72.  (0.5) ale: —
    so

    and

73.  (0.2) xain  i=vrake  nɛ \n    3S  3S:R=carry.in.hand  PART

    he himself carried some.

74.  (0.3) ale /
    so

    Now

75.  (0.6) marbih  nɛ / = xain  ø ...(0.3)  vɛ  ren-te  i=ve  i=dla  nɛ /=
     boy  DEF  3S  HES  but  time-SUB  3S:R=do  3S:R=be.thus  DEF

    As for the boy, while he was doing this,

    vɛ  drodroman  han  kle  i=vles  dax \n    but  mind  3S:POSS  too  3S:R=wander  PERF

    he had another idea.
Shifts in focus of character and shifts in degree of penetration into a character can trigger structural boundaries and free NP subjects. If a paragraph boundary is not associated with a deictic shift to do with character, then a free NP is typically not triggered. The following example, repeated from chapter 8, shows two structural boundaries but no shifts in focus of character. There are no free NPs associated with the structural boundaries:

(16) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 110-122)

110. (0.4) ale marbih ŋ i=at \  
    so boy DEF 3S:R=be

    And the boy stayed behind.

111. (0.6) i=delex nadxan \  
    3S:R=light fire

    He lit a fire.

112. (0.3) i=tin o nmab ŋ \  
    3S:R=cook HES chestnut DEF

    He cooked the chestnuts.

113. ^ i=tin i=tin v-v-v-ʋ s=xebu we s=xebu ^ \  
    3S:R=cook 3S:R=cook DUP-DUR 3P:R=burnt so 3P:R=burnt

    He cooked them and cooked them on and on until they were really burnt

114. ^ s=vlxnet ^ \  
    3P:R=turn.black

    and they turned black.

115. (0.6) ale i=narxat na /  
    so 3S:R=get.up now

    So he gets up

116. (0.2) i=lev nmab ŋ ^ i=tve- i=tveh drul xini xain ^ \  
    3S:R=take chestnut DEF HES 3S:R=rub all OBL 3S

    and takes the chestnuts and rubs them all over himself.
117. \( (0.3)^\text{n\text{de}-n} \) xar i=vlxnet drul ^\\  
\( \text{body-3s:poss} \ \ \text{dst} \ \ 3s:r=\text{turn.black} \ \ \text{all} \)  

His body became black all over.

118. \( (0.3) \text{lal mta=nan bih bo i=vuh} \ \\)  
\( \text{inside} \ \text{eye}=\text{assoc.3s:poss} \ \text{small} \ \text{dim} \ \ 3s:r=\text{white} \)  

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

119. (0.8) ale: —  
so  

So,

120. (0.9) i=an na: / = i-  
\( \text{3s:r=go} \ \text{now} \ \text{hes} \)  

now he goes

(0.2) i=tur xɔrɔ neli=na nvat \  
\( \text{3s:r=stand} \ \text{block} \ \text{door}=\text{assoc} \ \text{stone} \)  

and stands in the entrance of the cave.

121. (0.3) i=tur xɔrɔ neli=na nvat na /  
\( \text{3s:r=stand} \ \text{block} \ \text{door}=\text{assoc} \ \text{stone} \ \text{now} \)  

He was standing, blocking the stone doorway

122. (0.2) i=ri me salin \  
\( \text{3s:r=look} \ \text{come} \ \text{outside} \)  

facing outside.

This data poses a challenge for discourse structure approaches to reference tracking, and other hypotheses, such as Ariel’s (1990) *Unity* criterion, which predict that a structural boundary will be associated with a free NP for an entity already established in discourse.
9.4.3 Topics as transitions NPs

Returning to example 12 in this chapter, repeated below, it appears that the free NP *olfala vinadr ye* ‘the old woman’ is associated with a paragraph boundary and not a shift in focus of character. It is true there is a shift in ‘focus’: using the analogy of a camera lens, there is a shift from a *wide shot* of a woman picking up fruit, to a *close-up* of the sores on her legs. This ‘focus shift’ triggers the structural boundary.

However the shift does not account for the free NP *olfala vinadr ye*, which is a topic NP, and the focus of character of the previous paragraph. The form of the free NP that deictic shift theory might predict would be, for example, *male na olfala vinadr ye*, the old woman’s legs’, but not *olfala vinadr ye, nŋa malenan*, ‘(as for) the old woman, on her legs…’.

(17) EXAMPLE: *The Old Hag with the Sores* (IUs 11-14)

11. (1.5) i=van  i=vle  nalxah  sar  xini /
    3S:R=go  3S:R=gather  slow  IMPF  OBL.3

    *She (the old woman) went and was slowly collecting them,*

12. (1.2) i=wɛs-i  \  
    3S:R=eat-3

    *and eating them.*

13. (2.8) olfala  vinadr  ye / = nŋa  male=nan /  
    old.person(B)  woman  DEF  LOC  leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

    *(As for) the old woman, on her legs,*

14. (0.4) ngar  i=lɔŋvɛx  nŋa  male=nan  \  
    sore  3S:R=cover  LOC  leg=ASSOC.3S:POSS

    *there were sores all over her legs.*
One way of understanding the sequence of topics in the above example is as a way of managing information flow. You will recall from chapter 8 that transition clauses, a product of a misalignment of different levels of narrative structure, function as cohesive devices at places of structural discontinuities. Similarly here, the free NP can be understood as functioning as a ‘transition NP’, providing a link between the deixis of the previous paragraph and that of the incoming paragraph. The storyteller guides our inner eye, from the wide shot of the scene, to the woman, to her legs, to the sores, in one smooth transition. It is likely that, rather than choosing a full NP to signal a structural boundary, the speaker is actually choosing the free NP to reduce the impact of the structural boundary, itself already signalled by the prosody.

There are several instances in the data of topic NPs in fronted constructions functioning as transition devices. Like transition clauses, which retain the discourse-semantic features of the previous paragraph, transition NPs refer to entities which are the focus of character of the previous paragraph, and which are semantically or thematically connected to the incoming focus of character. The transition NPs links the referent with a possession or body part of that referent, as in the following two examples. In the first example the transition NP is a lexical NP, similar to the above example.

(18) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 27-29)

27. (1.9) ren-te i=vɛr i=dlɛ nɛ / = bɛ:
   time-SUB 3S:R=say 3S:R=be.thus DEF       but(B)
   And as she (the old hag) said this,

28. (1.1) ntebih nɛ / . sɔsɔ vra=nan i=hɡɛ \ chide DEF side DEF ASSOC.3S:POSS DEF
   one of the boy's hands disappeared.

29. (0.4) i=vla lue \ 3S:R=leave away
   It came off.
The following excerpt has a rare example of a free pronoun functioning as transition NP. The only examples of free pronouns functioning as transition NPs or topics is when they are linking the focus of character to a possession or body part.

(19) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 51-54)

51. (0.8) s=xdrɔ i=dla ɲɛ vvvv-vɔ / = HES 3p:r=do.over.and.over 3s:r=be.thus DEF DUP-DUR

They each did the same thing,

tete  tax  xain  i=teltax \ child  last  3s  3s:r=walk.behind

and then the youngest brother arrived last.

52. (0.4) i=nev  e  xain / =  nes  dran / =  xain  ə: — 3s:r=finish LIASON 3s fish PC.FOOD.3s:poss 3s HES

After that, as for him, his fish, it

53. (0.2) i=haxal  bih  bɔ  nŋa: — =  netur: negvat  han  ɲɛ \ 3s:r=one small DIM LOC prong 4.prong.spear 3s:poss DEF

as for his fish, there was just one small one on the prong of his four-pronged spear.

54. (0.8) i=haxal  bih  bɔ \ = 3s:r=one small DIM

Just one small one.

The concept of transition NPs neatly accounts for topicalisation in Tirax, defined in §5.7.2, whereby an NP precedes a clause in which it has no grammatical function. Topic NPs in topicalisation constructions are transition NPs functioning as cohesive devices, linking adjacent passages of text. The following example is repeated from chapter 5. It shows how the topicalised NP kelkel ‘exchange’, is the common theme linking the adjacent paragraphs.
(20) EXAMPLE: *A Personal History* (IUs 91-95)

91. (1.0) ale / … (0.5) vivni lele - vivni tata he M xner /
    so sister brother sister father POSS M P

    So the sister of M’s father

92. (0.4) i=van sxi lele hɔk \ 3S:R=go OBL brother 1S:POSS

    went to (ie. married) my brother.

93. (0.7) ale / = nar=kelkel - r=kelkel / na weri \ 1D:R=have.exchange 3D:R=have.exchange now that.place

    So we swapped - an exchange took place.

94. (0.9) kelkel / …(0.7) renanan xar / … (0.7) s=vol xɔnɔ /
    reciprocal.exchange at.the.time DST 3P:R=buy 1S

    When the exchange took place, they paid for me,

95. … (0.8) r=vol - r=kl-kle bo / … (1.0) a … (1.3) ten paun \ 3P:r=buy 3D:R=DUP-exchange DIM HES ten(B) pound(B)

    the exchange was just for ten pounds.

We can see that the principles of cohesion and managing information flow manifest in similar ways in different aspects of discourse structure. In terms of narrative constituency, these principles manifest as *transition clauses*, and in terms of reference tracking, they manifest as *transition NPs*. It is not clear how current theories of referent tracking would deal with transition NPs. Transition NPs are highly topical, or accessible, having been the focus of character of the previous clause, and yet the form is what Ariel (1990) terms a *Low Accessibility* marker, that is, an NP with a relatively high degree of information value, such as a lexical NP. Both a discourse structure approach and ‘boundary’ approach (cf. Ariel’s 1990 *Unity* criterion), account for the form, but do not account for the fact that the Low Accessibility marker is referring to the focus of character of the *preceding* paragraph, and not the present one. A Deictic Centre approach does not easily account for transition NPs for the same reason, that the shift in ‘Deictic WHO’ which triggers the structural boundary is associated with a
different referent from the one that is the syntactic topic in the paragraph initial-clause. Transition NPs are an interesting discourse phenomenon in Tirax narratives that challenge existing theories of reference tracking.

**Presentative clauses**

Before we turn to a discussion of free NPs and narrative structure, we revisit presentative clauses from a discourse-functional perspective, since presentative clauses are functionally and often structurally similar to topics NPs. We saw in chapter 5, that there are two main ways of introducing the principle characters in a narrative. The first is in a presentative clause, and the second is as a subject NP of the locative existential *at*. The excerpt below shows the main characters introduced into the narrative in a locative-existential clause. They have previously been mentioned as the topic of the story that the storyteller is about to tell in a story-frame preamble (arrowed), so there is no need to have a separate presentative construction to introduce them.

(21) **EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog** (story frame and IUs 1-2)

(0.5) a n=ve da=ver e: ...(0.3) e: kastom storian haxal \  
    HES 1S:R=want 1S:I=say HES HES custom(B) story(B) INDEF  

_I want to tell a custom story._

(0.6) a n=ve naxnel a: - n: n=ve vinadr vɔran=na nven N /  
    HES 1S:R=be woman LINK HES 1S:R=be woman young=ASSOC villageN

_The one about - the one about Cat and Dog._

(0.6) n: n=ve vinadr a: - n: n=ve vinadr vɔran=na nven N /  
    HES 1S:R=be woman LINK HES 1S:R=be woman young=ASSOC villageN

_As a young woman I came from the N group._

(0.5) a n=tur i=me nŋa naxnel — =  
    HES 1S:R=stand 3S:R=come LOC group

_I come from a group_
called the B group.

I would like to tell my story here now.

1. Once,

2. there lived (a) cat and (a) dog.

The alternative way to introduce the main characters is to put them in a presentative clause, as in the following example. This is more common if the topic of the story has not been introduced in a story frame.

(22) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 5-8)

(There was) a man,

(who had) a son.

He and his wife,

they went to the garden.
Presentative clauses in Tirax narrative are often superficially equivalent to topic NPs, and some presentative clauses could be analysed as a specialised case of topic NPs, associated with the introduction of entities into the discourse. In the above example, the prosody suggests a clausal analysis is appropriate. However in the example below, the prosody of the ‘presentative clause’ (arrowed) is identical to that of a topic NP, suggesting the topic analysis could be appropriate:

(23) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 1-7)

1. n=ve da=vər bɔ:
   1S:R=want 1S:I=say DIM

   *I just want to tell*

2. (1.0) m: … (0.4) rea: resan=na: —
   HES HES speech=ASSOC

   *the story of-

3. (0.4) stori \= stori=na: … (0.4) nani \n   story(B) story(B)=ASSOC coconut

   *a story, the of the coconut.

4. (0.6) stori=na nani te: m: —
   story(B)=ASSOC coconut SUB HES

   *The story of the coconut where*

5. (0.6) m: [clears throat]
   HES

6. (0.5) vi- vinadr hxal /
   HES woman INDEF

   *(there was) a woman,*

7. (0.3) m: …(1.1) m: i=ve bɔ: nmat \!
   HES HES 3S:R=be DIM snake

   *she was a snake.*
It was beyond the scope of the present research to test for whether such phenomena as illustrated above are clause-level or phrase level and so further work is needed. The present conclusion is that discourse phenomena such as that in line 6 above are structurally ambiguous, and may be clauses, or just NPs.

9.4.4 Free NPs and structural slots

We now look at the effects of narrative structure on the distribution of free NPs. A third of all discourse-old free NP subjects in the Tirax narratives occur paragraph-initially, following a structural boundary, and are typically associated with a shift in focus of character, described above. Discourse-old free NP subjects also occur in paragraph-medial and final positions. Of the medial discourse-old free NP subjects, just under half occur immediately following transition clauses, again associated with a shift in focus of character, as in lines 91-92 from example 14 above. Transition clauses, defined and discussed in chapter 8, are paragraph-initial clauses that retain the discourse-pragmatic features of the previous paragraph. A transition clause is a coherence device, leading up to a shift in discourse-pragmatic structure, which takes place in the following clause. The non paragraph-initial clause containing the shift in discourse-pragmatic structure is called here a post-transition clause. The distribution of the free NPs across structural categories is given in table 9-8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Paragraph-initial</th>
<th>Post-transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial (not following transition clauses)</th>
<th>Paragraph-final</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of free NP subjects</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of free NP subjects</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all paragraph-initial free NPs and all those following transition clauses are associated with shifts of focus of character, or are transition NPs, as discussed above in §9.4.2 and §9.4.3 respectively. Many of the remaining free NPs can be accounted for by the widely observed tendency for speakers to avoid ambiguity: speakers tend to
choose free NPs to refer to entities in paragraph-medial or -final position where there are other entities mentioned in the same paragraph which could potentially create interference with interpreting the reference. It is particularly common to use free NPs to refer to characters involved in dialogue for example, where free NPs could be understood as being associated with disambiguating reference. In fact, half the paragraph-medial old free NP subjects refer to entities involved in dialogue. Table 9-9 shows a breakdown of paragraph-medial free NP subjects.

**Table 9-9**: Distribution of *old* free NP subjects in paragraph-medial position in Tirax narrative across categories of animacy and ±dialogue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inanimate (engaged in dialogue)</th>
<th>Animate (No dialogue)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of old free NP subjects in paragraph-medial position</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of old free NP subjects in paragraph-medial position</td>
<td>10 / 47 (21%)</td>
<td>24 / 47 (51%)</td>
<td>13 / 47 (28%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can see from table 9-9 that of the free NPs in medial position not involved in dialogue, a little over half of them refer to animate entities and the rest refer to inanimate entities. The following section looks at possible triggers for those free NPs which occur paragraph-medially and paragraph-finally and are not associated with dialogue.

**9.4.5 Paragraph-medial and paragraph-final free NPs**

Potential ambiguity accounts for most, but not all, of the remaining *old* free NP subjects in paragraph-medial and -final position. However, there are often more interesting explanations as to why free NPs are chosen, which are masked by the fact that there is potential ambiguity. You may recall from chapter 8, for example, that a free NP is sometimes triggered paragraph-finally in an *ale*-clause, which sums up or recaps the resulting state of affairs from the events related in the paragraph. There are also other principles which appear to be associated with paragraph-medial and paragraph-final NPs.
One strategy that Tirax speakers use when referring to entities is to highlight a particular character or characters by choosing a free NP, particularly when a character is being singled out from a group. In this case, the paragraph is structured around setting up a group and group activity, and culminates in narrowing the scope of *focus of character* down to a single entity in that group. The clause with the free NP is paragraph-final and is followed by a prosodic structural break. This is exemplified by the first paragraph in the example below. The paragraph begins with establishing that the ten flying fox siblings are swimming in a water hole. Note that the focus of character in the previous paragraph was also the flying foxes, and so a dependent pronoun is used to refer to the flying foxes in the first clause (line 12). When the focus of character is established at the end of a paragraph, and continues across the structural boundary into the following paragraph, a dependent pronoun is used to refer to that entity in the first clause of the following paragraph, as in line 17 exemplified below.

(24) EXAMPLE: *the Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 12-17)

12. s=huv s=huv s=huv vɔɔvɔɔ-ɔɔ / =
   3P:R=swim 3P:R=swim 3P:R=swim DUP-DUR

   *and they swam and swam until*

   s=ŋɔ nalxah //
   3P:R=feel cold

   *they eventually got cold.*

13. (0.5) ale nɛɛ hxal i=mc i=lev i=to naxda-n /
   so ANA.PRO one 3S:R=come 3S:R=take 3S:R=put wings-3S:POSS

   *Then one of them came (out) and got his wings and put them on*

   .. i=xaxad i=vla /
   3S:R=fly 3S:R=go.away

   *and flew away.*
Another one did the same and so on

up till nine.

So just the little white one was still swimming.

She swam and swam and eventually

she got cold.

The narrative goes on to tell of how the white flying fox cannot find her wings. There is another paragraph-final free NP, naxdan ‘her wings’ (line 20). Again, this could be explained by a potential ambiguity, since both vin-bo and naxdan can be subject of the verb sal ‘be lost’ (line 20). However, this paragraph is also structured around a shift in focus of character, from the white flying fox, who is subject of each clause in the paragraph, to her wings, which is promoted to subject of the final clause, after being introduced as object of a previous clause. This shift could also be regarded as a narrowing of focus from vin-bo to her wings, an ‘inalienable’ body part.
EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 17-20)

17.  (0.7)  i=huv  vəvəvə-və: /=
    3S:R=bathe  DUR-DUR

She swam and swam and eventually

i=ŋɔ  nalxah  //
3S:R=feel  cold

she got cold.

18.  (1.8)  i=mɛ  salin  / — =
    3S:R=come  outside

She came out

te  de=van  de=das  xini: naxda-n  //
SUB  3S:I=go  3S:I=search  OBL  wings-3S:POSS

She came out to go and look for her wings

19.  (0.7)  bɛ:  —  ...(0.8)  i=leh  temul  \  
    but(B)  3S:R=see  no.more

But she couldn't see them anymore.

20.  (0.2)  naxda-n  i=sal  \  
    wings-3S:POSS  3S:R=be.lost

The wings were gone.

We have seen that shifts in focus of character are typically associated with paragraph-initial or post-transition clauses. A prop or body part, however, is less likely to be the focus of an entire paragraph, so the shift in focus to the wings does not trigger a new paragraph, in which case there would be a structural boundary before line 20. The shift in focus from the white flying fox to the wings is regarded in this work as a narrowing of focus, from the flying fox and her activities to the prop / body part at the centre of her activity. This strategy for focussing on key props / body parts represents
another way of narrowing focus to body parts, the first way was through transition NPs, discussed above in §9.4.3. In the case of transition NPs, the key prop or body part is associated with a new paragraph, and the transition NPs links the incoming topic with the previous topic.

The above examples from the Story of the Little White Flying Fox show that although the distribution of free NPs can be explained by potential ambiguity, this explanation misses a generalisation about how paragraphs can be structured around the narrowing of focus of character at the end of a paragraph, in order to spotlight a main character in a group of entities, or a body part or key prop.

9.4.6 Pragmatics: economy versus clarity

We have seen several triggers for free NPs, including shifts in focus of character, narrowing of focus and potential ambiguity. Potential ambiguity can also be present when there are other discourse-semantic triggers for free NPs, such as a narrowing of focus. However none of the phenomena described in the previous sections automatically trigger free NPs in Tirax narrative. The example below contains five shifts in focus of character which do not trigger free NPs, despite there also being the potential of ambiguity of reference in this passage of text. The shifts in focus of character are indicated by arrows.

(26) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the girl with the Sores (IUs 55-68)

55. (0.3) vinadr ɲɛ i=v-va: — \nwoman DEF 3S:"=say

(And) the woman said

56. (0.8) ^ ba=lev /= \n2S:"=take /HES 1S:"=beg.for

"Will you give – I begged for..."

57. ^ lele ham xner xar s=telamu xar ^ /
brother 2S:POSS PL DST 3P:"=lead DST

"Your brothers there have all come by already."
58. (0.9) {\text{x}n\text{\textbackslash}o} {\text{n=\text{\textbackslash}o}n} {\text{nes} dr\text{\textbackslash}ar} {\text{v\textbackslash\textbackslash}o-v\text{\textbackslash\textbackslash}} / =  \\
1S 1S:R=beg.\text{\textbackslash}\text{for} fish 3P.\text{POSS.}\text{FOOD} DUP-DUR \\

\text{“I begged and begged them for their fish,”}

\text{\textbackslash}^\text{i=\text{\textbackslash}\text{hge}} k-\text{kah} ^\text{/ —}  \\
3S:R=\text{not} DUP-\text{EMPH}

\text{“but they absolutely refused.”}

59. (0.6) {\text{x}n:\text{\textbackslash}x} {\text{x=dram-\text{\textbackslash}\text{t}}} {\text{xin(i)}} {\text{nes} dram} {\text{xar} a ^\text{\textbackslash!}}  \\
2S 2S:R=\text{agree-NEG} OBL.3S fish PC.\text{FOOD}.2S:POSS DST Q \\

\text{“As for you, will you not agree to it or what?”}

60. (0.7) a i=v-va {\text{\textbackslash}hee' ^\text{\textbackslash!}}  \\
\text{HES} 3S:R=\text{say} yes \\

\text{He (the youngest brother) said “Yes!”}

61. (0.2) {\text{nes} dr\text{\textbackslash}k} xar / =  \\
\text{fish 1S.\text{POSS.}\text{FOOD} DST}

\text{“My fish there, “}

(\text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e} erwan}) da=\text{lev} xini: … (0.4) \text{n\textbackslash{x} a !}  \\
\text{HES HES 1S:1=\text{give} OBL 2S ah}

\text{“I will give it to you, that’s ok!”}

62. (0.5) i=va {\text{n=ve-ve} net-uk vaven xar de=\text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e}\text{\textbackslash\textbackslash}s-i ^\text{\textbackslash\textbackslash} \text{\textbackslash}} }  \\
3S:R=\text{say} 1S:R=DUP-want child-1S:POSS female DST 3S:1=\text{eat-3S}

\text{She (the old woman) said “I’d like my daughter here to eat it (the fish).”}

63. (0.7) ale: i=\text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e} xini } \text{vinadr} \text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e} / =}  \\
so 3S:R=\text{give OBL woman DEF}

\text{So he gave (the fish) to the woman}

i=\text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e} xini net-in vaven \text{\textbackslash{\text{\textbackslash}e} \text{\textbackslash\textbackslash}}}  \\
3S:R=\text{give OBL child-3S:POSS female DEF}

\text{and she gave (it) to her daughter.}
64. (0.8) i=va \quad ^i=nam \quad we \quad i=nam \quad we \quad i=nam \quad txun \quad ^i

\quad 3S:R=say \quad 3S:R=good \quad so \quad 3S:R=good \quad so \quad 3S:R=good \quad very

(The girl’s mother) said “Thank you, thank you so much!”

65. (0.4) \quad ^da \quad x=lev \quad xini \quad x=nom \quad /

\quad MSTK \quad 2S:R=take \quad OBL \quad 1S

“You gave (something) to me.”

66. (0.3) \quad ^da=dram \quad xini(i) \quad net-uk \quad vaven \quad sxi-m \quad ba=uh-i \quad /

\quad 1S:R=allow \quad OBL \quad child-1S:POSS \quad female \quad DAT-2S:POSS \quad 2S:R=take-3S

“I will let you have my daughter to marry.”

67. (1.3) ale: \quad i=dram \quad xini \quad net-in_\quad vaven \quad \eta_\quad sxi \quad tete \quad tax \quad \eta_\quad /

\quad so \quad 3S:R=allow \quad OBL \quad child-3S:POSS \quad female \quad DEF \quad DAT \quad child \quad last \quad DEF

So (the woman) let her daughter (go) with the youngest brother.

68. (0.4) \quad r=vla \quad r=van \quad lain \quad /

\quad 3D:R=go.away \quad 3D:R=go \quad home

The two of them left for home.

Fox (1987) discusses the influence of gender of referents in the selection of pronouns versus lexical nouns, however gender is not distinguished in the Tirax pronominal system, and so I would not expect that the gender of the referents is in anyway disambiguating the reference in the above example.

There is a natural tension in managing information flow, between clarity and economy, neatly summed up in Grice’s maxims of quantity, and used by Huang in his pragmatic approach to the analysis of patterns of distribution of anaphora (Huang 2000). Huang, following Levinson (1995), uses three neo-Gricean principles to account for patterns of distribution of anaphora. These can be expressed as:

- Do not give more information than is needed
- Do not give less information than is needed.
- Do not use a marked expression without reason.
The speaker needs to give enough information for the hearer to be able to identify the referents, but not so much as to burden the hearer with unnecessary detail which would draw undue attention to the referent and inhibit the flow of the story. The more economical the expression the greater the sense of cohesion, with dependent pronouns giving a higher sense of textual cohesion than free NPs.

What constitutes ‘enough information’ depends on many factors. Tirax is a relatively small community and the speakers and hearers know the stories well. Therefore they are likely to need the minimum of information in order to identify the referents. This would explain those instances encountered in the Tirax narratives where a dependent pronoun is used, even when there is a shift in focus of character, or when there is potential ambiguity of reference, or both, as in the example above.

The storyteller constantly makes an assessment of how much information a hearer needs, and if they feel they may have made an incorrect assessment, they may self-correct, as in the example below. In this excerpt, the storyteller moves from the daughter at her new husband’s house, to her mother at home, shifting in both place and focus of character. The deictic shift triggers a paragraph boundary, however, the speaker initially chooses a dependent pronoun to refer to the mother (line 26). She then self-corrects, presumably because she feels the need to clarify the location and speaker, and chooses a free NP to refer to the mother (line 27).

(27) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 24-28)

24. (0.6) m  i=sre  mar  ne  \ 
   hes  3s:r=go.with  man  def

   *She (the girl) went with the man.*

25. (0.8) i=sre  mar  ne  /=  r=van  lot  han  \ 
   3s:r=go.with  man  def  3d:r=go  place  3s:poss

   *She went with the man, and the two of them went to his house.*
26. (0.8) \[ i=\text{v}-\text{va}; \quad \ldots = \]
\[ 3S:R=\text{say} \]

\((The\ mother)\ said\ -\)

27. \[ \ldots \; \text{han} \quad i=\text{at} \quad \text{v}-\text{v} \; / = \]
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{mother} & 3S: \text{POSS} \\
\text{3S:R=be.located} & \text{DUP-DUR}
\end{array}
\]

\(\text{Her mother was waiting at home}\)

\[ i=\text{leh-te} \; ^\_ \quad \ldots \]
\[ 3S:R=\text{see-NEG} \]

\(\text{and couldn't see her.}\)

28. (0.9) \[ i=\text{v}-\text{va} \quad ^\_ \; \text{o; } ^\_ \; ! \]
\[ 3S:R=\text{say} \quad \text{oh} \]

\(\text{She said “Oh!”}\)

The above two examples show that a Tirax storyteller can choose a dependent pronoun to refer to an entity, despite the structural conditions being present which normally trigger free NPs. We will also see in the case study in chapter 11, that dependent pronouns can be used to refer to characters engaged in dialogue, once the pattern of turn-taking is established. The structural conditions explored in this section therefore give the circumstances under which there is a likelihood or potential for a free NP, but not a guarantee. Speakers sometimes choose to move the story forward more quickly by referring to entities with dependent pronouns. This is likely to be enabled by the fact that the stories are well known to the community and the likelihood of confusion of reference is limited. Note however, that while the pragmatic approach is a neat way of explaining the occurrences of dependent pronouns where deictic shift predicts a free NP should occur, there is no independent evidence to support this. The weakness of the approach, is that it can explain all the phenomena related to reference tracking, but has little predictive power.

9.4.7 Use-determines-context and context-determines-use
The pragmatic approach to the occurrence or absence of free NPs appeals to shared knowledge, or more specifically, what the speaker assumes the hearer to already
know. Another way of accounting for dependent pronouns in paragraph-initial or post-transition clauses where a free NP is expected, is that there is some other feature of the text or performance that helps the hearer identify the referent. Fox (1996) observes that there is a dynamic relationship between linguistic form and speaker use: on the one hand, associations between form and meaning are established in language through repeated use and acceptance by a community, and on the other, speakers exploit the conventionalised associations of form and meaning, by using a form to signal the associated meaning. This dynamic relationship is referred to as use-determines-context and context-determines-use.

We have observed that deictic shifts, particularly shifts in focus of character, are associated with structural breaks. It is possible then, that a structural break could be used to signal a deictic shift, and may be a sufficient cue to enable the hearer to interpret the reference of a dependent pronoun. This explanation accounts for the pattern of distribution in anaphora in the following example. There are several shifts in focus of character, between the flying fox and her mother, but free NPs are eschewed in favour of dependent pronouns. The identity of the referents is clear from the structural breaks, signalling predictable shifts in focus of character (arrowed).

(28) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 141-154)

141. (0.2) i=va — =
   38;R=say

   *She (the mother) said*

142. ^^ u ^^!
   oh

   *“Oh!”*

143. (0.2) ^ navηa  dravo xan a: ^ /
   fruit tropical.almond PRX HES

   *“This tropical almond fruit*
144. (0.3) \( ^{na} \) i=leh \( ^{i=sla} \) nax\( ^{\omega} \) nt\( ^{ebih} \) haxal \( ^{^/} \)  
   \( ^{\text{now}} \) 3S:=see 3S:=be.thus face child INDEF  

"looks like a child’s face."

145. (0.4) be \( ^{i=ri} \) van-t\( ^{e} \) linha \( ^{/} \)  
   but(B) 3S:=look go-NEG high  

But she didn’t look up.

146. (0.8) i=nev \( ^{/} = 3S:=\text{finish} \)  

After that,  

\( ^{ale} \) i=bus lxen nav\( ^{\eta} \)a drav\( ^{\omega} \) taweh lxen \( ^{/} \)  
so 3S:=pluck back fruit tropical.almond another back  

she (the flying fox) picked another tropical almond.

147. (0.4) \( ^{i=t\( ^{o} \) \text{n}\( ^{\eta} \)-n nebih tax} \) \( ^{/} = 3S:=\text{put LOC-3S:POSS small.one last} \)  

She put on the last little one

148. (0.2) \( ^{ale} \) i=serex \( ^{^\text{n}\( ^{\eta} \)-\( ^{e} \) kl\( ^{\varepsilon} \) he nunu han \( ^{^/} \) \)  
so 3S:=throw ANA again POSS mother 3S:=POSS  

then she threw it again at her mother.

149. (0.7) \( ^{ale} \) i=an kl\( ^{\varepsilon} \) i=lev nav\( ^{\eta} \)a drav\( ^{\omega} \) \( ^{\eta} \)e \( ^{/} = \)  
so 3S:=go again 3S:=take fruit tropical.almond \( ^{\text{DEF}} \)  

And she (the mother) went again and took the tropical almond fruit

\( ^{i=\text{v-va} - 3S:=\text{say}} \)  

and said:

150. (0.5) \( ^{\text{nax}\( ^{\omega} \) drav\( ^{\omega} \) xan kl\( ^{\varepsilon} \) i=sla bo: n \( ^{^/} \) \) —  
front tropical.almond PRX again 3S:=be.thus DIM HES  

"the front of this tropical almond is just like .."
"this part is just like the first one!"

She made to look up high,

and she saw that

their mother was hanging up there with

in the tropical almond tree.

The excerpt above is from the climax of the narrative. In five of the narratives in the corpus, the climaxes or builds to the climax had dependent pronouns where free NPs would be expected due to ambiguity of reference and shifts in focus of character. This points to the importance of brevity and cohesion leading up to and during dramatic peaks, as a factor influencing choice of marker.

A shift in focus of character also does not trigger a free NP in the following example. Here, there is a shift in discourse mode as well as a shift in focus of character, which together trigger a strong structural boundary. The incoming focus of character, the daughter and youngest brother, are mentioned with formally definite lexical NPs in the preceding clause. The context, and the dual pronoun make it unambiguous who is
being referred to in the post-transition clause (line 68). The strong boundary also helps signal the deictic shift.

(29) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 64-70)

64. (0.8) i=va ^ i=nam we i=nam we i=nam txun ^ !
\[3S:R=say \ 3S:R=good \ so \ 3S:R=good \ so \ 3S:R=good \ very\]

*(The girl’s mother) said “Thank you, thank you so much!”*

65. (0.4) ^ te x=lev xini xno ^ /
\[SUB \ 2S:R=take \ OBL \ 1S\]

“For giving (it) to me,”

66. (0.3) ^ da=dram xin(i) net-uk vaven sxi-m ba=uh-i ^ \ 
\[1S:R=allow \ OBL \ child-1S:POSS \ female \ DAT-2S:POSS \ 2S:I=take-3S\]

“(So) I will let you have my daughter to marry.”

67. (1.3) ale: i=dram xini net-in vaven ng sxi tete tax ng ^ /
\[so \ 3S:R=allow \ OBL \ child-3S:POSS \ female \ DEF \ DAT \ child \ last \ DEF\]

*So (the woman) let her daughter (go) with the youngest brother.*

68. (0.4) r=vla r=van lain / 
\[3D:R=go,away \ 3D:R=go \ home\]

*The two of them left for home.*

69. (0.5) r=van / = ri=at o sar len har o: / 
\[3D:R=go \ 3D:R=be \ HES \ IMPF \ house \ 3P:POSS \ HES\]

*They went and were sitting in their house*

70. (0.3) r=drar sar / 
\[3D:R=chat \ IMPF\]

*and chatting.*

The above two examples illustrate how a speaker can use the conventions of story structure associated with deictic shifts to signal a shift in focus of character, obviating
the need for a free NP for the incoming subject. This option may be exploited by speakers at times where brevity and cohesion are important to the narrative, such as during the build up to and during dramatic peaks.

9.4.8 Discussion and summary
The Tirax data suggests that the selection of a free NP over a dependent pronoun for established entities in subject function is motivated by one or more discourse-semantic triggers. There is a high incidence of free NPs paragraph-initially and immediately following transition clauses. These free NPs appear to be triggered by deictic shifts, rather than structural boundaries, contrary to the tenets of a discourse structure approach. The deictic shifts which can trigger free NPs are focus of character, degree of penetration and narrowing of focus. We saw in the previous chapter that deictic shifts are also a principle trigger of structural boundaries; the incidence of free NPs following structural boundaries for established referents is likely to be an epiphenomenon.

Potential interference (eg. Givón 1983) or competition from another potential referent (eg. Ariel 1990) can also appear to trigger free NPs. This feature is not associated with any particular structural slot, but can account for free NPs that do not occur at structural boundaries. It is likely that a Deictic Centre approach could also account for these NPs, since the default deictic WHO is taken to be subject (eg. Zubin and Hewitt 1995), so where there is a change in subject, a free NP is likely to be triggered. We saw in the previous chapter that the focus of character as defined in this work is not equivalent to the deictic WHO, and that structural boundaries in Tirax narrative are associated with shifts in focus of character, but not necessarily shifts in deictic WHO. The triggering of free NP subjects in paragraph-medial and paragraph-final position could be accounted for by shifts in deictic WHO.

There are a number of free NPs, which also occur following structural boundaries, which appear to be associated with textual cohesion and the control of the flow of new information. Syntactically these NPs are topics, and they provide a cohesive tie to a referent in the preceding paragraph. These topic NPs are referred to here as transition NPs and there are two types of constructions associated with them. The first type involves a narrowing of focus, typically from a character to a body part.
belonging to the character. The second type is a topicalisation construction, in which the transition NP has no grammatical function in the following clause(s). This latter construction did not occur in the ten narratives, but in the wider database.

Table 9-10 summarises the discourse-semantic triggers for free NP subjects for established referents in the narratives across the range of structural slots.

**Table 9-10: Narrative structural slots and discourse-semantic triggers for free NPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural slot</th>
<th>Discourse-semantic trigger for free NP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>paragraph-initial</td>
<td>• shift in focus of character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• shift in degree of penetration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• cohesion and topic management across structural boundary:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Transition NP</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• narrowing of focus /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shift in focus of character to prop or body part: <em>Transition NP</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-transition</td>
<td>• shift in focus of character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause</td>
<td>• shift in degree of penetration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paragraph-final</td>
<td>• narrowing of focus /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shift in focus of character to prop or body part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any slot</td>
<td>• ambiguity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, the Tirax data appears to support a Deictic Centre approach to reference tracking over a discourse structural approach, although the Deictic Centre approach does not provide a good account of *transition NPs*. With respect to the *Unity* condition proposed by Ariel (1990), the Tirax data is equivocal. Ariel defines Unity as both a structural and a cognitive concept (1990:29). The Tirax data suggests that cognitive boundaries, that is *episode* boundaries, are more important than textual boundaries, that is *sequence* or *paragraph* boundaries, in triggering free NPs.
The main drawback of a Deictic Centre approach is that it also predicts free NPs where none occur. There are two plausible explanations for unexpected dependent pronouns, and both appeal to a shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer. One explanation is that the absence of free NPs is the result of the interaction of pragmatic principles, such as of clarity and economy (cf. Levinson 1995, Huang 2000). This explanation appeals to a shared world knowledge and knowledge of the stories; free NPs are eschewed when the speaker assumes that the hearer can identify the referents without them. A second explanation, compatible with the pragmatic approach, is that there is a shared knowledge of the language conventions, which means that a hearer can interpret a reference by using features indirectly associated with reference-tracking, such as structural boundaries, which are typically associated with shifts in focus of character. While both these approaches can account for the otherwise unexpected occurrences of dependent pronouns, neither of these approaches predicts when a speaker will opt to go with the minimal referring expression over the free NP. However it is likely that dependent pronouns will be preferred at times where there is an emphasis on momentum and cohesion, such as in the build up to and during dramatic peaks. This appears to be the case in the ten Tirax narratives, but further quantitative work is needed.

9.5 Distribution of free NP categories
We have seen that free NPs are typically associated with shifts in focus. This section looks at other discourse-pragmatic factors that influence the type of NP selected by the speaker.

9.5.1 The Topic continuity approach
We began this chapter with a précis of some of the approaches to explaining patterns of anaphora in discourse. We return now to look at the Topic continuity approach, and its application to the Tirax data.
Referring expressions can be arranged on a hierarchy from least to most lexico-phonological weight, where lexico-phonological weight refers to a combination of semantic-pragmatic information, prosodic weight and phonological length of the expression. Givón (1983) proposes that this scale iconically reflects the topic continuity value, from most continuous to least continuous respectively. This hierarchy is therefore known as the \textit{continuity hierarchy} by followers of Givón’s work, or the \textit{accessibility hierarchy} by cognitivists, such as Gundel et al (1993) and Ariel (1990), since lexico-phonological weight is regarded as an indicator of accessibility of the referent in the mind of the hearer, as assumed by the speaker.

The Tirax referring expressions for subject NPs are represented in figure 9-3. They are arranged on a hierarchy, from least to most lexico-phonological weight. According to the hypothesis, we would expect this hierarchy to also reflect the cognitive accessibility of the referring expressions. Zeros are excluded from the hierarchy, as they are not used to refer to subjects. Lexical and genitive NPs are grouped together here, as the choice between lexical and genitive NPs is not influenced by cognitive or discourse-pragmatic factors but by semantic factors: if an entity is referred to using a non-pronominal NP, a genitive NP will be triggered if the entity is in a relationship to an entity referred to by a NP in the surrounding text, and with a lexical NP if it is not.

\textbf{Figure 9-3:} Information hierarchy for Tirax referring expressions

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}[level 1/.style={level distance=1.7cm, sibling angle=90}]
\node{LEAST LEXICO-PHONOLOGICAL WEIGHT}
    child {node{dependent pronoun}}
    child {node{free pronoun}}
    child {node{lexical / genitive NP}}
    child {node{double reference expression}}
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}[level 1/.style={level distance=1.7cm, sibling angle=90}]
\node{MOST LEXICO-PHONOLOGICAL WEIGHT}
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
A topicality analysis for all ten narratives is beyond the scope of this work, however an analysis of *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, discussed in chapter 11, was performed, loosely following the clause-counting method outlined by Brown (1983). The three indicators used were those prescribed by Givón, of Lookback, Persistence and Potential Interference. The lookback value reflects the average number of clauses between the present and previous mention. The persistence value represents the average number of clauses in which the referent is mentioned following the present clause. The Potential interference value was arrived at by assigning either 1 ‘no ambiguity’, or 2 ‘competing referent in the vicinity’, to each marker. This figure was then averaged for that category of NP. Since free pronouns are not used to introduce entities into discourse, NPs referring to *new* entities were excluded from the count; only *old* main clause subjects were compared. The results are in table 9-11.

Due to the small number of tokens for free pronouns and double reference expressions in the narrative, only tentative conclusions can be drawn. However these results are followed up by a study of the discourse-pragmatic factors associated with referring expressions, which make sense of the findings for the referring categories given in the table.

Table 9-11: Topic continuity indicators for Tirax referring categories in the *Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (old main clause subjects only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Category</th>
<th>No. of tokens</th>
<th>Lookback</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Potential Interference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent pronoun</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Pronoun</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive / Lexical NP</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double reference</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lower the Lookback score, the higher the topicality, since the smaller the gap between the current and previous mentions. Predictably, dependent pronouns had the
lowest lookback score, in line with the prediction of the topicality hierarchy given in figure 9-3. However double reference expressions scored considerably lower than genitive / lexical NPs, despite the fact they are heavier expressions and according to the hierarchy would be expected to have the lowest topicality. The figures for Persistence are also relatively unexpected: free pronouns scored the highest, followed by double reference expressions, with lexical / genitive NPs and dependent pronouns scoring equally lowest, averaging half the persistence of the other categories. The results for lookback and persistence suggest the topicality of double reference expressions is influenced by the free pronoun component. The indicator which most closely reflects the postulated continuity hierarchy is Potential Interference, which shows that amount of coding is a direct indicator of likelihood of ambiguity; the more likely there is another possible referent in the vicinity, the more coding. The order of NP categories for each indicator is given in table 9-12.

**Table 9-12:** Relative topicality of Tirax referring categories in the Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (old main clause subjects only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lookback</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Potential Interference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent pronoun</td>
<td>Free Pronoun</td>
<td>Dependent pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Pronoun</td>
<td>Double reference</td>
<td>Free Pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double reference</td>
<td>Dependent pronoun &amp; Lexical NP</td>
<td>Lexical NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP</td>
<td>Double reference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall results, summarised in figure 9-4, suggest that the topicality of double reference expressions is not directly proportional to lexico-phonological weight, but is influenced by the pronoun component, as mentioned above.

**Figure 9-4:** Range of topicality for NP categories in The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts

Dependent pronouns > Free pronouns > Double reference > Lexical NPs

most topical / accessible ➔ least topical / accessible
The following section looks at another apparent influence on the choice of referring category: discourse structure.

9.5.2 Discourse structure and NP category
There appears to be a correlation between choice of NP and narrative structural slot. The data shows a skewing of free NP categories across narrative structural slots: double reference expressions prefer post-transition slots, free pronouns generally correlate with paragraph-final, and to a lesser extent paragraph-initial slots, and lexical and genitive NPs prefer paragraph-initial slots and occur least frequently in paragraph-final clauses. These results are given in table 9-13.

**Table 9-13**: Distribution of NP categories for *old* subject NPs in ten narratives across narrative structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free pronoun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical / genitive NP</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-Reference</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The skewing across structural slots is even more pronounced when inanimate NPs are excluded from the data. Only lexical or genitive NPs are used for *old* subject NPs referring to inanimate entities in the data, these occur either in medial or final slots, never initial or post-transition. The results for inanimate NPs are given in table 9-14.

**Table 9-14**: Distribution of NP categories for *inanimate* (old) subject NPs across narrative structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical / genitive NP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The adjusted results for NPs referring to characters only across structural slots are given in table 9-15, which shows the obvious skewing of lexical and genitive NPs to paragraph-initial slots.

**Table 9-15:** Distribution of NP categories for *animate* (old) subject NPs across narrative structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free pronoun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical / genitive NP</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-Reference</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In §9.4 we found that the distribution of free NPs across structural slots is motivated by discourse-semantic functions such as shifts in *focus of character*. This skewing across structural slots is therefore likely to reflect the different functions of the respective NP categories.

**Inanimate entities**

The results for inanimate entities suggest that paragraphs are likely to be structured around characters, rather than props. Shifts in focus of character involving inanimate entities do not trigger new paragraphs in the Tirax traditional narratives. This observation is supported by the data for the topicality indicators, *lookback* and *persistence* in the ten narratives. The clause-counting results for the sixteen inanimate NPs in the ten narratives, compared with the results for animate NPs in the *Chestnuts* narrative, shows that inanimate NPs have lower values for both *lookback* and *persistence*. Inanimate NPs do not appear in subject position in Tirax narratives after a gap, but are promoted to subject only after being (re)introduced as non-subjects in a previous clause. As one would expect, inanimate NPs also do not remain at the deictic centre for long, typically mentioned only in the following clause, then the focus of character reverts to the character who was previously at the centre of deixis. The topicality results are given in table 9-16.
Table 9-16: Topic continuity indicators varying with animacy for Tirax lexical /
genitive NPs (old main clause subjects only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animacy of referent for lexical/genitive NP</th>
<th>No. of tokens</th>
<th>Lookback</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animate (in the Chestnuts narrative)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inanimate (in the corpus of ten narratives)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Topicality and discourse structure both appear to have some influence on the
distribution of referring categories in the Tirax narratives. Other major influences on
the choice of referring category appear to be the discourse-pragmatic imperatives of
marking prominence and highlighting focus, and this helps explain the variation in the
results for the individual topicality indicators, seen in §9.5.1, and the structural results
seen in the present section. The relationship of discourse-pragmatic imperatives to
form of referring category is explored in sections §9.5.3, §9.5.4 and §9.5.5 for free
pronouns, lexical / genitive NPs and double reference expressions respectively.

9.5.3 Free pronouns

We saw above that free pronouns are often associated with paragraph-final position.
The distribution of free pronouns across structural categories is repeated in table 9-17.

Table 9-17: Distribution of free pronouns for old NP subjects across narrative
structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free pronoun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL free NPs</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since Tirax has the choice of dependent as well as free pronouns to refer to entities,
speakers can reserve the use of free pronouns for specific discourse-pragmatic
purposes. Mithun (1986) argues that in languages with dependent pronouns, free
pronouns are restricted in function to marking contrastive focus. However the
evidence from Tirax suggests that the free pronouns have several discourse-pragmatic functions. In the excerpt below, the *old woman* is the only referent established in the narrative at this point. The speaker uses a free pronoun to refer to her following a shift in focus back to the woman from her sores. A lexical NP is not needed here, since there is no ambiguity and the woman is highly topical. The pronoun signals the shift of focus, and is not functioning contrastively.

(30) EXAMPLE: *The Old Hag with the Sores* (IUs 13-15)

13. (2.8) olfala vinadr ŋə / = nŋa malɛ=nan /
   
   old.person(B) woman DEF = loc=ASSOC.3s:poss

   *The old woman, her legs*

14. (0.4) ngar i=lonvex nŋa malɛ=nan /
   sore 3s:r=cover loc=ASSOC.3s:poss

   *there were sores all over them.*

15. (2.4) xain ɾdŋəx sar /— =
   3s 3s:r=bend.down IMPF

   *She was bending down*

   te i=lev sar naxtabɔl / =
   sub 3s:r=take IMPF dragon.plum

   *to pick up dragon plums*

   i=wɛs-i /
   3s:r=eat-3s

   *and eat them.*

Free pronouns can simply highlight that the entity referred to is the focus of character; that is, the speaker selects a pronoun to signal to or remind the hearer whose point of view is being represented. In the example below, there is a shift in *focus of character* coinciding with a shift in discourse mode, and a paragraph boundary is triggered. The shift in focus of character typically triggers a free NP. In this case, a free pronoun occurs in the paragraph-initial clause rather than a lexical / genitive NP. It is potentially ambiguous, but the reference is clear from the content.
(31) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Snake and the Coconut* (IUs 8-16)

8. (0.8) \( i \equiv v_e \quad b_o \quad n m a t \quad / = \)

\( 3 s: R = b e \quad D I M \quad s n a k e \)

*She was a snake,*

\( i \equiv k o n \quad n e t = n a n \quad / = \)

\( 3 s: R = s u m m o n \quad c h i l d = A S S O C . 3 s: P O S S \)

*and she called for her daughter*

\( i \equiv v e - v e \quad d e = v a n \quad d e = m e l - m e l e x \quad \backslash \)

\( 3 s: R = D U P - w a n t \quad 3 s: l = g o \quad 3 s: l = D U P - w a s h \)

*and told her to go and do the washing,*

9. (0.7) \( l u a l \quad \backslash \)

*in the river.*

10. (1.0) \( a l e \quad i \equiv v - v a \quad \backslash — = \)

\( s o \quad 3 s: R = s a y \)

*So she said*

11. \( ^ { \wedge } b a \equiv v a n \quad / = \quad b a = m e l - m e l e x \quad ^ { \wedge } / = \)

\( 2 s: l = g o \quad 2 s: l = D U P - w a s h \)

*“Go and do the washing,”*

\( b a = r n o \quad v e v e \quad — \)

\( 2 s: l = h e a r \quad i f \)

*“but if you hear”*

12. (0.3) \( n x a \quad i \equiv m n a s \quad i \equiv m l a s \quad / \)

\( w o o d \quad 3 s: R = c r a c k \quad 3 s: R = b r e a k \)

*“a stick crack and break”*
13. (0.3) ba=ri-te \ 
   2s:i=look-NEG

   "don't you go and look (at what's there)."

-----------------------------------

14. (1.0) ale xain i=an / = i=mel-melex / =
   so 3s 3s:r=go 3s:r=DUP-wash

So she went and did the washing,

i=rọ te nxa i=mlas / =
3s:r=hear SUB wood 3s:r=break

and she heard a stick break,

ve-te i=ri \ 
but-SUB 3s:r=look

but she looked.

15. (0.9) i=ri na / =
   3s:r=look now

She looked

i=leh morti haxal \ 
3s:r=see person INDEF

and she saw a man -

16. (0.3) nner ni haxal \ 
   boy INDEF

a boy.

The following excerpt demonstrates contrastive focus between two referents who are in the one location. The free pronoun occurs in a post-transition clause, and is triggered by a the shift in focus of character, in addition to contrastive focus. Here, the protagonist is a spirit-woman who is now disappearing into the ground after a betrayal by her family. The husband tries in vain to prevent her leaving, but it is the perspective of the woman that the storyteller is reflecting, and she uses the free
pronoun to refer to the woman, underlining her as the focus of character, in contrast to the husband. The free pronoun has prosodic emphasis, being louder and higher pitched than surrounding text.

(32) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Cordyline Woman (IUs 162-164)

162. (0.5) i=van na: / =
    3S:R=go now

   He (the husband) went now,

        i=lev o i=to-to vra-n nŋa bet=nan / = ve \
   3S:R=take HES 3S:R=DUP-put hand-3S:POSS LOC head=ASSOC.3S:POSS but

   and he held onto her head with his hands, but

163. (0.4) o xain i:=vɛr na nŋe / = i=va: \
    HES 3S 3S:R=tell now PART 3S:R=say

   as for her, she just sang now, she sang:

164. (0.5) SONG: natugo lele mamag lele teboŋ raselex
        Natugo brother mamag.herb brother Teboŋ leaf-selex

(traditional song with the names of the two sons)

Shifts in degree of penetration into a character, often triggers free pronouns as opposed to lexical / genitive NPs. It is associated with clauses that relate thoughts or actions to which other characters are not privy, often contrasting with an apparent situation, as in the example below. In the case where a free pronoun is used to evoke a sense of intimacy with the inner life of character, it can occur paragraph-medially:

(33) EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog (IUs 75-76)

165. (0.6) o i=van i=dla ŋe / =
    HES 3S:R=go 3S:R=be.thus DEF

   He (the dog) went off like that,
but although he went off

76. (0.3)  $i=kreh$  $bo$  $nxariv$  $\etae$  $=\begin{cases} 3S:R=\text{deceive} \\ \text{DIM} \\ \text{cat} \\ \text{DEF} \end{cases}$

he was just tricking the cat.

$xain$  $i=van$  $=\begin{cases} 3S \\ 3S:R=\text{go} \end{cases}$  $i=telamu$  $=\begin{cases} 3S:R=\text{go.ahead} \end{cases}$

(What he really did was) he went off, going ahead

$i=van$  $lain$  $=\begin{cases} 3S:R=\text{go} \end{cases}$  home

and went home.

A free pronoun occurs paragraph-finally when there is a return to the focus of character established at the beginning of a sequence after a digression. The example below shows a free pronoun triggered in the conclusion of the paragraph when the focus shifts back to our two main characters as a pair, after a digression involving each of them.

(34) EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog (IUs 19-32)

19. (0.5)  $r=van$  $lain$  $=\begin{cases} 3D:R=\text{go} \end{cases}$  home

The two of them went home.

20.  $r=\text{van}$  $r=\text{kuk}$  $\alpha$:  $\text{nato}$  $\etae$:  $=\begin{cases} 3D:R=\text{go} \\ 3D:R=\text{cook(B)} \\ \text{HES} \\ \text{chicken} \\ \text{DEF} \end{cases}$

They went and cooked the chicken.

21.  $^\wedge r=v\epsilon$  $\text{mumux}$  $\text{lad}$  $\text{xini}$  $=\begin{cases} \nu\omega-\nu\sigma \end{cases}$  $i=\text{nam}$  $\text{lad}$  $=\begin{cases} 3D:R=\text{make} \\ \text{properly} \\ \text{big} \\ \text{OBL}\.3S \\ \text{DUP-DUR} \\ 3S:R=\text{good} \\ \text{big} \end{cases}$

They did it very well until it was really delicious
22. (0.7) a: te der=ɔs-i  
    HES SUB 3D:1=eat-3S
    for them to eat.

23. (0.5) r=van / = r=ve mumux vo i=nam lad ɲe / = ale: /  
    3D:R=go 3D:R=make properly until 3S:r=good big ANA so
    They went and properly made a really nice big stew like that, then

24. (0.4) nxariv i=ver m: i=ver xini lidax / = i=va-va — =  
    cat 3S:R=say HES 3S:R=say OBL dog 3S:R=DUP-say
    (the) cat said to (the) dog he said

      ^ bar=ɔs-i  a ^ !  
    2D:1=eat-3S Q

    “Let's eat, eh?!”

25. (0.4) lidax i=va ^ i=hge vor ^ !  
    dog 3S:R=say 3S:R=not EMPH
    (The) dog said “No way!”

26. (0.4) de=tɔx lebo ! \  
    3S:1=stay first
    “It will rest first!”

27. (0.4) bar=an kle / = bar=drɛl taweh te / =  
    2D:1=go again 2D:1=hunt another SUB
    “Let's go back and hunt another to”

      bar=max-me / = bar=ɔs-i  \  
    2D:1=NEC-come 2D:1=eat-3S

    bring right back and eat!”

28. (0.7) i=van / =  
    3S:R=go
    He went and
covered the chicken properly in the saucepan.

29. (0.6) ηο i=τοξ / HES 3S:R=stay

It stayed (there).

30. (0.6) ο ale: / = xair r=van lanih \ HES so 3P 3D:R=go bush

And the two of them went off to the garden.

31. (0.6) r=van lanih / = r=van a: / — 3D:R=go bush 3D:R=go

They went to the garden, off they went,

32. (0.2) nxariv i=kreh bo lidax / = i=v-va \ — cat 3S:R=deceive DIM dog 3S:R=DUP-say

but the cat tricked the dog, by saying:

So free pronouns are associated with highlighting focus of character, typically reflecting a degree of intimacy with the character in focus. They can be used for shifts in focus of character where the speaker believes there is no potential for ambiguity, in which case they tend to be associated with paragraph-initial positions, and they can be used to mark shifts in degree of penetration for a referent already the focus of character. Free pronouns can also be used to underline which referent is the main focus of character for the sequence with two or more characters, in which case they tend to be associated with paragraph-final position.
9.5.4 Lexical and genitive NPs

The topicality analysis discussed above in §9.5.1 suggests that lexical / genitive NPs are associated with relatively low topicality for main clause subject NPs compared with pronouns and double reference expressions. For animate referents, a lexical / genitive NP is most likely to be chosen when the referent has not been mentioned recently, and / or if it is not going to be mentioned much in the clauses immediately following, and / or if there is another nearby semantically similar referent it could potentially be confused with.

In terms of discourse structure, lexical / genitive NPs are most strongly associated with the paragraph-initial structural slot, where they are associated with shifts in focus of character. The category of lexical and genitive NPs includes bare NPs and NPs with a definite article or other determiner or modifier. The breakdown of the subcategories of lexical / genitive NPs across structural slots is given in table 9-18. In the breakdown, ‘bare’ genitive stands for a genitive NP with possessive marker but no other determiner or modifier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bare lexical NP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP with modifier or quantifier (no article)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bare genitive NP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with other determiner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that NPs with determiners are strongly associated with paragraph-initial slot, whereas bare lexical NPs are associated with medial positions.

The following example, from the *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, shows a definite lexical NP in paragraph-initial position. The new sequence is triggered by a shift in focus of character from a boy to the devil. The devil has not been mentioned for fourteen clauses, and the lexical NP is selected, reflecting the
common sense idea that after a long gap between mentions a lexical NP is required in order to clarify the identity of the referent. The focus of character remains with the devil for another two clauses, then his dialogue is introduced, so the persistence value is 2, which is also roughly the average persistence value for pronouns and double reference expressions in this narrative, as indicated in table 9-11 above.

(35) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 119-124)

119. (0.8) ale: —
so

So,

120. (0.9) i=an na: / = i-
3S:R=go now

*now he went*

(0.2) i=tur xɔɾɔ neli=na nvat \ 3S:R=stand block door=ASSOC stone

*and stood in the entrance of the cave.*

121. (0.3) i=tur xɔɾɔ neli=na nvat na /
3S:R=stand block door=ASSOC stone now

*He stood blocking the stone doorway*

122. (0.2) i=ri me salin \ 3S:R=look come outside

*facing outside.*

123. (0.7) ale tnah ƞe i=van \=
so devil DEF 3S:R=go

*So the devil went off.*

i=van xini xair dr-druenar \ 3S:R=go OBL 3P DUP-others

*He went to (get) the others.*
The above example is an illustration of a shift in focus of character triggering an NP, and the lookback value influencing the selection of NP category, since a high lookback value tends to be associated with lexical NPs. The persistence value however does not appear to be a factor selecting for the NP category, since the persistence value (2) is comparable to that of pronouns and double reference expressions.

Where there are two or more characters involved in dialogue, the persistence value tends to be 1. Lexical / genitive NPs are often used in this case, because of the potential for ambiguity. This is why the persistence value for lexical / genitive NPs is lower than that for pronouns. In many passages with dialogue, there are no boundaries between shifts from one character to the other. In this case, the lexical NP will be associated with medial position. This is exemplified below, with the animal fable Cat and Dog. The text below also illustrates how the main characters in animal fables tend to be represented as bare nouns. There are very weak breaks between turns in the passage below, mainly signalled by the discourse marker ale ‘then’, but the tone of voice and tempo is consistent throughout the passage, cohering the paragraph, which is why the NPs in the arrowed lines are analysed as non-initial.

(36) EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog (IUs 1-6)

1. (0.6) n: i=va-hxal
   HES 3S:R=MULT-one
   Once,

2. (0.6) n: nxariv dx.i lidax ri=at
   HES cat COM dog 3D:R=be

   there lived a cat and a dog.
They lived together on and on, until (one day)

lidax

i=va-va: \ — = ^ bar=telul

lue ! ^

dog

3:S=R=DUP-say

2:D=go.to.garden

away

the dog said “Let's go away to the garden!”

And the cat said “Ok, sure!”

So the dog said “Come on, let's go!”

Some of the lexical / genitive NPs in table 9-17 refer to inanimate entities, which may skew the results. The sixteen inanimate old main clause subjects in the data are represented with bare lexical, bare genitive NPs, and four lexical NPs with definite article. The breakdown for inanimate NPs is given in table 9-19.

**Table 9-19:** Distribution of inanimate lexical and genitive NP subcategories across structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bare lexical NP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP with modifier or quantifier (no article)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bare genitive NP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with other determiner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Excluding the inanimate NPs from the total breakdown gives the results for NPs referring to characters. These results are given in table 9-20. The general skewing across structural slots for the different categories observed in the combined results (table 9-18) is more pronounced in the results for characters alone. There is also a contrast in the results for bare genitive NPs. A third of bare genitive NPs refer to inanimate entities, such as *naxdan* ‘my wings’. While the inanimate bare genitives are strongly associated with medial and final slots, bare genitives referring to characters, such as *vinadr han* ‘his wife’ are strongly associated with initial and post-transition clause slots.

Table 9-20: Distribution of animate lexical and genitive NP subcategories across structural slots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bare lexical NP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP with modifier or quantifier (no article)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bare genitive NP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP with other determiner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definite marking is optional and affects both lexical and genitive NPs, and it appears from this data that its distribution may be influenced by discourse structure. The distribution and discourse-pragmatic function of the definite marker is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

9.5.5 Double reference expressions

Double reference expressions are a marked way of referring to entities, which suggests they are likely to be associated with a discourse prominence of some kind. We saw above that double reference expressions appear to have relatively high topicality compared with lexical NPs, despite their heavy lexico-phonological weight. The small sample in the *Chestnuts* narrative has a lower lookback and higher
persistence than lexical NPs, but the double reference expressions in this text are also associated with higher potential for ambiguity (cf. Stirling’s (2008) findings for double reference expressions in Kala Lagaw Ya narratives).

Virtually all the double reference expressions encountered in the corpus refer to human or anthropomorphised entities, which are typically more topical than inanimate entities. With respect to discourse structure, double reference expressions for old subjects occur most frequently in post-transition slots. This suggests an association with shifts in focus of character, but one that requires a ‘lead time’, accomplished with a transition clause. We saw in chapter 8, that transition clauses have a dramatic function of delaying an expected shift in discourse-semantic structure, therefore giving that shift prominence. Since double reference expressions are associated with post-transition clause slots, they are associated with clauses which are already marked for prominence.

Section §9.2.6 illustrates the two kinds of double reference expressions encountered in the Tirax narratives, summarised below:

- N N or NP NP
- NP Pro

where N stands for lexical or genitive noun. These will be referred to as type I and II respectively. Type II double reference expressions are the most commonly encountered type. They are only encountered in subject position and appear to have a conventionalised discourse-pragmatic function, discussed below. Type I double reference is not frequently encountered and is relatively idiosyncratic in its discourse-pragmatic use.

**Type I double reference**
The type I double reference, comprising two nouns or noun phrases, occurs relatively infrequently. One of the few examples in the corpus *ntebih netna ri* ‘that child of his’ occurs in the *Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*, and is discussed in chapter 11. In that chapter we will see that the complex NP appears to signal the promotion of the referent to the role of protagonist. The other couple of instances of type I double
reference also relate to the promotion or introduction of an important character. In the excerpt below, a girl, who was warned by her mother not to look up if she heard a stick crack, does look up and sees a boy. The boy is referred to with a double reference expression in object position, and so this instance was not included in the data tabled above. Following the paragraph boundary, the boy is promoted to subject, but is represented with a dependent pronoun, contrary to the predictions of both a discourse structure model and the Deictic Centre model of reference tracking. The double reference to the boy in the previous line is enough to signal a switch in focus of character from the girl to himself. This example of double reference involves juxtaposed, independent NPs.

(37) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Snake and the Coconut (IUs 14-17)

14. (1.0) \textit{ale xain i=an} /= \textit{i=mel-melex} /=
\begin{tabular}{ll}
so & 3S  \\
3S:R=go & 3S:R=DUP-wash
\end{tabular}

So she (the snake’s daughter) went and did the washing,

\begin{tabular}{ll}
i=r\textit{ŋɔ te nxa i=mlas} & /=
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
3S:R=hear & SUB & wood & 3S:R=break
\end{tabular}

and she heard a stick break,

\begin{tabular}{ll}
ve-\textit{te} & i=ri \\
but-SUB & 3S:R=look
\end{tabular}

but she looked.

15. (0.9) \textit{i=ri na} /=
\begin{tabular}{ll}
3S:R=look & now
\end{tabular}

She looks

\begin{tabular}{llll}
i=\textit{leh morti hxal} & \textbackslash
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
3S:R=see & person & INDEF
\end{tabular}

and she sees someone,
From the small sample of data, a type I double reference expression in Tirax appears to give prominence to a NP, and is associated with the introduction or promotion of a key character.

**Type II double reference**

The type II double reference expression, comprising a lexical or genitive NP followed by a pronoun is far more frequently encountered than type I. The discourse-pragmatic function of this form appears to be more conventionalised and less idiosyncratic than that of expressions comprising two lexical / genitive nouns or NPs. While virtually all double reference expressions, like pronouns, refer to higher animate entities, type II double reference expressions only occur in subject position. Evidence from intonation suggests that they are mostly associated with topic-comment type constructions. The lexical or genitive NP component is a fronted NP, and there is a co-referential pronoun in the clause proper, as exemplified by the English sentence *A woman, she was waiting on the road with her small daughter.* The lexical / genitive component therefore appears to function as a topic. Free pronouns have been shown to be associated with promoting or underlining focus of character in Tirax, and reflecting a degree of intimacy with the character (§9.5.2 above). If the discourse-pragmatic function of double reference expressions is a combination of the discourse-pragmatic functions of the component NPs, then double reference expressions are likely to have a discourse-pragmatic function of both signalling topic, and underlining focus of character.

An example from §8.4.3, repeated below, shows a type II double reference expression being used for a discourse-new referent. It is used to introduce a new character and put her at the deictic centre as the focus of character. There are four transition clauses
leading up to the introduction of the character. After a digression describing the woman’s daughter, the speaker resumes the narrative and the woman is referred to using a dependent pronoun, in an example of a return pop use of pronoun, following an embedded structural unit (Fox 1986:27ff). The return pop (line 29, arrowed) is enabled by the discourse prominence of the woman, through the choice of a double reference expression (line 24, arrowed).

(38) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 21-9)

21. (0.8) ale: / = ren-te s=lxex lxn dxi-n / =

so time-SUB 3P:R=turn.back back COM-3S:POSS

And when they headed back with them

tete amu i=telamu / child in.front 3S:R=lead

the first one lead the way.

22. (0.5) s=vla s=me / 3P:R=go.away 3P:R=come

They started to come back.

23. (0.5) s=me vvvvvvv-vɔ nja nhal / = ren-te:

3P:R=come DUP-DUR LOC road time-SUB

They walked on and on until they reached the road

24. (0.5) vinadr hxal / = xain i=at nja nhal / =

woman INDEF 3S 3S:R=be LOC road

A woman was standing on the road

dxī net-in vaven bih \ COM child-3S:POSS female small

with her small daughter.

------------------
25. (0.6) net-in vaven bih ɬə te: —
   child-3S:POSS female small DEF SUB

The young daughter of hers who

26. (0.3) i=nxav vvvvvvvv-vo / = i=nxav \ 3S:R=covered.in.sores DUR-DUR 3S:R=covered.in.sores

was completely and utterly covered in sores,

27. (0.5) te r=uh drul temul \ =
   SUB 3IMPShold all no.more

so that there is no longer any place to touch her,

lote ba=uh txun i=hge \ 3S:i=hold very 3S:R=not.be

there was no place you could touch her.

28. (0.3) i=nxav we i=nxav ! \ 3S:R=covered.in.sores so 3S:R=covered.in.sores

She was completely covered in sores.

-----------------------------

dependent pronoun

29. (0.9) am: ale: ... (0.4) tet- i=ɬon na: 3S:R=beg HES HES

Now, she begged for the

nes dre tete amu ɬə \ 3S-F:PC FOOD child first DEF

the oldest brother’s fish.

Table 9-21 is a summary of table 9-5 from §9.3.2, showing the breakdown of grammatical function for the various NP categories. For double reference expressions encountered in the data, the six non-main clause subjects are all subordinate clause subjects. For the free pronouns, the fifteen non-main clause subjects comprise subordinate clause subjects, reflexive objects and only two non-reflexive objects. So free pronouns and double reference expressions have a high affinity with subject
relation. This skewing reflects the discourse function of pronouns and double reference expressions as underlining or highlighting the focus of character, since the focus of character, that is, the character at the deictic centre, is understood to be the subject of the clause.

**Table 9-21:** Distribution of free NP categories in Tirax narrative according to grammatical relation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total NPs</th>
<th>Free Pronoun</th>
<th>Lexical / Genitive NP</th>
<th>Double-reference (type II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of old free NP subjects (main clause)</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of old non-subject NPs / subordinate clause NPs</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of discourse-old free NP subjects (main clause)</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The discourse-pragmatic function of the type II double reference expression appears to partly derive from the discourse-pragmatic function of free pronouns. In the following example, the double reference is associated with a shift in degree of penetration into the character in focus, similarly to the pattern found for free pronouns, described in section §9.5.3. The pronoun in line 73 underlines that it is the boy who is the focus of character for the paragraph. The shift in degree in penetration which triggers the double reference expression (line 74) also triggers a structural boundary. Both the lexical NP and the pronoun which comprise the double reference expression are topicalised, as both are in their own sub IUs and precede the discourse marker *rente* ‘while’. Mentions of *the boy* are in bold, and the double reference is arrowed.
EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 69-76)

69. (0.7) marbih ŋɛ i=v-va —
   child  DEF  i=v-va —
   The boy said

70. (0.2) mɔm-^ bar=vrakɛ  bo ^ \]
   HES  2D:i=carry.in.hand  DIM
   "We'll just carry them in our hands."

71. (0.3) ale  tnah  i=vrakɛ  nŋɛ \]
   so  devil  3S:R=carry.in.hand  PART
   So the devil carried some,

72. (0.5) ale: —
   so
   and

73. (0.2) xain  i=vrakɛ  nŋɛ \]
   3S  3S:R=carry.in.hand  PART
   he himself carried some.

74. (0.3) ale /
   so
   Now

75. (0.6) marbih ŋɛ / =  xain / =  a  ren-ɛ / i=vɛ  i=dla  ŋɛ /
   boy  DEF  3S  HES time-SUB  3S:R=make  3S:R=be.thus DEF
   As for the boy, while he was doing this,

76. (0.3) vɛ drodroman han  klɛ i=vles dax \]
   but  mind  3S:POSS  again  3S:R=wander PERF
   he had another idea.
We will see in the following chapter, that animal fables have a different distribution of NP categories than tales with human protagonists. One point of difference is the distribution of double reference expressions. Double reference expressions in animal fables tend to be associated with narrative clauses or recapitulative at dramatic peaks (cf. Stirling 2008). In the fable *Cat and Ant*, for example, there are four instances of double reference and they occur in narrative clauses at the two dramatic peaks of the narrative. The first, exemplified below, relates the cat chasing a rat, who ducks into a hole. The second relates the rat leaping with pain from the hole after an ant urinated in his eye, and the cat pouncing on him. These dramatic peaks are have other markers of prominence, such as reduplication of the VP, clause reiteration, the perfective marker *dax*, which we saw in chapter 7 is associated with discourse prominence in narrative clauses, and prosodic prominence, with rapid tempo, higher pitch and loudness than surrounding text.

(40) **EXAMPLE: Cat and Ant** (IUs 25-27)

24. (0.8) i=tvë-i  ⟨ !  \\
3S:R=chase-3S

He (the cat) chased it!

25. (0.7) i=tvë-i i=tvë-i i=tvë-i i=tvë-i  \\
3S:R=chase-3S  3S:R=chase-3S  3S:R=chase-3S  3S:R=chase-3S

He chased and chased and chased and chased

\[ i=tvë \quad vvvv-v \quad \text{/} \quad i=\text{van} \quad \text{/} \quad 3S:R=\text{go} \]

and chased on and on he went,

26. (0.3) nxariv-deknali  / =  \etaε  ε  xain  i=leh  dax  a:  \\
rat  DEF  LINK  3S  3S:R=see  PERF  HES

(but) the rat, he suddenly saw ⁵

(0.3) a  nueldrum \   \\
HES  hole

a hole.

27. (0.6) i=leh  dax  nueldrum  hxal  \  \\
3S:R=see  PERF  hole  INDEF

He suddenly saw a hole.

⁵ You may recall from chapter 9, that *dax* is translated as ‘suddenly’, to capture the punctual aspect it gives the clause.
There is no evidence that double reference expressions have this function in Tirax tales with human protagonists.

**Double reference and introducing characters into narrative**

As discussed in chapter 7, it is generally understood that there is a division of labour in narratives between progressing the story on the one hand and introducing characters and providing descriptive detail on the other. It has been found for English that referents tend to be introduced into a narrative in descriptive clauses, but if they are introduced in narrative clauses, there is additional coding of some kind associated with the new referent (Du Bois 1980). Similarly in Tirax, there is a range of discourse strategies for assimilating new referents if those referents are important to the plot and are introduced into narrative clauses. The strategies include rising intonation contours of previous IU, and the syntactic constructions of clause iteration or tail-head linkage, embedded timelines and clause-final *na*. These strategies are listed in table 9-22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Strategy for assimilating new NP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tahitian Chestnuts</td>
<td><em>tnah haxal</em> ‘devil’</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>clause iteration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat and Ant</td>
<td>*mlexu‘ ant’</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>tail-head linkage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake &amp; Coconut</td>
<td><em>morti haxal, nerner haxal</em> ‘boy’</td>
<td>O</td>
<td><strong>double reference</strong>, with second NP in own IU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cordyline Woman</td>
<td><em>vinadr haxal, xain ‘woman’</em></td>
<td>S</td>
<td><strong>double reference</strong> &amp; <em>rente</em>-embedded timeline with the referent at deictic centre, with high persistence of referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Fox</td>
<td>*morti haxal ‘man’</td>
<td>S</td>
<td><em>rente</em>-embedded timeline with the referent at deictic centre, with high persistence of referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Planks</td>
<td><em>lahlahvuxvux haxal ‘devil’</em></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>elongated <em>na</em> and rising intonation anticipating new information and pause preceding token</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Planks</td>
<td><em>valax betnial haxal ‘red-headed bird’</em></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>elongated <em>na</em> and rising intonation anticipating new information and pause preceding token</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So in addition to the discourse-pragmatic features associated with double reference outlined above, double reference is one of a range of strategies which allow a speaker to establish important referents in narrative clauses.

9.6 Narrative pressures and choice of referring expression
Sections §9.4 and §9.5 above outline structural and other discourse features associated with the selection of free NPs in Tirax narratives. Structural considerations are presumably motivated by cognitive requirements, and reflect how a speaker organises information for ease of processing by the hearer. However, there is prosodic and structural evidence to support the common sense notion that choice of referring expression is sometimes motivated by storytelling pressures, such as the desire to create a dramatic effect, to heighten the audience engagement in the story or to underline the point of the story.

The choice between a dependent pronoun versus lexical NP, for example, can have as much to do with the desire to create a dramatic effect, as to do with structural considerations such as distance since last mention, or shifts in focus of character. In the following example, the speaker chooses a lexical NP, netnan bih ‘his small child’, to refer to the boy in line 12. There is no structural boundary preceding the lexical NP, and I would argue there is no shift in focus of character, since the reference to the parents in line 11 is from the boy’s point of view, as possessed nouns, and he is encoded as a possessive pronoun. The lookback value is 1, reflecting the high topicality of the boy. The choice of lexical NP is due to narrative pressures associated with immersing the audience in the story world and creating empathy with the protagonist. The speaker underlines the vulnerability of the boy, who is left alone at home while his parents go out to the garden, with modifier bih ‘small’. In discourse-pragmatic terms, the free NP marks the referent as prominent. All references to the boy are in bold.
The lexical choice can reflect the status of a character or prop at that point in the narrative. We will see in chapter 11 that the choice of lexeme for the protagonist changes from *net* ‘child (belonging to someone)’ to *ntebih* ‘child’ to *marbih* ‘boy’, reflecting an increasing independence of the boy through the course of the narrative. Similarly, the key character of the woman in *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* is introduced as the small daughter of a woman encountered by the brothers on the road back from the sea. The NP used for the first mention of the daughter is *netin vaven bih* ‘her small daughter’. Like the example above, *bih* ‘small’ underlines the girl’s vulnerability, as the mother begs for food to feed her. When the mother allows the youngest brother to take her daughter as his wife, the daughter is then referred to as simply *netin vaven* ‘her daughter’. There is no need to set the girl up as vulnerable at this point, and the adjective *bih* ‘small’ is not used. Later, when the girl uses magic
herbs to protect their lives from the treacherous brothers, she is referred to as *vinadr* (*ge*), ‘(the) woman’. The different lexical items chosen to refer to the same character, reflect her changing role in the story, from *vulnerable daughter* begging for food, to *daughter* given in marriage, to *woman* with knowledge of herbs. Interestingly, the girl is not referred to as *vinadr han* ‘his wife’, but as *vinadr (ge)* ‘(the) woman’, underlining her independent status. This may be because she is not officially the youngest brother’s wife until the marriage is accepted by the brothers, which happens in the final lines of the narrative.

There is considerable redundancy in Tirax narratives with respect to factors influencing the choice of referring expression. The various pragmatic / discourse-semantic / structural pressures outlined in §9.3 often converge, such that most patterns of distribution can be accounted for by one or more triggers, and the effect of narrative pressures is overlooked. For example, we saw in example 25 above, repeated below, that the storyteller chose to use the free NP *naxdan* ‘her wings’ in the final line of a paragraph, and made the observation that the free NP was associated with a shift in focus from the flying fox to the wings, reflected in a shift in grammatical function of *naxdan* from object to subject.

(42) EXAMPLE: *The Story of the Little White Flying Fox* (IUs 17-20)

17.  (0.7) i=huv \(\text{vɔvɔvɔvɔvɔ} : /=\)
\[3S:R=\text{bathe} \text{ DUP-DUR}\]

*She swam and swam and eventually*

\[i=rŋɔ \text{ nalxah} ///\]
\[3S:R=\text{feel} \quad \text{cold}\]

*she got cold.*

18.  (1.8) i=me \(\text{salın} /— =\)
\[3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{outside}\]

*She came out*
She came out to go and look for her wings

But she couldn't see them anymore.

The wings were gone.

There is evidence that the speaker also wanted to create a dramatic effect and signal that the wings have a key role to play in the story. The prosody of this line suggests the speaker is highlighting the fact that the clause relates a significant event: she lowers her voice for lines 19 and 20, and has a relatively long pause preceding the clause with the first mention of her wings. There is additional structural evidence: the clause naxdan isal ‘her wings were gone’ is repeating the information of the previous clause, underlining the fact that the little white flying fox cannot find her wings. It is a form of evaluation (cf. Labov 1972, Polanyi 1987), in this case a clause is repeating information related in another clause, in order to give prominence to an event. So there is prosodic and structural evidence to suggest that the speaker wants to give prominence to the event of the wings being lost. In fact, the following paragraph describes how a man had come along and hidden the wings. He then forces the flying fox to become his wife. When the wings are ultimately found, accidentally by their son, the little white flying fox puts them on and takes her children and flies back to her mother’s home. So the wings play a prominent role in the story. The choice of a free NP in this paragraph-final clause underlines the significance of the wings at this place in the story. It also explains the shift in focus from the flying fox to her wings, itself associated with triggering free NPs, as discussed above (§9.4.5). Narrative considerations underlie the discourse-semantic and structural considerations which are associated with the pattern of distribution of anaphora.
We will see in chapter 11, that narrative pressures include maintaining the hearer’s attention, immersing the hearer in the world of the story, controlling the focus of the hearer’s attention, creating empathy for the protagonist, heightening the drama of the story and ensuring the hearer gets the point of the story. These pressures can influence whether a free NP is used instead of a dependent pronoun, as well as the lexical choice.

9.7 Conclusion
This chapter has been concerned with the discourse-semantic triggers for free NPs and the distribution of NP categories in Tirax narrative. We began by looking at the range of NP categories encountered in the Tirax narratives. We then showed that the distribution of free NP categories is affected by basic information status, that is, the categories of NP are represented in different proportions, depending on whether the referent is being introduced or already established in the narrative. To control for effects of information status, only NPs referring to entities already established in the narrative, ‘old NPs’, were included in the study. We also saw that grammatical function appears to be associated with choice of referring expression, and that it was likely to be an indirect association via animacy, since inanimate entities tend to occur more frequently than animate entities as objects, and inanimate entities are also associated with bare NPs. To control for the effect of grammatical function, the research was restricted to main clause subjects.

We found for Tirax narrative that over half of all old free NP subjects are associated with paragraph-initial or post-transition clause structural slots. Most of these are triggered by shifts of *focus of character* or *degree of penetration*. We identified another discourse-semantic feature of Tirax narrative analogous to the *transition clause*, and that is the *transition NP*. Transition NPs refer to entities which are the focus of character of previous paragraph, and provide a link to the incoming focus of character which is triggering the structural boundary. The trigger for the boundary is a *narrowing of focus* from the character to a body part or possession. Syntactically, transition NPs are topic NPs, and they are associated with two different types of constructions: fronting and topicalisation. Transition NPs are not predicted nor easily accounted for by existing theories of reference tracking.
The remaining free NP subjects in the data are paragraph-medial and -final. These often occur in paragraphs which describe two or more characters taking turns in conversation, and so can be accounted for both by a Deictic Centre approach and by the topicality / accessibility indicator of potential interference, or competition from a semantically similar referent. Other paragraph-final free NPs are associated with narrowing of focus to a prop or body part. Such paragraphs are structured around a group or character and during the course of the paragraph ‘zoom in’ to a member or part of the group or character. Free NPs are also encountered paragraph-finally in result or ‘summing-up’ clauses, introduced by ale ‘so’.

Of the current theories of reference tracking and anaphora, none by itself gives a complete account of the distribution of anaphora in Tirax narrative. Givón’s continuity hypothesis provides some insight into the discourse-pragmatic functions associated with the different NP categories, showing a relationship between amount of coding and distribution for pronoun and lexical / genitive NP categories, but needs to be supplemented by insights related to discourse-semantic structure, animacy, prominence-marking and narrative pressures. The insights from the discourse structure approach exemplified by Fox (eg. 1987, 1996) and others also appear to hold, but on further investigation, the data suggests that it is shifts in focus of character which are triggering both new paragraphs and the free NPs for established referents which are the new centre of deixis. Deictic Centre theory has a lot to contribute to the understanding of the patterns of distribution of anaphora, as well as to narrative structure, discussed in the previous chapter, but does not give a comprehensive account of anaphora in Tirax. Apart from transition clauses, mentioned above, we find that there are other free NPs whose form is not predicted by any prevailing theories, but which can be accounted for by appealing to narrative pressures such as those involved in immersing the hearer in the story-world, increasing empathy with the protagonist and communicating the underlying point of the story or event.

Another issue for Deictic Centre and other approaches is unexpected dependent pronouns. There are insights from Huang (2000) and Fox (1996) which can account for dependent pronouns where deictic shift and potential ambiguity, for example,
predict a free NP. Huang, following Levinson (1995), proposes a pragmatic account of distribution of anaphora, using neo-Gricean principles, and Tirax speakers presumably need less information to interpret reference at those times when a dependent pronoun is triggered. However, there is no independent evidence from Tirax speakers to support this approach at this stage. We can also appeal to Fox’s (1996) hypothesis of context-determines-use versus use-determines-context to explain those instances of dependent pronouns that represent referents promoted to focus of character, where we would expect a free NP. In this case, structural boundaries can be used by the speaker to signal a shift in focus of character, so that the hearer is able to interpret the reference of the dependent pronoun. These two hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, and may together help account for those instances of dependent pronouns where free NPs are otherwise predicted. However without additional evidence to support them, these accounts are danger of explaining everything and predicting nothing. I suggest that another discourse-semantic motivation for the selection of dependent pronouns in positions that normally trigger free NPs is related to narrative imperatives such as to increase momentum. It appears that unexpected dependent pronouns are more likely to occur at builds towards climaxes or during dramatic peaks where there tends to be a greater concentration of narrative clauses. However, this hypothesis needs to be followed up by detailed, quantitative study of the distribution of unexpected dependent pronouns.

In the following chapter we look more closely at the distribution of optional NP markers, in particular, the definite marker, to assess their discourse-pragmatic functions.
10 Optional NP markers

In the previous chapter we saw that old lexical / genitive NPs can be ‘bare’ or marked with a definite article, and that the distribution of bare NPs is markedly different to that of definitely marked NPs in the Tirax narratives. This chapter looks at the distribution of the definite article and other NP markers in more detail.

10.1 Introduction

We saw in chapter 3, that Tirax has a range of grammatical markers that can optionally be used to encode indefiniteness, definiteness and plural number, and a set of demonstrative determiners which help specify the identity of a referent by means of its relative location. The present chapter outlines the pattern of distribution of these markers, and their discourse-pragmatic function.

McGregor (In press) observes that for optional grammatical markers, both or either of the presence and absence of the marker may have significance over and above its grammatical functional. In order to discover if there is a discourse-pragmatic function associated with the presence or absence of Tirax optional NP markers, the patterns of distribution of lexical and genitive NP categories for established referents in the ten narratives were examined. The NP categories contrasted in the study were bare lexical, definite-marked lexical, bare and definite-marked genitive. Interestingly, the distribution of NP categories is influenced by narrative genre: animal fables have a much higher proportion of bare lexical NPs than tales with human protagonists. For this reason, these two genres were studied separately. This study was followed by an examination of the distribution of the indefinite and plural markers. And finally, the patterns of distribution of demonstrative markers were examined to determine their discourse-pragmatic role in Tirax narrative. The definite marker is frequently encountered in the corpus of ten narratives, however the other markers are less frequently encountered, meaning some of the conclusions are more speculative. However all the findings point to a potentially fruitful area for further research with a broader database.
We begin in section §10.2 below with an overview of the semiotics of the distribution of grammatically optional markers, and a summary of the distribution of lexical and genitive NPs. Section §10.3 is the most detailed section. It deals with the distribution of the definite marker, which occurs frequently in the corpus of ten narratives and so lends itself to a detailed analysis. Sections §10.4, §10.5 and §10.6 discuss respectively the indefinite marker, the plural marker and demonstratives, and section §10.7 gives a conclusion.

10.2 Distribution of optional grammatical markers

10.2.1 The semiotics of grammatically optional markers

Free lexical nouns in Tirax can be optionally marked with a marker for ± definiteness: haxal, for indefinite and ŋɛ for definite. The definite marker appears to be associated with old and inferable information, and the indefinite marker with new information. However in Tirax, old, new and inferable entities can carry no marking, giving three formal possibilities for two meanings, that is, old versus new, as shown in table 10-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>new</th>
<th>old / inferable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ marker</td>
<td>nvat haxal</td>
<td>nvat ŋɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘a rock’</td>
<td>‘the rock’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- marker</td>
<td>nvat</td>
<td>nvat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘(a) rock’</td>
<td>‘(the) rock’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

McGregor (In press) explores optionality from the point of view of semiotics, whether the presence or absence of a particular marker has any meaning over and above the marker’s grammatical meaning. McGregor is particularly interested in optional case-marking, but the question he raises is also relevant to optional grammatical categories in Tirax: definite marking, indefinite marking and plural marking.

Optional grammatical marking can be an indicator of semantic, discourse-pragmatic and / or sociolinguistic features. A sociolinguistic study of Tirax grammatical markers is beyond the scope of this work and is not attempted here. The focus of this
research is the possible semantic and/or discourse-pragmatic meanings associated with the definite, indefinite and plural markers.

McGregor (In press) observes that, in cases where marking a grammatical category is optional, either its absence or its presence may have an additional meaning of marking prominence of some kind. McGregor proposes that in languages where the presence of an optional grammatical marker carries additional discourse-pragmatic meaning, the discourse-pragmatic meaning indicated by the marker will be prominent foreground. That is, it will mark prominence in clauses of high semantic transitivity, as defined by Hopper & Thompson (1980), and discussed above in chapter 7. Conversely, in languages where the absence of an optional grammatical marker carries additional discourse-pragmatic meaning, the discourse-pragmatic meaning indicated by the absence of the marker will be prominent background.

Of these global possibilities, McGregor proposes that a language will consistently express one pair of possibilities for a particular grammatical category, giving potentially four types of languages, shown in table 10-2. For languages of type B, for example, the presence of the grammatically optional marker has no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning, but its absence is meaningful. For a type C language there is no discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with either the presence or absence of the grammatically optional marker, and both the presence and absence of the marker carry additional discourse-pragmatic meaning in a postulated type D language.

**Table 10-2**: Four language types, based on discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence or absence of optional markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>marker present</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
<td>no effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>no effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marker absent</td>
<td>no effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>prominent background</td>
<td>no effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>prominent background</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distribution of grammatically optional NP markers in Tirax narratives was examined to determine whether McGregor’s hypotheses held true for Tirax, and if so, to which type did it belong. It was found that definite, indefinite and plural markers in Tirax narrative are associated with a range of discourse-pragmatic meaning, and that the presence or otherwise of discourse-pragmatic meaning is determined by the animacy of the referent.

10.2.2 Continuity and discontinuity of form

This section gives an overview of the patterns of reference tracking in the Tirax narratives, with respect to optional NP marking. There tends to be a continuity of form for genitive NPs, (in)definite lexical NPs and bare nouns in the Tirax narratives, such that:

an entity which is introduced into a narrative as a category x NP will be tracked with a category x NP, whenever a free NP for that entity is triggered, and where category x NP stands for lexical NP, genitive NP and NPs comprising bare nouns.

An entity that is introduced into the narrative as a bare noun, for example, tends to be tracked with a bare noun whenever a free NP is triggered. We can identify five circumstances in which there is a formal discontinuity in repeated mentions. The arrows indicate the discontinuities this chapter is concerned with:

- Indefinite Lexical NP —> definite lexical NP
- Lexical NP —> Genitive NP
- Genitive NP —> Lexical NP
- NP (bare) —> NP with definite marker
- NP with (in)definite marker —> NP (bare)

The most common situation is for a human protagonist to be introduced with a lexical NP marked with indefinite marker haxal, as in vinadr haxal, ‘the woman’. When a free NP is subsequently triggered for the same referent, it is marked with a definite
marker, as in vinadr ye, ‘the woman’; the formal discontinuity associated with indefinite marking to definite marking is entirely related to information status. However as soon as a family member is introduced, or the character gets married or has a child, then the subcategory of NP referring to that character will move from a lexical NP to a genitive one, such as dede har ‘their mother’. Conversely, for some stories, a family is introduced, such as five brothers, then one of the family members, the protagonist, is abandoned. Once the boy or girl is alone and becomes the centre of the story, then he or she is referred to with a lexical NP with definite marker, usually marbih ye, ‘the boy’ or vinadr ye ‘the girl, or woman’. The situation of a referent swapping subcategory due to the presence or absence of family members is an automatic consequence of the story circumstances.

It is the final pair of situations to which the principle of continuity of form applies. In these situations, an entity which is being tracked with a NP with definite marker, is expressed as a free NP without the definite marker, or vice versa. For lexical NPs, human and anthropomorphised entities are typically introduced with an indefinite marker, whereas other entities tend to be introduced as bare NPs: the distribution of the marker is broadly associated with animacy of the referent. The discontinuity of form is associated with some kind of discourse-pragmatic meaning or effect. The following section examines the discourse pragmatic meaning associated with this shifting of NP category in repeated mentions for the same referent.

10.3 The definite article ye
Evidence from related languages suggests that the Tirax definite marker, ye, has historically derived from a demonstrative, but patterns of use in the ten narratives

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1 For ‘man’ and ‘boy’, the referents are established respectively with morti haxal ‘a person, someone’ and ntebih haxal ‘a child’, then tracked with mar ye ‘the man’ and marbih ye ‘the child’, the boy’ respectively. Morti tends to be used in existential sentences, whereas there are no instances of mar in an existential sentence, suggesting morti is preferred for non-referential and non-specific meanings, but once the character is established, mar is used, which is more closely associated with specific identity. Similarly, a child tends to be introduced as ntebih, but as soon as the referent becomes the protagonist he is referred to with marbih. Interestingly ntebih is comprised of nte ‘thing’ and bih ‘small’, compared with marbih, which contains mar ‘man’, as though once the boy acquires an identity he is upgraded from a small thing to a small person. Vinadr ‘woman’ is used in all cases, meaning ‘girl, woman, wife’.
suggest that it has been reanalysed as a definite marker, marking NPs referring to *inferable* entities which are being introduced into the discourse, in addition to marking established ('old') entities. The Tirax definite marker is relatively frequently encountered in the narratives, with almost a third of all non-pronominal hearer-old NPs being marked with *ŋe*, including genitive NPs. In the ten Tirax narratives comprising the database, there are 535 non-pronominal *old* NPs including non-subjects. Of these, 152 NPs carry the definite marker, representing 28% of all old NPs. Most NPs that carry the definite marker are lexical, and a small number are genitive. The breakdown for old entities is given in table 10-3.

**Table 10-3:** Distribution of definite marker across NPs referring to old entities in ten Tirax tales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Bare</th>
<th>Definite marker</th>
<th>% of NPs in the category with definite marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-reference expression</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>535</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not surprising that so few genitive NPs are specifically marked for definiteness, since the definite marker is grammatically redundant for genitive NPs: possessive marking is also an indicator of *old* and *inferable* information status. Definite marking in genitive NPs is discussed below in §10.3.5. Double reference expressions are typically a clause-level category, rather than phrase level category, and themselves comprise lexical and genitive NPs. The pattern of distribution of definite marking for double reference expressions is analysed and discussed in §10.3.7.

The traditional tales that make up the database fall into two main categories: there are seven tales which have human protagonists, and there are three with animal protagonists. The pattern of definite marking in animal fables is slightly different to that in tales with human protagonists, and is discussed separately in §10.3.4. The
distribution of definite-marked NPs in tales with human protagonists is discussed in §10.3.1 below.

10.3.1 Distribution of definite marker in tales with human protagonists

There are 384 non-pronominal NPs in the seven tales with human protagonists. Table 10-4 shows the breakdown of NP subcategories. Lexical and genitive NPs associated with double reference are excluded. The table shows that almost half of lexical NPs in tales with human protagonists carry the definite marker, compared to one in ten genitive NPs.

Table 10-4: Distribution of definite marker across NPs referring to old entities in seven Tirax tales with human protagonists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Definite marker absent</th>
<th>Definite marker present</th>
<th>% with definite marker present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sensitivity of the definite marker to animacy in the seven human tales is shown in table 10-5. As mentioned above, bare nouns tend to be associated with inanimate referents, and lexical NPs with animate referents. Genitive NPs tend to be associated with both animate and inanimate referents, representing largely kin terms and body parts respectively. Animacy refers here specifically to human or anthropomorphised entities.

Table 10-5: Breakdown of feature ±[higher animate] across four subcategories of NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>[+higher animate]</th>
<th>–[higher animate]</th>
<th>% of [+higher animate] entities in category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP (bare)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP with definite marker</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP (bare)</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP with definite marker</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that definite marking varies with both category of NP (lexical versus genitive) and animacy. Forty-one per cent of all lexical and genitive NPs are higher animate. This is also roughly the proportion of [+higher animate] NPs in the bare genitive subcategory, reflecting a relative lack of bias with respect to animacy for this subcategory. The other three subcategories of NP are skewed for animacy: around three quarters of NPs with a definite marker refer to higher animates, whereas a mere 12% of bare lexical NPs do.

Looking at the data from the point of view of choice of referring expressions for higher animate entities, table 10-6 shows that while 83 per cent of [+higher animate] NPs carry a definite marker, only nineteen per cent of –[higher animate] NPs do.

**Table 10-6:** Distribution of definite marker for [+higher animate] versus –[higher animate] lexical NPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Lexical NP (bare)</th>
<th>Lexical NP with definite marker</th>
<th>% of NPs which carry the definite marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[+higher animate] NPs</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- [higher animate] NPs</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Genitive NPs have a much lower incidence of definite marking, likely to be due to the fact that genitive NPs are already formally definite. However the ratio of definite-marked inanimate NPs to definite animates is roughly the same for both NP categories, at 1:4 and 1:5 for lexical and genitive respectively. As shown in table 10-7, twenty per cent of genitive NPs referring to higher animate entities are marked with a definite marker, compared with only four per cent of NPs referring to inanimate entities.

**Table 10-7:** Distribution of definite marker for [+higher animate] versus –[higher animate] genitive NPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Genitive NP (bare)</th>
<th>Genitive NP with definite marker</th>
<th>% of NPs which carry the definite marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[+higher animate] NPs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- [higher animate] NPs</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distribution of definite marking across the subcategories of NP can be tabulated in order of decreasing percentages, as shown in table 10-8.

**Table 10-8:** Distribution of definite marker for +[higher animate] versus –[higher animate] lexical NPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of NPs with definite marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs  + [higher animate]</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs + [higher animate]</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs  – [higher animate]</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs  –[higher animate]</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that it is common for an ‘animate’ lexical NP to carry a definite marker, relatively uncommon for ‘animate’ genitive NPs and ‘inanimate’ lexical NPs to carry a definite marker, and rare for ‘inanimate’ genitive NPs.

I suggest that if a marker is overwhelmingly present for a certain nominal subcategory, then the presence of that marker is not likely to have an effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning but its absence *is* likely to be discourse-pragmatically meaningful for that subcategory. Conversely, if the marker is overwhelmingly absent for a certain subcategory, then the presence of the marker is likely to have a discourse-pragmatic significance over and above its grammatical meaning, but its absence is not likely to have an effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning. Based on McGregor’s (In press) hypothesis, relating presence with prominent foreground and absence with prominent background, the possibilities for a discourse-pragmatic effect of the definite marker in Tirax are illustrated in figure 10-1.

2 The quotes are here to remind the reader that ‘animate’ refers here to human and anthropomorphised entities, such as devils and talking animals, which often occur in tales with human protagonists.
Figure 10-1: Possible discourse-pragmatic effects of definite marking on meaning for four NP subcategories in Tirax

The predictions represented in figure 10-1 are that for lexical NPs which refer to higher animate entities, the presence of the definite marker is likely to have no effect on discourse-pragmatic meaning, whereas the presence of the marker in the other NP subcategories may have discourse-pragmatic effect of marking prominent foreground. Conversely, the absence of the definite marker may have the effect of marking prominent background for ‘animate’ lexical NPs, while the absence of the definite marker on genitive NPs or ‘inanimate’ lexical NPs is likely to have no discourse-pragmatic significance. This hypothesis is represented in table 10-9.

Table 10-9: Predicted discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence / absence of definite marker across different subcategories of NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>definite marker</th>
<th>potential discourse-pragmatic meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs + [higher animate]</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs + [higher animate]</td>
<td>absent</td>
<td>prominent background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs + [higher animate]</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs + [higher animate]</td>
<td>absent</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs – [higher animate]</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NPs – [higher animate]</td>
<td>absent</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs – [higher animate]</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NPs – [higher animate]</td>
<td>absent</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So there is possibly a split-system of discourse-pragmatic function for the definite marker along the lines of animacy and NP category: genitive versus lexical. The predictions made in this section with respect to animacy in lexical NP category are explored in §10.3.2 and §10.3.3 below.

10.3.2 Absence of definite marker in ‘animate’ lexical NPs

We suggested above that, since the definite marker is overwhelmingly present for ‘animate’ lexical NPs in human tales, its absence is likely to be discourse-pragmatically significant. Based on McGregor’s (In press) hypothesis, we predicted that the absence of the definite marker will be associated with marking ‘background prominence’. We saw in chapter 7, that ‘background’ clauses correspond to Descriptive clauses in the present analysis of functional clause-types in Tirax narrative. Therefore we might expect to see bare lexical NPs referring to animate entities confined to Descriptive clauses, with the lack of definite marker conferring discourse prominence. This prediction is explored in the present section.

In the corpus of seven human tales, there are sixteen old ‘animate’ NPs which do not carry a definite marker. Ten of these refer to a devil, and only two refer to a protagonist. The characters associated with bare lexical NPs are given in table 10-10.
Table 10-10: Bare +[higher animate] lexical NPs in the ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical NP</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
<th>Instances of bare lexical NP (grammatical function)</th>
<th>Instances of formally definite NP (grammatical function)</th>
<th>Number of free NP tokens</th>
<th>% of free NP mentions with no definiteness marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mre 'people'</td>
<td>Snake and Coconut</td>
<td>4 (Subject)</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lahlahvuxvux 'devil'</td>
<td>Five planks</td>
<td>3 (Subject)</td>
<td>2 (Subject) 1 (Object)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tnah 'devil'</td>
<td>Tahitian chestnuts</td>
<td>3 (Subject) 2 (IO) 2 (Possessor)</td>
<td>7 (Subject) 1 (IO)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinadr 'woman'</td>
<td>Girl with Sores</td>
<td>1 (Topic, Object)</td>
<td>2 (Subject) 1 (Object) 2 (IO)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marbih 'boy'</td>
<td>Tahitian chestnuts</td>
<td>1 (Subject)</td>
<td>9 (Subject) 1 (Object) 1 x IO</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bare ‘animate’ NPs occur as subjects, object and indirect objects; grammatical function does not appear to be a significant factor in choosing a bare NP over a NP with definite marker. Most of the bare NPs are subjects, but this correlation is not likely to be statistically significant, as the overwhelming majority of NPs that refer to higher animates are subjects. There may be a semantic correlation: human protagonists appear to be less likely to be expressed as a bare lexical NP than devils or other antagonists, as in mre, the village people, who killed the protagonist’s mother by burning her in her sleep. It appears for Tirax that absence of definite marking for ‘animate’ NPs is unexpected, therefore prominent, and is most unexpected for protagonists, but less unexpected for antagonists.

A study of the texts shows that there appear to be some discourse-pragmatic correlations with the absence of definite marking for ‘animate’ NPs. As predicted, bare ‘animate’ NPs tend to occur in Descriptive clauses. In particular, they appear to be associated with contextualising clauses, defined in chapter 7, as clauses which give background information which pre-empts a narrative event.
Seven of the sixteen instances of bare lexical NPs appear in contextualising clauses. Given that contextualising clauses represent a small fraction of the total clauses in the narratives, it suggests there may indeed be an association between background information and an absence of definite marking for higher animate NPs. Bare ‘animate’ NPs also tended to occur in climaxes or builds towards dramatic peaks. The example below shows vinadr, ‘(the) woman’ in a clause giving important background information: the brothers cannot carry out their plan to take or kill the woman, because she has hanged herself. There is another marker of prominence of the NP referring to the woman, vinadr: it is fronted, marking it as topic. However, the focus of character remains with the brothers; they are the grammatical subject and the scene is viewed from their perspective. In the following clause, the free pronoun highlights a shift in focus of character to the woman. This passage of text relates a dramatic peak in the narrative, in that it represents the turning point in fortunes of the protagonists.

(1) EXAMPLE: *The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores* (IUs 103-104)

103. (0.5) s=rub-din-i = i=nev
    3P:R=hit-dead-3S 3S:R=finish

_They finished killing him_

vinadr  s=rub  temul
woman  3P:R=hit  no.more

_(but) they could no longer kill the woman_

te  xain  i=haxra  xini  narit /
SUB  3S  3S:R=knot  OBL  rope

_because she had knotted a rope_

104. (0.4) i=lxɛ  betixdralɛ=na /
    3S:R=tie  throat=ASSOC

_and tied it around her neck_

i=lilix  linha /
3S:R=hang  high

_and hanged herself._
The above example shows that the bare +[higher animate] NP is associated with other features indicating prominent background: the contextualising clause is a kind background clause as it is very low in semantic transitivity (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1980), and the fronting of vinadr is a form of discourse prominence, as sentence-initial position is typically associated with prominence in the world’s languages (cf. eg. Mithun 1992, Mišić Ilić 1998).

A second function of an absence of definite marking for hearer-old +[higher animate] NPs appears to be to block a shift in focus of character from taking place. You may recall from chapter 8, that Zubin and Hewitt (1995) give a list of conditions which block an otherwise expected shift in deictic centre, such as if the incoming subject NP is in a subordinate clause. They refer to such conditions as anti-shifters. It is possible that an absence of a definite marker in old ‘animate’ NP subjects functions as an anti-shifter. The anti-shifter hypothesis accounts for some instances of unexpected dependent pronouns in the Tirax narratives, such as in the following example, where there is a dependent pronoun representing the protagonist in line 95 (arrowed), where a full NP is expected. Following a transition clause (line 90), the protagonist becomes the focus of character (line 91), but there is a shift in deictic WHO (cf. Zubin & Hewitt 1995) in the narrative clause in line 93, to the devil. The NP tnah ‘devil’ is subject of the clause in line 93, and therefore the default centre of deixis. We would therefore expect a free NP to refer to the boy in line 95. However there is a dependent pronoun instead. The ‘animate’ NP tnah ‘devil’ is old, but does not carry a definite marker. The absence of the marker appears to block the shift in focus of character to the devil, in the same way as if it were the subject of a subordinate clause. Note that the devil is mentioned twice in this excerpt, neither mention is definite-marked, and both are in narrative (‘foreground’) clauses:
(2) EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 90-95)

90. (0.5) \( r_{-\text{HES}} \)

(0.2) \( r=\text{v rake}-\text{nenev}-i \) na /  
\( 3D:R=\text{carry.in.hand-COMPL-3S} \) now

Now the two of them put them down,

91. (0.3) \( \text{mar } \text{ŋ } \text{e } i=m-\text{mex} \) xini tnah \ 
\( \text{man } \text{DEF} \) 3S:R=DUP-ask OBL devil

and the fellow asked (the) devil:

92. (0.2) ^ \( \text{be } \text{bar}=\text{tin} \) nmab xan ade^ \ 
\( \text{but(B) 2D:1=cook} \) T.chestnut PRX where

“But whereabouts are we going to cook the chestnuts?”

93. (0.5) \( \text{tnah } i=\text{naxat} \) i=\( v-\text{va} \) \ 
\( \text{devil} \) 3S:R=get.up 3S:R=DUP-say

The devil went and replied

94. (0.2) \( \text{bar}=\text{tin} \) lot h\( \text{ak} \) \ 
\( 2D:1=\text{cook} \) place 1S:POSS

“We’ll cook them at my place.”

95. (0.5) \( i=\text{va} \) ^ale^ —  
\( 3S:R=\text{say} \) ok

(The boy) said “Ok!”

In the example below, again from the Chestnuts narrative, the boy, \( \text{marbih } \text{ŋ } \text{e} \), is the focus of character in line 69, and also in line 73, where the free pronoun is used to refer to the boy. The devil, \( \text{tnah} \), is subject of the clause in line 71. Again, the absence of the definite marker appears to function as an anti-shifting device, signalling that the
focus of character remains with the boy. In this case a free pronoun is used to refer to the boy in the final line.

(3) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IUs 69-73)

69. (0.7) marbih ɲɛ i=v-va —
child DEF 3S=R=DUP-say

    *The boy said*

70. (0.2) məm-^ bar=vrake bɔ ^ \
HES 2D:i=carry.in.hand DIM

    “We’ll just carry them in our hands.”

71. (0.3) ale tnah i=vrake ɲɛ \—
so devil 3S=R=carry.in.hand PART

    *So the devil carried some,*

72. (0.5) ale: —
so

    *and*

73. (0.2) xain i=vrake ɲɛ \—
3S 3S=R=carry.in.hand PART

    *he himself carried some.*

The above example also contrasts the use of a lexical NP with a free pronoun, discussed in the previous chapter. You will recall that free pronouns are associated with greater degree of intimacy with the character compared with lexical or genitive NPs. The paragraph above begins by establishing the boy as focus of character. The devil is mentioned, using a bare lexical N, then we return to the boy. The free pronoun underlines that it is the boy whose point of view is being reflected, by being associated with a deeper degree of penetration into the character than the lexical NP.
It appears for Tirax that the absence of definite marking for ‘animate’ NPs is associated with two functions. It can mark prominent background, as predicted above (§10.3.1) and exemplified in (2). An absence of definite marking on an ‘animate’ subject can also function as an ‘anti-shifting’ device, preventing focus of character shifting from the previous centre of deixis. In this case it can occur in narrative clauses, contrary to McGregor’s (In press) predictions. The corpus is relatively small, and further work with a broader database is needed to support these results. However the hypothesis proposed by McGregor pointed to some fruitful insights, touching on the interaction of narrative role of referent (protagonist versus antagonist), grounding (functional clause-type), discourse prominence and focus of character, and does appear to account for around half of the instances of bare ‘animate’ NPs in the seven human tales.

10.3.3 Presence of definite marker in ‘inanimate’ lexical NPs
We now turn to unexpected definite marking. We saw above, that unexpected definite marking is predicted to be associated with marking prominent foreground. Analysis of the seven human tales shows there are three kinds of circumstances in which ‘inanimate’ NPs can attract definite marking. The first is for inferable referents, such as ntay-lxex ye, ‘the return basket’, a cultural item associated with bride price, and sospen ye, ‘the saucepan’ in a text about cooking. In this case, the definite marker is likely to be coding the inferable status, signalling to the hearer that the identity of the referent is predictable from the frame, or activity that is being talked about. All other definite markers for inanimate entities are associated with old NPs.

An inanimate old NP can attract a definite marker if it refers to a sacred or otherwise important location. The rock where the man hides the flying fox’s wings, in The Story of the Little White Flying Fox is later referred to as nvat ye, ‘the rock’, in the text following dialogue where the father tells his children not to go near the rock as it is sacred. Such definitely marked inanimate NPs typically occur in narrative clauses:
(4) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 64-67)

64. (1.0) be ren-te nge bih tax / = i=van dax / =
   but(B) time-SUB one small last 3S=R=go PERF

   *But the youngest one* had already *gone*

   i=leh dax / = a:
   3S=R=see COMPL HES
   *and seen*

65. (0.5) naxde nunu han / = te
   wings mother3S:POSS SUB

   *his mother’s wings* as

66. (0.3) vakal mlaxes / = i=vla / =
   lizard green 3S=R=go.away

   a green lizard *ran off*

67. be i=stretem a: .. nvat nge 
   but(B) 3S=R=straighten(B) HES stone DEF

   *and ran straight to the rock.*

An inanimate old NP can also attract a definite marker when it is salient to the plot, such as in The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts, when the Tahitian chestnuts are being used to disguise the boy, helping him to scare off the devils (lines 112-16).

Structurally, in almost all cases, the formally definite inanimate NPs are associated with narrative clauses or narrative mode, and the build towards the climax in particular. This is likely to be because it is during a lead-up to a climax that a prop or location becomes important as its function is realised. In the example below, the wife gives her husband a herb to protect him from being murdered by his brothers. The herb is introduced as a bare NP rxxa (arrowed), then is tracked with a definite marker (also arrowed).

(5) EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores (IUs 93-98)

93. (0.7) ve ren-te: — =
   but time-SUB

   *But by that time,*
the man, his wife there had already spoken to him.

She had already got a herb,

and she said

"I will give you a herb for you to eat,"

"and I will also eat one."

"When they come."

"to kill you, but you will be dead."

and I will be dead,
The two of them ate up the herbs.

and then they waited.

The above example also illustrates a discontinuity of form for ṛaxa ‘leaf’. An entity introduced with a bare lexical NP is typically tracked with a bare lexical NP. Plot-salient props tend to be formally marked for definiteness only when their function in the narrative is being realised. It supports the idea of unexpected definite marking being associated with foreground prominence in Tirax.

The data from Tirax appears to support the contention that unexpected definite marking on inanimate NPs will be associated with foreground prominence.

10.3.4 Distribution of definite marker in animal fables
We observed above in §10.3.1 that there is a different pattern of distribution of NP categories in animal fables compared to tales with human protagonists. The first point of difference is that lexical NPs far outnumber genitive NPs in animal fables. This is because animal fables tend not to have characters which are in family relationships, whereas tales with human protagonists almost always involve family members: brothers, daughters, mothers, husbands and so on; NPs referring to family members are always referred to with genitive expressions.

The second point of difference is that the vast majority of referring expressions in animal fables are bare lexical NPs. Table 10-11 shows the distribution of subcategories of NPs across the three Tirax fables.
Table 10-11: Distribution of subcategories of NPs referring to hearer-old entities in three Tirax animal fables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bare NP</th>
<th>Lexical NP with definite marker</th>
<th>Genitive NP</th>
<th>Genitive NP with definite marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is common for the principle characters in animal fables to be referred to with bare lexical NPs, such as ‘lidax’, ‘dog’ or mlexuv, ‘ant’. This is common to other Vanuatu languages, and Ellen Facey (1988) raises the question as to whether the referring expressions in these situations are actually akin to proper names, and should be translated with upper case letters, such as in Dog and Ant. The Tirax data provides some support for this proposition, but is by no means conclusive. In support of the ‘proper name’ analysis, the main characters in animal fables are not introduced with the indefinite marker haxal, and tend to be tracked with bare NPs whenever a free NP is triggered. Conversely, animals with supporting roles in animal fables, similarly to animals in narratives involving humans, tend to be introduced with haxal and tracked with the formally definite NPs.

The distribution of the feature ±[higher animate] across lexical NP subcategories is given in table 10-12. The proportion of +[higher animate] bare NPs, at 64%, is much larger than for tales with human protagonists, where only 12% of bare NPs are +[higher animate].

Table 10-12: Distribution of definite marker across NPs referring to old entities in animal fables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL NPs</th>
<th>Human or anthropomorphised entities: +[higher animate]</th>
<th>Other (lower animate, inanimate entities): – [higher animate]</th>
<th>% of human / anthropomorphised entities in NP category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP (bare)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP with definite marker</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The evidence for bare nouns functioning as proper names for main characters in the Tirax animal fables is equivocal. On the one hand, like proper names, bare nouns can be used vocatively in dialogue:

(6) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 70-72)

70. \[ \text{lidax } i=\text{vE } i=\text{v-va} \quad \backslash \quad \text{dog } 3\text{s}:\text{r}=\text{say-3s} \quad 3\text{s}:\text{r}=\text{DUP-say} \]

\[(\text{The) dog spoke, saying:)}\]

71. \[ (0.4) \quad \text{n\text{nxariv} !} \quad ^{\text{cat}} \]

"Cat!"

72. \[ (0.4) \quad \text{n\text{o}x} \quad \text{ba}=\text{at} \quad \text{weri} ^{\backslash} \quad 2\text{s} \quad 2\text{s}:i=\text{be} \quad \text{there} \]

"You stay there!"

However, certain other generic nouns can also be used vocatively, such as *mar*, ‘man’. Unlike proper names, some NPs referring to principal characters in animal fables are marked with the definite article. There are no examples of proper names being marked with a definite article in the corpus.

(7) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 75-76)

75. \[ (0.6) \quad \text{\text{o} } i=\text{van} \quad i=\text{dla} \quad \eta\varepsilon \quad / = \quad \text{HES} \quad 3\text{s}:\text{r}=\text{go} \quad 3\text{s}:\text{r}=\text{be,thus} \quad \text{DEF} \]

*He (the dog) went off like that,*

\[ \text{ve-\text{te}} \quad i=\text{van} \quad / = \text{be: i: } \quad \text{but-SUB} \quad 3\text{s}:\text{r}=\text{go} \quad \text{but(B) 3s:r} \]

*but he went off, but*

76. \[ (0.3) \quad i=\text{kreh} \quad \text{bo} \quad \text{\text{nxariv} } \eta\varepsilon \quad / = \quad \text{3s:r}=\text{deceive} \quad \text{DIM} \quad \text{cat} \quad \text{DEF} \]

*he was just tricking the cat.*
It is likely that the bare NP referring to main characters in animal fables has an intermediate status, between generic and proper noun categories.

The definite marker is associated with marking prominence in narrative or recapitulative clauses in animal fables, similar to its role in human tales. When marking main characters, it is associated with turning points, or unexpected (prominent) narrative events. Table 10-13 shows the distribution of lexical NPs referring to the cat in the fable *Cat and Dog*. Of seventeen mentions, twelve are bare and five definitely marked. All bare NPs are subjects, whereas definite-marked NPs occur as subject, object and indirect object.

**Table 10-13**: Distribution of lexical markers for the cat in *Cat and Dog*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>IO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The excerpt below from *Cat and Dog* shows that the definite marker is associated with an unexpected turn of events: the cat deceives the dog and goes back alone to the house and eats up the chicken the dog has caught.

(8) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 52-55)

52. (0.4) **nxariv**  

   cat **nxariv**  
   DEF $i=$van  
   $3S:R=$go  
   $3S:R$  

   The cat went

53. (0.6) **nxariv**  

   $i=$vax  
   $3S:R=\text{open saucepan}(B)$  
   DEF  

   and opened the saucepan,

   $i=$wes-nenev  
   $3S:R=\text{eat-COMPL}$  
   chicken  

   and ate up the chicken.
He ate and ate and ate and ate until he had eaten it all up.

There appears to be an additional function in animal fables of distinguishing the antagonist from the character the hearer should be empathising with. In *Cat and Dog*, we saw that there are five definite-marked references to the cat. However there are no definite-marked NPs referring to the dog, who is arguably the tale’s protagonist; he has done all the work of hunting for chickens, is betrayed by the cat, and gives the cat his comeuppance. Similarly, in *Cat and Ant*, there are four definite-marked lexical NPs referring to animals, and all refer to the rat, who is proving to be vexatious for the cat in his efforts to avoid being eaten. If the bare NP for main characters is understood as representing a proper name, it may be that the definite marker represents a shift away from the status of a proper name, marking the referent as stereotypical rather than an individual. The definite marker is also associated with non-subject relation for animals in animal fables, as shown in table 10-14. The distribution across grammatical relations may reflect its role as ‘dehumanising’ or ‘objectifying’ the referent, as human and anthropomorphised NPs are typically agentive and strongly associated with subject relation, as discussed in the previous chapter.

**Table 10-14:** Distribution of definite marker across grammatical categories in Tirax animal fables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>IO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The corpus of three narratives is too small for the observations made in this section to be anything more than tentative. However they provide a good starting point for further work on the discourse-pragmatic function of the definite marker in animal fables. The tentative conclusions made here also tie in well with Facey’s (1988)
suggestion that bare lexical NPs might be tantamount to proper names in Vanuatu animal fables.

10.3.5 Definite marking in genitive NPs
The prediction made for definite-marked genitive NPs in §10.3.1 above was that they would be associated with prominent foreground. There are only twelve instances of definite marking on animate genitive NPs, and just three definite-marked inanimate genitive NPs in the corpus of ten traditional tales. Therefore just a brief observation will be made about the distribution of the definite marker in genitive NPs, specifically animate genitives.

The most striking difference in the pattern of distribution of definite-marked animate genitives is that there is a relatively low proportion of subjects represented. Table 10-15 shows the distribution of definite-marked animate genitives across grammatical functions.

Table 10-15: Genitive NPs with definite marker (animate) in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical function</th>
<th>Number of tokens</th>
<th>Percentage of all definite-marked animate genitive NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution is different to that of both definite lexical NPs and bare genitives, which both have a high proportion of subjects, shown in tables 10-16 and 10-17 respectively.
**Table 10-16**: Lexical NPs with definite marker (animate) (human tales) excluding possessors in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical function</th>
<th>Lexical NPs (Def)</th>
<th>% of all definite-marked animate lexical NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>66 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 10-17**: Bare Genitive NPs (animate) (excluding possessors) in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical function</th>
<th>Number of tokens</th>
<th>% of all bare animate genitive NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>83 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So of the small sample of definite genitives, only a quarter of them are subjects, compared with around two thirds of definite lexical NPs. This pattern is reminiscent of the definite marker in animal fables, discussed in §10.3.4 above, where the definite marker was also observed to be associated with antagonists. The distribution of definite-marked genitives suggests that definite genitives are often not the focus of character. For two out of the three definite genitive subjects, the marker appears to function like an anti-shifter, signalling that the point of view does not shift from the previous focus of character. This apparent function is demonstrated in the following example, where there is a dependent pronoun in line 104 where we might expect a free NP, since it represents an incoming referent as subject. The dual dependent pronoun represents the parents, and I suggest that the parents are the focus of character for the entire paragraph. The definite marker on the genitive is functioning
similarly to the absence of a definite marker in lexical animate NPs, in not attracting the focus of character to the referent the NP represents.

(9) EXAMPLE: The Cordyline Spirit-woman (IUs 98-106)

98. \[r=\text{van na} \quad / = \quad r=\text{ver xin(i) butat he:} \quad —\]
    \[3D:R=\text{go now} \quad 3D:R=\text{say OBL grandma POS} \]

    Now they (the parents) went and said to the grandmother of

    \[\text{ntebibih ru-ru nɛ} \quad / = \quad r=\text{v-va} \quad —\]
    \[\text{children} \quad \text{DUP-two} \quad \text{DEF} \quad 3D:R=\text{DUP-say} \]

    the two children, they said

99. \[\text{keni bas=at te:} \quad / = \quad \]
    \[2\text{p} \quad 2P:i=\text{be SUB} \]

    "You stay and"

    \[\text{ve-ve ntebih ru-ru xar r=naxɔd te} \quad / \quad \]
    \[\text{DUP-if} \quad \text{child} \quad \text{DUP-two} \quad \text{DST} \quad 3D:R=\text{hungry EXCL} \]

    "if the two children are hungry."

100. \[\text{a} \quad ^\text{bar=}\text{vɛn-te} \quad \text{nalɔk drar xi(ni)rɔxa xar} \quad ^\text{\|} \quad \]
    \[\text{HES} \quad 2D:1=\text{wrap-NEG laplap} \quad 3P:POSS.FOOD.OBL leaf DST \]

    "you are not to wrap their laplap in this leaf."

101. \[\text{ale butat har nɛ iv-va} \quad ^\text{e’e’}! \quad i=\text{nam bo} \quad ^!\]
    \[\text{so grandma} \quad 3P:POSS DEF 3S:R=DUP-say yes 3S:R=good DIM \]

    And their grandmother said "Ok, that's fine!"

102. \[^\text{nah=}\text{vɛn tɛ-nɛ} \quad \text{xini nɛ} \quad ^!\]
    \[1S:1=\text{NEG=wrap NEG-PART OBL ANA.PRO} \]

    "I definitely won’t wrap it in it!"

103. \[^\text{keni xar=}\text{telul vɔr nɛ} \quad ^!\]
    \[\text{HES} \quad 2\text{p} \quad 2D:R=\text{go.to.garden EMPH PART} \]

    "You two should go and do some gardening!"
The two of them did the gardening.

They did the gardening, on and on and on and they came (back) in the afternoon.

They were coming, as the grandmother, she ...

The small sample of data here does not support the hypothesis that the definite marker is associated with marking prominent foreground. Definite-marked genitives occur in a range of clause-types, so there is no evidence to suggest they are associated with foregrounded, or narrative clauses. It may be that for kin terms, similarly to referring expressions for animals in animal fables, the definite marker has a ‘depersonalising’ effect, which is reflected in an affinity for non-subject roles, or having an anti-shifting function in episodes with protagonists. Kin terms are used vocatively in Tirax, and used instead of proper names to talk about family members. So kin terms are a more personal way of referring to characters in Tirax narratives than their English equivalents, since English speakers tend to use proper names in those functions (with the exception of terms for parents and grandparents). This could explain the apparent discourse-pragmatic function of the definite marker in kin terms, in ‘demoting’ them to the functional equivalent of lexical terms.

The observations made in this section about the function of the definite marker in genitive NPs cannot be conclusive as the sample is too small. However, they provide a useful starting point for future study and perhaps a cross-linguistic comparison.
10.3.6 Patterns of distribution of definite marker and narrative structure

You may recall from the previous chapter that there appears to be a correlation of formal definiteness and paragraph-initial position, with 58% of non-pronominal free NPs occurring paragraph-initially being formally definite, and 53% of formally definite NPs occurring paragraph-initially. The correlation holds when controlling for the effects of grammatical relation on the patterns of distribution of lexical NPs, as shown in table 10-18, where we see that 51% of all paragraph-initial free NP subjects carry a definite marker, and half of all formally definite lexical NPs occur paragraph-initially.

**Table 10-18:** Distribution of formally definite lexical S NPs across narrative structural slots in ten Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>&gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of S NPs</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of formally definite S NPs</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of S NPs which are formally definite lexical NPs</td>
<td>31 / 61</td>
<td>10 / 43</td>
<td>9 / 48</td>
<td>12 / 34</td>
<td>62 / 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of formally definite lexical NPs across structural slots</td>
<td>31 / 62</td>
<td>10 / 62</td>
<td>9 / 62</td>
<td>12 / 62</td>
<td>62 / 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation of formal definiteness and paragraph-initial slot is likely to be a fallout from one of the other factors associated with both variables, such as animacy. As expected, there is a strong correlation of subject-hood and animacy, with only twelve per cent of *old* subjects representing inanimate entities. The data also shows a skewing of inanimate NPs across structural slots, such that the majority of inanimate *old* subject NPs occur in non-initial locations, neither paragraph-initial nor immediately following transition clauses. This reflects a natural bias in the sort of entities with which people can empathise: the vast majority of paragraph-initial and post-transition clauses are associated with shifts in focus of character, so the free NP subjects in those positions are likely to be higher animate. Table 10-19 gives the figures for the distribution of *old* inanimate free NP subjects in the ten narratives.
Table 10-19: Position of old inanimate free NP subjects in Tirax narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of S NPs which are inanimate</th>
<th>Initial &gt; Transition clause(s)</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 / 61</td>
<td>3 / 43</td>
<td>10 / 48</td>
<td>8 / 34</td>
<td>23 / 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of inanimate S NPs across structural slots</td>
<td>2 / 23</td>
<td>3 / 23</td>
<td>10 / 23</td>
<td>8 / 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A topicality analysis of old subjects in *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* shows that definite-marked lexical NPs are the most persistent of non-pronominal NPs, an indicator of high topicality, but also have the highest lookback value. The high lookback value suggests that formally definite NPs are more likely to be used than bare NPs to bridge a gap between the present and previous mentions. Long gaps occur, for example, when the story shifts between the main characters when they are in separate locations, each character being the focus for one or more paragraphs. The topicality results are given in table 10-20.

Table 10-20: Topic continuity indicators for non-pronominal NP categories in the *Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (old main clause subjects only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Category</th>
<th>No. of tokens</th>
<th>Lookback</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Potential Interference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP (Def)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical NP (Bare)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive NP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the only genitive subject NPs in the story occur in the first paragraph, which introduces the protagonist and his parents. The parents are not mentioned again, and there are no more genitive NPs in the story.

Conversely, bare NPs tend to be associated with paragraph-medial position. The contrast in distribution is partly explained by types of entities that the bare NPs are referring to. The paragraph-medial bare NPs are almost all from animal fables, and
refer to principle characters. You will recall from §10.3.4 above that principle characters in animal fables tend to be referred to with bare NPs. These tales are also dialogue-heavy, and the medial bare NPs are almost all from the clauses introducing the direct speech.

We observed in this section that there is a skewing across structural slots of definite-marked versus bare NPs, but I suggest it is likely to be an indirect association. The affinity of the definite marker for paragraph-initial position is likely to fall out from animacy, since higher animate entities are associated with triggering structural boundaries, as observed in the previous chapter, and higher animate referents are also associated with definite marking, as discussed in §10.3.1).

10.3.7 The definite marker in type II double reference expressions

We saw in the previous chapter (§9.5.5), that the discourse function of type II double reference expressions is related to the discourse-functions of its constituents. We now look at the distribution of the definite marker in double reference expressions. These expressions have at least one non-pronominal NP component and less than half of the non-pronominal NPs in the data carry a definite marker.

All double reference expressions in the corpus of ten narratives refer to human or anthropomorphised entities. Of the bare NPs in double references expressions, most are either genitive or refer to animals in animal fables, both of which tend to be bare anyway, as discussed above in §10.3.5 and §10.3.4 respectively. Only two bare NPs are lexical NPs referring to humans, begging the question as to the discourse-pragmatic function of the absence of the definite marker in lexical double reference.

We have seen that the absence of a definite marker in higher animate lexical NPs is associated with prominent background, and can function as an ‘anti-shifting’ device, while a pronoun is associated with contrastive focus or otherwise highlighting focus of character. In the two examples encountered in the data, the function of the double reference expression appears paradoxically to reflect the functions of the individual NP categories, exemplified below in (10). In each case, the clause with the double reference expressions reflects a shift in focus of character which lasts for at least 7 clauses before the focus of character returns to the person who was the previous focus
of character, and with whom the focus of character remains for the rest of the narrative. However the shift in focus of character does not trigger a structural boundary, but pre-empts it. The double reference expressions with bare lexical NP are therefore associated with paragraph-final position, and function as a ‘preview’ to the upcoming episode.

In the excerpt below, the double reference expression in line 51 is associated with a shift in focus of character from the old woman to the boy. However line 51 is prosodically part of the paragraph centring on the old woman. The expression has a contrastive function, comparing the situation of the boy with the activities of the old woman. The perfective marker dax functions here to establish a new timeline centring on the boy (as discussed in §7.2.4), although there is no rente ‘meanwhile’. The clause introduces contextual information centring on the boy, which anticipates the following paragraph where the boy is at the deictic centre.

(10) EXAMPLE: *The Old Hag with the Sores* (IUs 50-53)

50. (0.9) i=l$xex
    sar / = l$xen / =
    3S:R=turn.back IMPF back

    *She (the old woman) was coming back*

    i=m$e / = i=s$der le$bo ves-nhal /
    3S:R=come 3S:R=reach first half-road

    *and had reached half way*

51. (0.3) ntebih xain ir- ...(0.2) i=ŋɔdrɔ dax !\ 
    child 3S HES 3S:R=know PERF

    *(but) the child already knew.*

52. (2.0) i=kgɛdrɛh narit=na ŋɔ bak ŋɛ /
    3S:R=break rope=ASSOC mouth bag(B)DEF

    *He broke the rope around the mouth of the bag.*
The double reference expression with bare lexical NP therefore could be seen as functioning as a kind of switch-reference marker at the level of the paragraph, signalling a shift in focus of character which triggers the following boundary.

Conversely, we saw in §10.3.5 above, that genitive NPs tend not to carry the definite marker, and it was suggested that the presence of a definite marker in animate genitive NPs may be associated with a ‘depersonalising’ function. There is only one example encountered in the data where the double reference expression includes a definite-marked genitive NP, and it forms a cohesive tie between the present reference to the two children and their introduction in the previous clause. Beyond that, the discourse-pragmatic function of the marker is unclear, and a larger sample is needed in order for a pattern to emerge. The example is given below.

(11) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 45-50)

45. (1.0) r=vla r=van lain /
   3D:R=leave 3D:R=go home

   So they (the flying fox and the man) went to his house

46. (0.6) ri=at voXvo-vo: /
   3D:R=dwell DUP-DUR

   and lived together there and eventually

47. (1.5) a net-ir ...(0.2) i=ru /
   HES child-3P.POSS 3S:R=two

   they had two children.

48. (0.4) net-ir ru-ru xe /
   child-3P.POSS DUP-TWO DEF

   The two children,
49. (0.2) \textbf{xair} svsox \( r=\nu \varepsilon \) nerner \( \backslash \)  
\( 3p \) both \( 3d:\text{R}=\text{be} \) boy  
\textit{they both were boys.}

50. (1.3) \textbf{ale} \( \text{so} \) … (0.6) \( r=\text{at} \) vɔ-vɔ \( /= \) \( 3d:\text{R}=\text{be} \) DUP-DUR  
\textit{The two of them (ie. the man and the flying fox) lived there}

\( ^\wedge \text{net-ir} \) \( r=\text{lanlad} \) drɔ \( \text{na} \! ^\wedge \) \( 3d:\text{R}=\text{be} \text{.big} \) \( \text{real} \) \( \text{now} \)  
\textit{and their children grew up.}

There is some evidence for lexical double reference expressions, that the discourse-pragmatic function of the absence of the definite marker is similar to its significance in single reference lexical NPs, and that the discourse function of the double reference expression reflects that of each of its parts. For both lexical and genitive double reference, however, the sample is very small. The conclusions drawn in this work are tentative, but provide a starting point for future research in this area.

10.3.8 Summary: split system of discourse-pragmatic meaning  
We have seen in this section that there is a split-system of discourse-pragmatic meaning in Tirax along the lines of animacy: human and anthropomorphised entities versus lower animate and inanimate referents. The discourse-pragmatic function is also affected by category of NP (lexical versus genitive) and genre of narrative (tales with human protagonists versus animal fables). The findings are summarised below.

\textbf{Tales with human protagonists}  
For lexical NPs in human tales, the presence of optional nominal markers signals foreground prominence if the NP refers to an inanimate entity, and if the referent is human or anthropomorphised, an absence of definite marker signals prominent background, or functions as an ‘anti-shifting’ device for focus of character in narrative clauses, as shown in table 10-21.
Table 10-21: Pattern of discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence or absence of definite marker on lexical NPs in ‘human’ Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>human / anthropomorphised NPs</th>
<th>non-human NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>marker present</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marker absent</td>
<td>prominent background; anti-shifter</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Animal tales

Animal tales have a much larger proportion of bare lexical nouns than human tales, as the main characters in animal fables are referred to with bare lexical nouns, and there is evidence that status of these bare lexical nouns is similar to that of proper nouns. The definite article is frequently associated with non-subject roles and typically marks antagonists, suggesting the marker functions to ‘depersonalise’, or reduce the hearer’s empathy with the referent. Definite marking for ‘inanimate’ referents has the same pattern of distribution and apparent discourse-pragmatic function as that encountered in human tales. These observations are presented in table 10-22.

Table 10-22: Pattern of discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence or absence of definite marker on lexical NPs in Tirax animal fables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NPs referring to main characters</th>
<th>Other lexical NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>marker present</td>
<td>‘depersonalises’ referent</td>
<td>prominent foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marker absent</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining observations about genitive NPs and double reference apply to both genres of tale. Genitive NPs are rarely encountered in animal tales, since there are typically no kin terms in that genre, and it is only body parts and possessions that are referred to with genitive NPs in those narratives.
Genitive NPs

Genitive NPs typically do not attract definite markers, and there are too few instances of inanimate genitive NPs with a definite marker to detect a pattern. However kin terms appear to behave similarly to main characters in animal fables in terms of the discourse-function of definite marking. The definite marker on animate genitives is frequently encountered in non-subject roles, and typically appears on antagonists and rarely if ever on protagonists. I suggested that the definite marker on kin terms, like that on main characters in animal fables, has a ‘depersonalising’ function, signalling to the hearer that a reduced empathic response is appropriate. For definite-marked kin term subjects, the marker appears to function like an ‘anti-shifter’, preventing a shift in focus of character similarly to the absence of a definite marker on lexical NPs. These observations are summarised below.

Table 10-23: Pattern of discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence or absence of definite marker on genitive NPs in Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>marker</th>
<th>human / anthropomorphised NPs</th>
<th>non-human NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>‘depersonalises’ referent</td>
<td>prominence (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘anti-shifter’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absent</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type II double reference

We observed in the previous chapter that the discourse-pragmatic function of type II double reference reflects that of its constituents: a lexical / genitive NP and a free pronoun. This characterisation appears to apply equally to the discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with the presence / absence of the definite marker on the lexical / genitive component. For both lexical and genitive double reference, the sample is very small and the conclusions drawn in this work are tentative. However they point to a potentially fruitful line of investigation, both on Tirax and other languages with this phenomenon. The observations are summarised in table 10-24.
Table 10-24: Pattern of discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with presence or absence of definite marker on double reference lexical NPs in Tirax narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marker Present</th>
<th>Lexical NPs</th>
<th>Kin Terms / Animals in Animal Fables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td>‘anti-shifter’ ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prominent background; ‘anti-shifter’</td>
<td>no additional discourse-pragmatic meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The primary function of the definite marker is to encode information status (old / inferable), and in this role it reflects cohesion between present and prior mentions of a referent. We have seen in this section how these functions are elaborated in Tirax discourse. The investigation into the discourse-pragmatic function of the presence / absence of the definite marker yielded some interesting and in the case of genitive NPs and animal fables, somewhat unexpected results, and provides a good starting point for further research into the area.

The following sections look briefly in turn at the distribution of the indefinite marker, plural marker and demonstratives in Tirax narrative.

10.4 The indefinite marker haxal

The present section looks at the distribution of the indefinite marker, with a view to inferring its discourse-pragmatic function. As discussed above in §10.2, the indefinite marker is typically associated with introducing human or anthropomorphised entities into the narrative, as exemplified below.

(12) EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 3-6)

3. (1.2) i=va-hxal /  
   3S:R=MULT-one  
   Once,

4. (2.8) olfala vinadr haxal / / [laughs quietly]  
   old.person(B) woman INDEF  
   there was an old woman,
5. (3.0) i=at \nu\-\nu / 3S:R=be D-U-DUR
she was living for a while and then one day

6. (2.4) i=r\nu de=wes naxtabo / 3S:R=want 3S:R=eat dragon.plum
she wanted to eat some dragon plums.

Other entities which can be encoded with the indefinite marker are important or sacred natural locations and plot-salient props. It is often used to introduce items in the natural environment which have a locative role, such as a body of water or species of tree. That entity may subsequently be tracked with a formally definite NP, as in the example below, where the definite marker creates a cohesive tie with the indefinite NP, highlighting the proximity of the flying fox to her long lost mother.

(13) EXAMPLE: The Story of the Little White Flying Fox (IUs 130-133)

130. (0.9) i=van i=dla \xotan /= 3S:R=go 3S:R=be.thus LOC:D-X1
She went like that

be i=dis n\na —
but(B) 3S:R=land LOC

and landed on

… (0.2) drav\a haxal \ tropical.almond INDEF
a tropical almond tree.

131. (0.6) i=dis n\na drav\a n\a / 3S:R=land LOC tropical.almond DEF
She landed on the tropical almond tree

132. (0.5) ren-te nunu han /= i=xes-xesir sar \ time-SUB mother 3S:POSS 3S:R=D-U-P-sweep IMPF
while her mother was sweeping.
133. (0.4)  
\[ \text{unless \ tropical.almond} \ \text{DEF} \]

- underneath the tropical almond tree.

There are too few examples in the database to draw any firm conclusions about discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with the presence or absence of definite marker for these natural environment and culturally important locations.

The marker is also sometimes used to introduce key props into the narrative. In this case, the key prop is introduced as a direct object in a narrative clause and is immediately put to use, as in the following example.

(14) EXAMPLE: *The Ten Birds* (IUs 25-30)

25. (0.4) \[i=leh\]  \[t\varkappa\]  \[xair\]  \[dru\l\]  \[sa:\]  / —  
\[3S\!:\!R=see\]  \[SUB\]  \[3P\]  \[all\]  \[HES\]  

and she saw that they all

26. (0.4) \[a\]  \[s=n\varepsilon\]  \[dru\l\]  /=  \[si=at\]  /  
\[HES\]  \[3P\!:\!R=die\]  \[all\]  \[3P\!:\!R=be.located\]  

were lying there dead.

27. (0.6)  
\[ale:\]  /  
\[so\]  /  

So then,

28. (0.5) \[i=an\]  \[i=lev\]  \[\varkappa:\]  \[navir\]  \[haxal\]  /  
\[3S\!:\!R=go\]  \[3S\!:\!R=take\]  \[HES\]  \[wild.cane\]  \[INDEF\]  

she went and fetched a stick of wild cane,

29. (0.8) \[\varkappa:\]  \[\ldots(0.4)\]  \[\varkappa:\]  \[\ldots(0.5)\]  \[\varkappa:\]  \[i=\varepsilon\]  /  
\[HES\]  \[HES\]  \[HES\]  \[3S\!:\!R=come\]  

she came (back)
Haxal is also the number one, and it can encode a new NP, where its function is clearly that of singling out an entity from a group of entities:

(15) EXAMPLE: *Cat and Dog* (IUs 13-14)

13. (1.1) $i=at$ sar $/ = \ i=trev$ lidax $/ =$
   $3S:R=be$ IMPF $3S:R=wait$ dog

*He (Cat) sat waiting for Dog.*

lidax xain $i=van$ $/ = \ i: i=dre1$ nato $\$
   dog 3S 3S:R=go HES 3S:R=hunt chicken

*As for Dog, he went hunting chickens.*

14. (0.7) $i=dre1$ nato $\eta\epsilon$ vvvvv-vv $/ =$
   $3S:R=hunt$ chicken ANA DUP-DUR

*He hunted chickens (like) that on and on, until* \(^3\)

$$i=xch-din \ haxal$$
   $3S:R=bit-dead$ ANA.PRO one

*he killed one by biting it,*

Haxal is a numeral that has been coopted into marking new referents, possibly via a function of individuating entities. Because of its dual nature as numeral / indefinite marker, its discourse-pragmatic function in marking –[higher animate] NPs is not as clear cut as for the definite marker, which can mark both singular and plural entities.

\(^3\) It is clear from the surrounding text that the marker $\eta\epsilon$ here is functioning as an anaphoric marker, pointing to the event of hunting chickens, rather than a definite marker and part of the NP. It is short for *idla* $\eta\epsilon$ ‘like that’. In the previous clause, *nato* ‘chicken’ is non-referential, and in the following clause is the first instantiation of a chicken, $\eta\epsilon$ *haxal* ‘one (of them)’. The speaker also claims that $\eta\epsilon$ here is short for *idla* $\eta\epsilon$. 
It requires further investigation in order to establish whether it indeed has a role in marking some kind of discourse prominence in Tirax narrative.

10.5 The plural marker xner

We saw in chapter 3, that xner is optionally used to specify plural number, although most Tirax NPs are unspecified for number. Xner is closely associated with NPs referring to humans in general, and kin terms in particular, as in the following example:

\[(16) \quad \text{ale nas=lev malvat i=ru} \quad \text{so 1P:R=take car 3S:R=two} \]

So we took two cars

\[\text{nas=an dxì dne hok xner nasan} \quad \text{1P:R=go COM uncle 1S:POSS P 1P:R=go} \]

and went over with some of my uncles.

Xner tends to be more frequently attested marking non-subject NPs than subject NPs, at a ratio of roughly 1:2. This may be due to number already being specified for subject NPs via the subject marker.

There are only eight occurrences of xner in the corpus of ten narratives. Four of these are in dialogue, and of the remaining four, one marks an inanimate NP, shown below. In the story, an old hag has stuffed a boy into a sack and has gone to the garden to collect vegetables to put in the stew with the boy. While she’s away, the boy escapes from the bag and stuffs it with all her precious cooking equipment, then runs away. The woman returns with the intention of killing the boy. The narrator gives a long slow build to the climactic moment, when the woman smashes her own things, assuming she is clubbing the boy. The NP referring to the woman’s cooking utensils is nte ye xner, ‘the things’. This clause is a narrative clause and the dramatic/comic peak of the entire narrative. As discussed in §10.3.3, the definite marker on the inanimate NP has an additional function of marking foreground prominence. Emphasising plural number with the marker xner highlights the breadth of the old woman’s loss, hence heightens the drama and comedy:
(17) **EXAMPLE: The Old Hag with the Sores (IUs 76-80)**

---

76. (1.7) \( i=vɛ \) paoa han / = \( i=me \) \( i=xeiv \) /  
    \( 3s:r=make \) power(B) \( 3s:poss \) \( 3s:r=come \) \( 3s:r=strong \)  

*She (the old woman) summoned up all her might*

77. (1.8) \( i=uh \) \( nɛ \) \( nɛ \) / =  
    \( 3s:r=hold \) thing DEF  

*she held the thing (the axe)*

\( i=van \) \( linha \) \( i=dra \) \( xɔtaxan \) / =  
\( 3s:r=go \) high \( 3s:r=be.thus \) DST.DX1  

*high in the air like that*

\( i=rdrh \) \( nɛ: \) —  
\( 3s:r=broken \) LOC  

*and smashed down on*

78. (0.9) \( bak \) \( nɛ \) \( i=dra \) \( xɔtaxan \) / =  
    bag(B) DEF \( 3s:r=be.thus \) DST.DX1  

*the bag like that,*

be \( i=drax \) bɔ te: —  
but(B) \( 3s:r=get.a.fright \) DIM SUB  

*but she got a surprise because*

79. (1.6) \( nɛ \) \( nɛ \) \( xner \) \( ɔ: \) / —  
    thing DEF P HES  

*all the things,*

80. (1.7) \( dral=nar \) \( i=ɔx \) /  
    noise=ASSOC.3P.POSS \( 3s:r=be \)  

*they made a big noise,*
A search through the entire corpus of thirty-nine narratives and expositional texts showed that, of seventy instances of *xner*, sixty-five mark NPs with human referents, one NP marks *lidax* ‘dog’ and there are four inanimate NPs marked with *xner*. We have seen that animacy underlies several patterns of distribution of markers in Tirax, including the definite marker (§10.3) and object marker (§3.3.3), so the pattern of distribution of *xner* is another example of how animacy is an important feature in Tirax grammar.

The plural marker is only used when the narrator wants to draw attention to the plural number of the referent. This tends to happen at dramatic peaks, as in the climax of *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* given below, where the devils are fast approaching the boy with the weapons in hand to kill him:

(18) EXAMPLE: *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* (IU 154)

154. (0.7) **tnah ** _xner_ **s=mė**  **s=mė**  **s=mė**  **vvv-vɔ**

    devil**DEF** P 3P:R=come 3P:R=come 3P:R=come DUP-DUR

  *The devils came and came and came until*

    **s=ri**  **s=leh**  **dax** /*—*

    3P:R=look 3P:R=see PERF

  *they suddenly looked and saw him.*

*Xner* is likely to have derived from demonstrative *xan* and the third person plural marker –*er*, with the vowel [a] disappearing following the Tirax trend of vowel attrition and deletion in unstressed syllables.

### 10.6 Demonstratives and prominence marking

Demonstrative determiners help identify and track the referent of the noun they mark. In the case of deictic demonstratives, they help identify and track referents by creating
a viewpoint in relation to that entity, singling it out or contrasting it with another similar entity, as in the example below, from an elicitation session:

(19)  ntaŋ xan i= dla ntaŋ= na xuɛ
basket PRX 3S: R= be. like basket= ASSOC LOC. DX 3

This bag is like that bag (over there).

Elicitation Tape 04A

Demonstratives form complex cohesive ties between the referent they mark and other referents in the text or context, as well as the locations of speaker and hearer in the real or story-world. However for most instances of demonstratives in the Tirax corpus, the tracking function is superfluous, as the referent can be identified without it. Another function of demonstratives in Tirax discourse is to mark prominence for important referents involved in narrative action. This function of prominence marking is exemplified in the Chestnuts narrative, discussed in the following chapter, where neden, ‘his body’, is marked with xar. In the story, the boy finds out that the devil is frightened of black skinned people. So while the devil is out gathering other devils and weapons to kill the boy, the boy roasts chestnuts until they turn to charcoal, then uses them to paint his body black. The demonstrative in neden xar highlights the referent and therefore its role in the boy’s plans to outwit the devils.

(20)  EXAMPLE: The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts (IUs 115-118)

115.  (0.6)  ale i=narxat na /  3S: R= get.up now

So he gets up

116.   (0.2)  i=lev nmab  неж  3S: R= take chestnut DEF

and takes the chestnuts

^i=tve- i=tveh  drul xini xain ^\  
HES 3S: R= rub all OBL 3S

and rubs them all over himself.
That body of his became black all over.

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

It has been observed in chapter 7, that words which invoke the here and now are associated with increasing audience immersion in the story world. The few instances of demonstratives in the ten narratives occur in builds towards a climax, as in (20) above, and tend to correlate with other features associated with dramatic peaks, such as increased momentum due to a high concentration of narrative clauses, and prosodic markers of excitement such as a higher pitched voice and increased tempo. The distal demonstrative xar, and not the proximal demonstrative xan, is encountered in narrative and Descriptive clauses, and both are encountered in direct speech.

The greatest point of merging between the story-world and the real world is in dialogue, where the narrator enacts the voices of the characters. Demonstratives frequently occur in dialogue, with approximately four times as many demonstratives occurring in speech clauses as in story clauses. The example below, from Cat and Dog, is spoken by the dog to the cat, who pretended to be going ‘to the toilet’, when in fact he went all the way home and ate up all their food. The dog exclaims at his return:

(21) EXAMPLE: Cat and Dog (IU 37)

“Wow! You're back from the toilet!”

“You've been ages!”
The demonstrative *xar* can also mark clauses to give prominence to the event related by the clause, as in the example below. In this example, there are two distal demonstratives, one NP-final and one clause-final, giving a cumulative effect of prominence marking. The sentence, from a personal anecdote, is translated with the English emphatic marker ‘really’, to reflect the effect of the two demonstratives. The event of the storyteller’s friend’s leg swelling up, related in the sentence below, is the key event, around which the narrative is structured.

(22) \[\text{male}-n \quad \text{xar} \quad \text{i}=\text{hol} \quad \text{xar} \quad / !\]

\[\text{leg-3S:POSS} \quad \text{DST} \quad 3S:R=\text{swell} \quad \text{DST}\]

*That leg of hers really swelled up!*

This function of *xar* to give prominence to an event is not frequently encountered in the corpus of traditional narratives. More commonly, the Bislama demonstrative *ia* is used, as in the example below, from the *Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores*. When the eldest brother comes back from the sea with his spear filled with fish, he encounters a woman on the road. The woman begs for some fish for her diseased daughter to eat, but the boy refuses. The language is forceful, with demonstratives, emphatic markers and exclamation intonation contours. The demonstratives and other words marking prominence are in bold.

(23) **EXAMPLE: The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores** (IUs 33-39)

33. (0.7) \[a: \quad \text{tete amu nge} / = \quad \text{i}=\text{va} —\]

\[\text{HES} \quad \text{child} \quad \text{first} \quad \text{DEF} \quad 3S:R=\text{say}\]

*The eldest replied*

34. (0.2) \[\text{oha’} !\]

*no*

*“No!”*
35. (0.5) xɔnɔ: nas drɔk vɔr !
 1s fish PC:FOOD.1S:POSS EMPH

“These fish are mine!!”

36. (0.5) nh=n=lev-te nẹ xini net-um vaven xar nẹ
  HES 1S:1=NEG=take-NEG PART OBL child-2S:POSS female DST PART

“I absolutely can’t give any to your daughter there

x=w=nes nẹ !
2s:r=eat PART

for you to eat at all!”

37. (0.4) xɔnɔ nẹ drɔk vɔr !!
  1s PART PC:FOOD.1S:POSS EMPH

“This is my food!”

38. (0.5) ^ nes xan te r=das xini i=xeiv ia ^ !
  fish PRX SUB IMP=搜索 OBL 3S=R=hard there(B)

“These fish are really hard to catch!!”

39. (0.7) xɔn o nẹ drɔk vɔr nẹ !
  1s ANA PC:FOOD.1S:POSS EMPH PART

“It will be me who eats all this food!”

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The Bislama demonstrative ia, appears to have the same function as the indigenous word xar, in marking prominence in clauses, though ia is not attested as an NP marker in the Tirax corpus. Ia is also frequently encountered in more conversational speech, as in the aside by the speaker on the story she is telling:

(24) “m n=res xini stori xar te i=brav ia !”
  HES 1S=R=talk OBL story(B) DST REL 3S=R=long there(B)

“Hm, I’m telling a rather long story!”
As noted in chapter 3, there is also a complex system of locative demonstratives with an overlapping pattern of distribution with the deictic demonstrative determiners. Their function and distribution is yet to be studied.

10.7 Conclusion
The previous chapter looked at the distribution of referring expressions in Tirax narrative, and the present chapter supplemented that description with a more detailed description of the distribution of optional NP markers. We began by noting that principle of continuity of form can be seen to hold for the Tirax categories of bare lexical NP, formally definite lexical NP and genitive NPs. Discontinuity of form occurs between lexical and genitive categories if triggered by story events. Discontinuity of form between bare and (in)definite-marked NPs is associated with some kind of additional discourse-pragmatic meaning at the time of mention.

McGregor (In press) observes that for optional grammatical case markers, both or either of the presence and absence of the marker may have significance over and above its grammatical functional. He also predicts that the presence of an optional marker, if meaningful, will be associated with prominent foreground, and absence of a marker, if meaningful, will be associated with prominent background. I worked with the assumption that a presence or absence of a marker will only be meaningful for a category if the presence / absence is unexpected, and that McGregor's predictions might be equally applicable to definite and other optional NP markers in Tirax.

The study of the distribution of the Tirax definite marker showed that both the presence and absence of definite marking can be discourse-pragmatically meaningful, over and above the traditional grammatical function of encoding old / inferable information status and reflecting cohesion. It was also found that the patterns of distribution of NP categories split along several lines including genre of the narrative and animacy of the referent, resulting in a complex system of discourse-pragmatic meaning. While some meanings accorded with McGregor’s predictions, there were also some unexpected results.

In general, definite marking correlates with animacy, and with human and anthropomorphised entities in particular. However the pattern of distribution of bare
versus definite-marked NPs for animal fables contrasts with that of tales with human protagonists: animal fables have a higher proportion of bare ‘animate’ NPs, due to the fact that main characters are referred to with bare NPs, which appear to have a status tantamount to proper names. Definite marking of NPs referring to main characters in animal fables appears to have a ‘depersonalising’ or ‘objectifying’ effect, being associated with antagonists and non-subject functions. The role of definite marking in genitive NPs in all genres appears to have a similar ‘depersonalising’ effect.

The absence of the definite marker for ‘animate’ NPs in tales with human protagonists does seem to be associated with prominent background, as predicted by McGregor. When an ‘animate’ subject NP is bare, it appears to also function as an ‘anti-shifting’ device, to use Zubin and Hewitt’s (1995) term, preventing the NP from attracting focus of character. The presence of the definite marker on a genitive NP appears to have a similar function as an ‘anti-shifter’, in addition to its ‘depersonalising’ function mentioned above. Definite marking of inanimate NPs in general appears to be associated with prominent foreground, as predicted.

We also saw that the discourse-pragmatic meaning associated with definite marking in double reference expressions has the same function as it has in ‘single reference’ lexical and genitive NPs, described above. This meaning is combined with the discourse-pragmatic function of the pronoun element, of highlighting focus of character. The data was limited and conclusions drawn for double reference expressions and genitive NPs in particular are tentative, but provide a basis for further investigation with a broader database.

We concluded the chapter with a brief look at other optional NP markers, indefinite *haxal*, plural *xner* and the demonstratives *xan* and *xar*. These markers which also tend to be associated with animacy and / or discourse prominence.

The patterns of distribution of anaphora and optional grammatical categories in Tirax illustrates how a language’s lexico-grammatical resources can be co-opted into serving the complex discourse-pragmatic tasks involved in storytelling, such as controlling the spotlight, marking information as important and increasing drama.
The following chapter, we present a case study of a narrative analysis, where we can see the interaction of all aspects of language, from prosody and poetics to grammar, lexical choice and narrative structure, and the narrative pressures underpinning them.
11 Narrative Analysis: Case Study

The previous chapters of this work have presented a description of aspects of Tirax grammar and narrative. We have taken a holistic approach to the analysis of the language and grammar, allowing us to observe and describe the interaction of grammar, prosody, semantic-thematic structure and discourse-pragmatic function of the constituents of narrative. The present chapter is a description of the poetics of one of the narratives, looking at form and meaning in narrative. The chapter illustrates the rules, structures and other features which this work has described through studying their distribution and interaction in the narrative. In performing a detailed analysis on a whole, single narrative, we reveal the motivating force that underpins the structural features which have been described thus far, and that is the narrative pressures involved in telling a compelling story.

The kinds of narrative pressures identified in this work are listed in the introduction in §11.1. The body of this chapter is the line-by-line analysis of the narrative, The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts, and comprises §11.2. The findings are discussed and summarised in §11.3, and there is a conclusion in §11.4. The entire text can be found in Appendix I, and the sound file of the narrative is included on the accompanying CD.

11.1 Introduction

The Tirax narrative which is the subject of the case study is The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts, told by a male speaker in his 60s or 70s, August 1, 2004, outside my consultant’s house in Mae village. The prosody, lexical choice, morphosyntax and other aspects of oral narrative form which contribute to the poetics of the narrative are described and analysed in the present chapter. These formal properties are then related to the narrative function and dramatic effect of the clause.

We begin this section with some definitions of key terms, followed by an overview of the narrative pressures that the case study illustrates. The third subsection gives an overview of the structure of the narrative under study.
11.1.1 Terminology

We have been using the terms narrative, protagonist and others during the course of this work, and in this section we give brief definitions for them. Narrative analysis has its basis in Aristotle, who identified key features of narrative for the purposes of defining a well-formed narrative, and for making distinctions between types of narrative, and between narrative and other forms of human discourse. One such concept is the concept of Unity, discussed in chapter 8 in relation to narrative structure and sequentiality (§8.3.4). Aristotle’s Poetics provided the foundations for the development of literary theory, and theatre and film theory, and many of the terms used in current descriptions of narrative have their roots in Aristotle’s work. Below is a glossary of some of the key terms used in present work:

Narrative is defined here as a text, either oral or written, which represents chronologically two or more events that occur in succession and are logically connected. This definition owes as much to Labov and Waletzky (1967) as it does to Aristotle. Narratives are a vehicle for expressing stories. Story is regarded here as autonomous, able to be abstracted from narrative, and of which narrative is a representation. A story consists of characters, situations and at least one sequence of chronological, logically related events, or plot. A plot, then, is a succession of causally related events. A protagonist is the main character, the character whose story it is, who goes through some sort of trial, and with whom the audience sides. The protagonist is typically the first character introduced and / or the last character mentioned. A story will also usually have an antagonist, who opposes the protagonist, providing obstacles, conflict and the threat of danger. A plot point is an important event which makes up the backbone of the narrative. A turning point is a plot point in which the fortunes of the protagonist are altered, and a climax is a turning point in

1 Distinctions have been made elsewhere between the story and representation of the story, exemplified by Propp’s approach to narrative analysis (Propp 1928), which distills a set of ‘functions’, or events which are universal to the folk tale genre. This distinction between narrative and story has been challenged by some theorists, notably Todorov (1967) and others, who assert that story is not an autonomous abstraction but integral to the medium of communication. Rimmon-Kenan (2002:6ff.) gives a detailed discussion of the debate. The position taken here is that there is a distinction between story and narrative, and that the effects of translation from one medium or language to another may lose some, but not all, of the meaning associated with the original version.
which the fortunes of the protagonist are ultimately reversed. Turning points form dramatic peaks in the narrative, with the climax being the ultimate dramatic peak. Finally, the *denouement*, literally ‘unravelling’, relates the events following and resulting from the climax, and forms the conclusion of the narrative.

11.1.2 Narrative pressures: overview

For a narrative to have an impact it must be well-told, so that the audience will be immersed in the world of the story. The audience must be able to identify with the protagonist, identify (with) his / her needs and the challenges s/he is facing. It must be able to understand the story easily, follow the progression of events and characters, and comprehend the point of the story (cf. Labov and Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972, Polanyi 1989). For maximal enjoyment, the audience must also have an emotional or visceral connection to the story as it unfolds. The teller can increase the sense of drama (excitement) by:

- setting up recognisable characters with clear wants and needs
- setting up and ‘paying off’, or rewarding, plot twists
- increasing the sense of vulnerability of the protagonist
- raising the stakes – making the challenge greater, or the outcome more important,
- increasing jeopardy, the danger the protagonist is in, for example by increasing the power or strength of the antagonist

and also:

- increasing the suspense
- heightening the climax

There are many linguistic and narrative devices a storyteller can exploit to achieve these ends. The distribution of linguistic elements and structures in a narrative can therefore be understood from a functional perspective, looking from the point of view of both story-as-text and story-as-performance:

- text-wise, any clause within a narrative has a role in setting up, developing or resolving the action of the narrative
- performance-wise, any clause within the narrative has a role in entertaining, shocking, informing, thrilling or otherwise engaging the audience.

The relationship between story-as-text and story-as-performance is a symbiotic one, and the two may merge. A *climax* for example could be defined from either a text point-of-view or a performance point-of-view. Text-wise, a climax is an event which reverses the fortunes of the protagonist, leading to the resolution of the story. Performance-wise, a climax could be defined as the most exciting part of the story. Text and performance work together to achieve their individual ends.

The analysis presented in this chapter illustrates the interaction of narrative pressures and linguistic features, and we will see a range of narrative devices at a Tirax storyteller’s disposal exemplified by the *Chestnuts* story.

11.1.3 Overview of the storytelling event and the structure of the narrative

*The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts* is approximately five minutes long, and recorded on mini DV and cassette. My consultant, a 37 year old male, was present for the recording, standing about four metres away to the side. The narrator, J-L, sat down on a stoop in the sun, and began telling the story without much ado. There was an off-hand, business-like manner to the telling, suggesting it was a story he had told many times before. It was transcribed in the field with the assistance of my consultant, who regularly commented on how well-told the story was.

Table 11-1 has an overview of the narrative episodes which make up *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*. The term *episode* was defined in chapter 8 as a semantic unit governed by a single proposition, and whose boundaries correspond to structural boundaries in the narrative (cf. Tomlin 1987, Ji 2002, Stirling 2007).
Table 11-1: Summary of episodes in *The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>IUs</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Resulting state of affairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>Father, Mother, Boy</td>
<td>Introduce characters, boy must stay at home by himself while parents go to the garden</td>
<td>The boy is home alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:</td>
<td>13-19</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>Boy leaves home, climbs chestnut tree and collects chestnuts</td>
<td>The boy is in a tree, pulling off chestnuts and throwing them to the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Devil, (boy)</td>
<td>Devil comes along and discovers boy</td>
<td>The boy is discovered by a devil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The devil traps the boy in the tree and makes him throw chestnuts down to him</td>
<td>The boy is doing the devil’s bidding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:</td>
<td>46-63</td>
<td>Devil, Boy</td>
<td>The boy asks the devil to collect all their chestnuts; The devil gathers the chestnuts and the boy climbs down</td>
<td>The boy is on the ground with the devil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:</td>
<td>64-73</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The boy and devil pick up the chestnuts</td>
<td>The boy and the devil are wandering off through the bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:</td>
<td>74-89</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The boy finds out that the devil is scared of black people; the boy and devil walk to the devil’s cave with the chestnuts</td>
<td>The boy and the devil arrive at the devil’s cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:</td>
<td>90-96</td>
<td>Boy, Devil</td>
<td>The devil asks the boy to cook the chestnuts while he goes to the toilet</td>
<td>The boy is trapped in the devil’s cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:</td>
<td>97-122</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>The boy cooks the chestnuts and paints himself black with them and stands in the entrance of the cave</td>
<td>The boy is standing in the doorway of the cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:</td>
<td>123-148</td>
<td>Devils</td>
<td>The devil gathers together his devil friends and they agree to kill the boy and arm themselves with weapons</td>
<td>All the devils are armed with weapons to kill the boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:</td>
<td>149-153</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>Repeated sequence: the boy paints himself with the chestnuts and stands in the entrance</td>
<td>The blackened boy is standing in the cave’s entrance, hearing the devils coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:</td>
<td>154-157</td>
<td>Devils</td>
<td>The devils head towards the cave, see the blackened boy and scatter in fear</td>
<td>The devils leave the boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:</td>
<td>158-160</td>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>The boy escapes</td>
<td>The boy is safe from the devils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section presents a study of the form and function of the clauses which relate the episodes.
11.2 Intonation units: analysis of form and narrative function

In this section, the Intonation Units (IUs), or lines, of the oral narrative are studied, with the aim of understanding and describing the relationship between the form and function. We will see how the features of Tirax grammar and narrative identified in the previous chapters manifest in a narrative and how they are driven by the functional pressures identified in §11.1.2.

Lines 1-4 are non-story IUs, introducing the teller and the story. The story begins with the fifth line.

11.2.1 Episode 1: Set up protagonist, desires and obstacles

The narrative begins with the introduction of the characters: a man, his son and the man’s wife (lines 5-7). The man and his son are introduced in verbless presentative clauses, establishing a lean, compact story-telling style.

5. … (0.6) morti hxal \  
   person INDEF

   *(There was) a man,*

6. … (0.9) net=na hxal \  
   child=ASSOC INDEF

   *(who had) a son.*

7. … (1.1) xair dxi: … (0.4) vinadr han //  
   3P COM woman 3S:POSS

   *He and his wife,*

8. … (1.1) r=telul \  
   3D:R=go.to.garden

   *they went to work in the garden.*

There is a tune and rhythm to the telling; the intonation units form an AABA quatrain, with IUs 5, 6 and 8 having the same number of syllables, same pattern of stress and descending intonation contour, and the third IU contrasting with the other
three IUs, being longer, with a different stress pattern and rising intonation contour.\(^2\) There is a partial consonance, with the final consonant in the first, second and fourth lines being /l/. So the first, second and fourth lines exhibit *parallelism*, whereby a pattern is created by the consecutive elements having a similar syntactic or prosodic form.

In the third IU, there is a pause before *vinadr* ‘woman’, and the previous adjacent vowel is lengthened. The wife has not yet been introduced, however that the farmer has a wife is inferable from the previous clause, which introduces the farmer’s son. The lengthened vowel and pause before *vinadr* reflects her status as a new referent. The wife does not play an important role in the narrative and is not introduced in her own presentational clause. *Vinadr* is also *anchored* by the possessive, to use Prince’s terminology (Prince 1981:236), and this formally circumvents the need for a presentational clause. The prosodic cues which accompanied the introduction of the NP can alert hearers to the introduction of the referent, and so ensure the referent is established in their discourse model. However the claim made here is that prosodic cues can correlate with information status, and not that the speaker is deliberately manipulating the prosody to signal information status.

There is a possible hierarchy of new information, as suggested by the marking of the NP and the order of presentation. A hearer might (unconsciously) expect that the way a referent is introduced will correlate with their narrative role. The likely expectations are summarised in table 11-2, in order of decreasing importance of the referent. It suggests that the hearer’s working hypothesis might be that the father is the protagonist, the son a key supporting character, and the wife an incidental character.

Table 11-2: Marking of new referents in relation to the likely narrative role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of introduction</th>
<th>Morphosyntactic marking</th>
<th>Prosodic marking</th>
<th>Suggested narrative role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>indefinite</td>
<td>in its own IU</td>
<td>protagonist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>indefinite possessive</td>
<td>in its own IU</td>
<td>key supporting character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>possessive</td>
<td>preceded by elongated vowel and pause</td>
<td>incidental supporting character</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\) The indefinite marker *haxal* is pronounced *hxal* by this speaker.
The first verbal clause describes the man and his wife leaving to go to their garden, which is typically a long way from the house, deep in the bush. The compact narrative style is continued, with the semantically complex verb telul ‘go to (work in) the garden’, instead of a common alternative phrase such as van nya naut ‘go to the garden’.

In contrast to this compact story-telling style, the following line contains a type I double reference expression and prosodic marking:

9. … (1.5) ntebih net=nar ri //
   child3 child=ASSOC:3P:POSS FOC

  That child of theirs,

10. … (0.3) i=ve-ve xair \  
    3S.R=DUP-want 3P

  he wanted (to go with) them.4

The subject NP is morphosyntactically and prosodically marked and contains information which is superfluous to the basic referential content of the expression. The subject NP is marked with:

- type I double reference
- a focus marker
- being in its own IU
- a steeply rising intonation contour

Studying the text, it is clear that the heavy, focussed NP is functionally significant to the narrative. Up until this point, it appears that the father is the protagonist: he was

3 Ntebih, ‘child’, is derived from nte, ‘thing’, and bih, ‘small’. Net is a synonym, which means ‘child belonging to (someone)’.

4 This is represented as a single clause, though technically there is ellipsed material which, together with xair ‘them’ would form a complement clause.
introduced first, and the other characters were introduced in relation to him, that is, his son and wife. He also has the first narrative action, that of going out to the garden. In line 9, the boy is the subject NP, and in fact turns out to be the story’s protagonist. It is in this line that the narrative role of the boy is established; the linguistic elaboration is associated with the boy ‘usurping’ his father, as grammatical subject, discourse topic, and story protagonist. In Tirax traditional narratives with human characters, it is not unusual for the protagonist to emerge after family members, such as parents or brothers, have been introduced. The character is then typically marked with such features as double reference, or an otherwise semantically rich expression, which identifies him or her as the story’s protagonist.

Lines 9 and 10 express the boy’s desire to be with his parents. In the terminology used by Polanyi (1989), the desiderative verb acts as a comparator, that is, it evokes an alternative reality. The significance of this alternative reality is that it establishes the protagonist’s wants and needs. Knowing the boy’s wants and needs can help an audience create a connection with him.

It is interesting to note that this clause is loaded with cohesive devices, features which describe the relationship between linguistic entities in a text, such that the full meaning of some linguistic entity is recoverable from information from another part of the discourse (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1976). The different kinds of cohesion operating in this clause are:

- lexical choice of the ‘inalienable’ noun net and associative na, which refer back to the parents, who are the possessors
- the focus marker ri, which points back to the previous mention of the referent (that is, the boy)
- ellipsed complement of the verb ve ‘want, desire’, recoverable from the previous clause, which relates the parents going to the garden
- the pronoun xair ‘them’, which requires the audience to refer back to IU (7) to determine the referents

\[\text{Net, ‘someone’s child’, is only used if that ‘someone’ is recoverable from previous discourse or context. Otherwise, ntebih or marbih are used.}\]
Each of these elements functions as a cohesive device, as it is necessary to refer to previous clauses in order to interpret their meaning or reference.

It has been observed, by Bauman (1986:pp70ff) for example, that punch-lines to anecdotes contain significantly more cohesive devices than other clauses. This is likely to be primarily due to the punch-line relying heavily for its impact on the context built up in preceding lines. However, it may be that cohesive ties are associated more generally with clauses which are functionally important to the narrative. Points of increased cohesion in a text may be easier to process and have the effect of increasing the audience’s experience of immersion in the story world. This clause has an important role in the story in identifying the protagonist and his desires. The high number of cohesive ties could be associated with the functional importance of the clause.

In the following line, the parents thwart the boy’s desire:

11. … (1.1) dede han tate han r=v-va \nx ba=at ^ \n mother 3S:POSS father 3S:POSS 3D:R=DUP-say 2s 2S:l=stay

   *His mother and father said “You stay here!”*

This line is the first incidence of direct speech in the narrative. The effect of direct speech is to heighten the drama in the story by bringing the characters to life. It is likely therefore, that direct speech will tend to be associated with events in the story which are functionally significant. This intuition is supported by the work of Ballantyne (2005), discussed in §7.7.4. In direct speech, the real world and story world come close to converging, as the characters appear to represent themselves in a here-and-now situation within the narrative. Direct speech is often characterised by first and second pronouns and imperative sentences, similar to everyday conversations. So direct speech would be predicted by Ballantyne’s hypothesis to be associated with prominent, or functionally significant events in the narrative. This extension of her hypothesis is supported in this instance, where the direct speech is used to block the fulfilment of the boy’s desire. The story is about what happens to the boy when he defies his parents and leaves the house.
For the first time in the narrative the parents are now referred to by their kin terms, from the point of view of the boy, consolidating the boy’s role as protagonist. The use of possessive kin NPs also gives further weight to the authority of the direct speech, emphasising that it is the boy’s own parents who are giving him the order.

This line relates a possible world, that of the boy staying at home. It functions as a kind of comparator to the rest of the narrative, where the boy defies the order and leaves the house. The misadventures that the narrative goes on to relate are in contrast to the possible world described by this line.

The final line in this sequence gives the resulting state of affairs, and is followed by a structural boundary:

12. ... (1.2) ale net=nan
   so child=ASSOC.3S:POSS
   bih i=at \ 
   small 3S:R=stay

So their little child stayed behind.

This clause is introduced by the discourse marker ale, which reflects the link between the previous clauses and the present, resulting state of affairs. It is an outcome which is undesirable to the boy – his desire to go with his parents has been thwarted, and the result is that he is at home alone.

There is loaded characterisation of the S NP, with the adjective bih ‘small’. Loaded characterisation is a term used by Polanyi (1982) for a semantically rich expression. It may be a single, semantically rich lexical item, or it may be a combination of head and modifier(s), as in IU (12) above. Loaded characterisation is a form of elaboration, giving information over and above the main propositional thrust of the clause. The loaded characterisation (‘small’) emphasises the boy’s vulnerability and powerlessness, increasing the jeopardy. It also further confirms the boy’s role as

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6 You may recall from chapter 10, that a sequence is defined as a passage of text between two strong prosodic-morphosyntactic boundaries, and that it typically corresponds to the cognitive, or thematic unit: episode.
protagonist, as this kind of loaded characterisation is typically associated with protagonists in Tirax narratives.

Despite a lean story-telling style, the storyteller has included the detail about the boy wanting to go with his parents but his parents forbidding it, related in lines (9) to (11). This is not necessary to the plot, the resulting state of affairs would be the same whether IUs (9) to (11) were there or not. The effect of these lines is to establish the boy as the story’s protagonist, so that the audience can easily follow where the narrative is going. It also gives the audience an insight into the boy’s desires and how those desires are thwarted, increasing the tension and increasing the potential engagement of the audience with the character and his story. It could also be understood by a hearer as introducing a moral element, and the subsequent misadventures of the boy when he defies his parents are a kind of punishment and cautionary tale.

11.2.2 Episode 2: Protagonist embarks on quest
After introducing the characters (lines 5-8), establishing the protagonist and his desire (lines 9-10) and thwarting the desire to create an unwanted outcome for the protagonist (lines 11-12), lines (13) to (33) advance the story through a series of narrative clauses with extensive tail-head linkage and clause iteration.

Tail-head linkage and clause iteration, as discussed in chapter 7, are stylistic devices which manage the introduction of new information. They are a kind of parallelism which operates at clause-level, and creates a certain stylistic effect. This parallelism increases cohesion in the narratives. It is used extensively by Tirax speakers, and is typical of Vanuatu languages in general (cf. Thieberger 2004, Crowley 2006a, Musgrave 2007). Some speakers employ clause parallelism more heavily than others, but in all cases, it is expressed in a similar way, with falling intonation for the first clause and rising intonation for the repeat. The stylistic effect is one of a relentless momentum through the story.

Prosodically, lines 13 to 25 form pairs, or couplets, whereby the first line in the couplet, the repeated clause in the tail-head linkage, has rising intonation, and the second has falling intonation. The syntactic and prosodic layers of structure in the
Tirax narratives are often misaligned, with clause-initial discourse markers, such as ve ‘and / but’ occurring at the end of the previous prosodic unit, for example, or the IU expressing part of a clause such as an NP or temporal adverbial phrase rather than a whole clause. However in this section, every IU corresponds to a whole clause, giving a clean, steady rhythm to the telling. Every second line in the couplet relates a narrative event. Every other line in the couplet reiterates the propositional content of the previous clause, in the form of tail-head linkage or clause iteration. The regularity of the prosodic pattern suggests an inevitability in the progression of events. The final narrative clause in this sequence introduces the antagonist: a devil.

The first clause of the new sequence progresses the narrative along the timeline, without adding any new information:

13. ... (0.9) ᵐ=at ᵐ anv-va na: /

   Now he stayed for a while,

The full NP antecedent is mentioned in the final line of the previous sequence, line 12. As we saw in chapter 9, free NPs can be triggered paragraph-finally in clauses beginning with ale which sum up a resulting state of affairs. When there is a paragraph-final free NP, there tends to be no (co-referential) free NP following the adjacent paragraph boundary.

Line 13 also has clause-final, na, ‘now’, discussed in §7.7.3, which is associated with perfect aspect and marking weak prominence. The vowel in na is lengthened, to further build the anticipation of the next event. The rising intonation contour anticipates the following event:

14. ... (0.4) ren-te nmb \ ν i=vu \ now

   and (the) Tahitian chestnut tree came into season.
When (the) Tahitian chestnut tree bore fruit,

*he went and climbed up it.*

*He climbed up (the) Tahitian chestnut,*

*he went up till he reached the top.*

Line 14 relates an event which triggers the sequence of events which make up the plot. Line 15 is a repetition of 14, but with a steeply rising intonation contour, anticipating the event described in the following clause, and so emphasising the link between the two events: the Tahitian chestnut bearing fruit (15) and the boy climbing up it (16). This link is further emphasised by *ale,* which is associated with cause-and-effect relationships, as discussed in chapter 7. The connection between the clauses is also underlined with the cohesive tie between the anaphor (line 16), and its antecedent *nmab* (line 15).

Line 16 is a narrative clause with aspectual V1 *van* ‘go’. In the repetition (line 17), there is no *ivan*; line 17 is a simple clause. We saw in chapter 6, that directional V1s in Tirax are often associated with inceptive aspect, so that *van* in line 16 refers to the beginning of the event, and the repeated material in the tail-head linkage (line 17) actually furthers the event on the timeline. The following line, 18, represents the culmination of this event. In this way, the event of climbing to the top of the *nmab* tree is broken down into three phases: the beginning (16), the development (17) and the endpoint (18). This tripartite event structure, referred to in this work as a *triplet,* is typical of the way events are presented in Tirax discourse. Elaborating an event by
The significance of the event of climbing the tree is that the boy has gone outside into the world in defiance of his parents’ instructions (line 11). Although the significance is not directly stated, it is indicated by the amount of elaboration, in the form of the triplet. It also has the effect of emphasising how high he is off the ground.

For lines 13 to 20 inclusive, each clause is six syllables long, excluding discourse markers *ale* and *na*, which occur in (16), (19) and (20), and which are arguably extra-clausal. The regular pattern of syllable structure of the clause gives the recounting of this chain of events a steady momentum. The full NP *nmab* in line 17 means that the clause keeps to the six-syllable meter, so choice of referring expression in oral discourse may not be just a matter of structure, or topicality, but also of prosody, which in turn is driven by the pressures of telling a compelling story.

Line 19 describes a final state of affairs for this sequence; the boy throws the fruit down from the tree:

19. ... (1.4) *ale*  *i=vɛ*  *sar*  *nmab*  *s=rus*  
   then  3S:R=make  IMPF  T.chestnut  3P:R=drop.down

Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to drop down.

The speaker has used a causative construction, comprising the causative verb *ve*, with a sentential complement, *nmab s’rus*, instead of a corresponding transitive sentence, such as ‘he threw down the chestnuts’. The following clause (line 20) begins with a repetition of *nmab s’rus*. One effect of using the causative construction is that there is a seamless transition to the following clause in line 20, and it enables syntactic, as
well as prosodic parallelism. This parallelism is straddling a structural boundary, triggered by a shift in focus of character which occurs in line 21. As discussed in the following section, the clause relating the event of the falling chestnuts is literally connecting the boy (line 19) to the devil (line 21), in the following episode.

The clause is also marked with imperfective sar, which is associated with marking prominent contextualising events, as discussed in chapter 7. It signals to the hearer to pay attention to the event, which will form the backdrop to the upcoming narrative event of a devil arriving. It further connects the boy in line 19 to the devil in line 21.

11.2.3 Episode 3: Protagonist encounters antagonist
In the third episode, the antagonist is introduced. Line 20 is a repetition of the previous clause in line 19. The IU has rising intonation, which anticipates the following event (in line 21). This function is reinforced by clause-final na ‘now’ with elongated vowel, since clause-final na with rising intonation is associated with marking prominence for the following clause, as discussed in §7.7.3.

20. ... (1.0) nmab s=rus ᶜѡѷ-ѡ na /
    T.chestnut 3F:R=drop.down DUP-DUR now

    Now (the) chestnuts were dropping down,

21. ... (0.4) tnah haxal j=me \
    devil INDEF 3S:R=come

    and a devil came along.

The clause in line 21 introducing the antagonist is a simple realis clause, with no additional markers or elaboration. Such a nasty turn of events may be expected to warrant some sort of evaluation, that is, commentary or other form of editorialising by narrators, including morphosyntactic / discourse-pragmatic highlighting, expressing their attitude towards a story event or situation (cf. Labov 1972). Tnah is a generic term for devil and is the usual villain in Tirax folk tales. This is well known to anyone who hears such a story, and so no elaboration is needed to signal its significance. Furthermore, it is possible that a lack of evaluation in a clause describing an event which is expected to be highly evaluated, may itself be a form of evaluation giving
prominence to that event (cf. Polanyi 1987). At five syllables in length, it is shorter than the previous IUs, which makes it stand out prosodically from the previous lines.

22. \( \ldots (0.6) \) tnah haxal i\(=\)mɛ //

\[ \text{devil INDEF} \]

\( A \) devil came,

23. \( \ldots (0.2) \) i\(=\)rŋ te nmb s\(=\)rus \(

\[ \text{3S:R=hear SUB T.chestnut 3P:R=fall.down} \]

\( \text{and he heard the chestnuts dropping down} \)

24. \( \ldots (0.9) \) i\(=\)rŋ te nmb s\(=\)rus na /

\[ \text{3S:R=hear SUB T.chestnut 3P:R=fall.down now} \]

\( \text{Now he heard the chestnuts falling down:} \)

Lines 22 to 24 continue the pattern of alternating rising and falling intonation contours. Line 22 is a repetition of the previous clause but with steeply rising intonation, anticipating the following event. It is an example of clause iteration, in which an exact copy of the clause is repeated (see §7.3.2). We saw in §9.6 that Tirax has a number of strategies to give prominence to a referent which is introduced in a narrative clause (cf. Du Bois’ (1980) observations of a similar phenomenon in English narrative). Clause iteration, with a repeat of the indefinite marker, is a marked construction, compared with the more frequently encountered tail-head linkage, in which the referent in the repeated clause would be encoded as old information, such as with a dependent pronoun or definite-marked NP. I suggest that clause iteration is a strategy used by Tirax speakers to give prominence to a referent which is established in a narrative clause.

Line 23 describes how the devil hears the falling chestnuts, and line 24, the repetition, has clause-final \( na \) and rising intonation, both of which are markers anticipating the following clause. The steady pattern of clause parallelism and rising and falling intonation contours builds suspense, as the devil appears and gets closer to discovering the boy. His awareness of the boy’s presence is represented as direct speech:
25. ... (0.7) \( \text{nevti} \) todrak haxal xan hut-xan^ \( \backslash \) \\
smell food:1S:POSS INDEF PRX place-PRX

“The smell of my food is someplace here!”

The direct speech is prosodically marked with a high pitch, but there is no morphosyntactic coding to signal the switch from narration to direct discourse. The character speaking is assumed to be the devil, since the devil is the subject in the previous sentence.

The speech is in the form of a verbless demonstrative locative, comprising an elaborated NP nevti todrak haxal xan ‘this smell of my food’ and proximal locative hut-xan, ‘someplace here’. The proximal demonstrative xan emphasises the close proximity of the boy to the devil, thus increase the sense of jeopardy. Todrak is a portmanteau possessive classifier for food-belonging-to-someone, conjugated in the first person singular (‘my’). The use of haxal, which quantifies the food as one unit, suggests that the devil is referring to the boy, rather than the chestnuts. Later, in line 126, the devil again refers to the boy as todrar haxal ‘our food’. The obvious meaning is that the boy is in danger of being eaten by the devil.

The previous line has a clause-final na, as well as rising intonation, which typically signals that the following line relates an important narrative event. However in line 25, the expected narrative event is represented by a line of dialogue. Direct speech, as discussed above in §11.2.1, is a technique for vividly evoking the characters to help the audience enter more deeply into the world of the story. All these factors increase the drama: clause-final na and a rising intonation contour set up expectations of a forthcoming important narrative event. These expectations are then paid off by dramatising the event directly through speech, without a verb of locution. This unexpected lack of a locution verb gives the direct speech prominence. Suspense and drama are heightened, because the danger posed to the boy appears more immediate.

The following clauses elongate build suspense leading up to the devil seeing the boy.
Suspense is created as soon as a negative outcome is anticipated. Once the devil arrives, it is clear the boy is in danger and each clause which intervenes between the arrival of the devil and the devil’s discovery of the boy increases the suspense. The clause in line 26 is introduced by *ale*, reflecting the cause-and-effect connection between this clause and the previous clauses.

In line 29 for the first time, the lexical item *marbih*, from *mar* ‘man’ and *bih* ‘small’, is used instead of *ntebih*, literally ‘thing-small’, or *netna*, ‘child of (someone)’. *Marbih* reflects the status of the boy as an independent, active protagonist. The verb *hakel* is used here where an alternative verb, *at* (‘sit’) would be adequate. *Hakel* means ‘to sit with legs dangling down’; the manner of sitting is lexicalised in the verb. The adverb *linha* gives further specification to the location of the boy and also provides a cohesive tie with lines 27/28, which contain *linha* when describing where the devil is looking, as well as line 18, which relates the event of the boy climbing to the top of the tree. Line 29 evokes an image of the boy more clearly than if using a more generic verb. *Hakel* and *linha* highlight the vulnerability of the boy, being trapped in the tree with the devil below, while at the same time keeping to the simple story-telling style established in the opening lines.
Including descriptive detail in a story helps create a vivid image in the mind of the audience, and so potentially engages an audience more deeply. If it is in the form of elaboration, such as in lines 27 and 28, it distorts narrative time by stretching it relative to real time, and in this case has the additional function of increasing suspense. Conversely, by using a semantically dense expression *hakel*, in line 29, the teller creates a vivid picture of the boy and evokes his vulnerability, but without taking up extra time in uttering it. Once the devil has seen the boy, there is no longer any need to build suspense, and the task is then to tell ‘what happens next’, that is, to progress the narrative along the timeline.

Once the devil is introduced (line 21), the point of view stays with him: what he hears, what he smells, what he sees. With each clause the devil - and danger - gets closer to the boy. And then when the devil looks up into the tree, the boy is revealed through his eyes. However, there is the suggestion of a switch in line 29 to an omniscient point of view, created by the use of the definite article to introduce the boy; the definite article is not compatible with taking the devil’s point of view, since this is the first time the devil has spotted the boy. The definite article reflects cohesion, linking the boy to previous mentions, and therefore increasing the audience’s connection to the boy: the storyteller creates a more powerful moment by shifting away from a true reflection of the devil’s point of view at that time. Controlling the point of view is one of the tools at a storyteller’s disposal for engaging the audience in the story. It also underpins narrative structure, as we saw in chapter 8, where we demonstrated that switches in focus of character, or the character whose eyes we are seeing the story world through, is one of the main triggers of structural boundaries. The definite article can also be interpreted here as reflecting cohesion with the mention of the food (*todor haxal*) in the devil’s direct speech. The cohesion with the mention in the speech also raises the stakes for the boy, as he is potentially the devil’s food. In this interpretation, the point of view remains with the devil.

The following clause elaborates on the previous clause, by adding more detail to the image expressed in line 29:
30. … (0.5) $i=\text{ve}$ nmab $s=\text{rus}$ $i=\text{haxalxin}$ \\
$3S:\text{R}=\text{make chestnut}$ $3P:\text{R}=\text{fall.down}$ $3S:\text{R}=\text{do.continuously}$

*He was making the chestnuts continuously fall.*

Line 30 rephrases line 19, but underlines the repetitiveness of the action by using the manner verb *haxalxin* ‘(do) one after another’. By rephrasing an earlier line (19), line 30 provides a cohesive tie linking the clauses together. But the audience is afforded a new view of the same event: when the event is described in line 19, it is an innocent action. The repetition in line 29 underlines its role in attracting the attention of a passing devil.

So in the third episode, the devil and boy meet face to face. The boy is vulnerable and in danger of being eaten by the devil. The following episode describes what happens once the protagonist encounters the antagonist. A structural boundary is triggered by a shift in discourse mode to speech mode.

11.2.4 Episode 4: The devil takes control of the protagonist

In the fourth episode, the devil assumes control of the situation, increasing the sense of danger to the boy.

31. … (1.2) $i=\text{ve}$- $\sigma$ — \\
$3S:\text{R}=\text{(say)}$ HES

32. .. tnah $\eta$ $i=\text{ve}$ xini mar- marbih $\eta$ $i=\text{va}$ $^\text{e}$ — \\
devil DEF $3S:\text{R}=\text{say OBL}$ HES boy DEF $3S:\text{R}=\text{say}$ hey

*He said to the boy, he said “Hey!”*

33. … (0.8) $^\text{ba}$- $\text{ba}$- $\text{ba}$=busde haxal $\text{ba}$=serex-i $\text{de}=\text{me}$ litan$^\text{e}$ — \\
HES HES $2S:\text{I}=\text{remove}$ one $2S:\text{I}=\text{throw-3S}$ $3S:\text{I}=\text{come down}$

*“Pick one and throw it down,”*

34. … (0.3) $^\text{vehx}$ da=we$e$ n$\text{ox}$ — \\
otherwise $1S:\text{I}=\text{eat}$ $2S$

*“or I'll eat you!”*
Line 31 is a false start, and is immediately repaired (line 32); the subject is expressed as a dependent pronoun in 31, and as a free NP in 32. The free NP is likely to have been triggered by the competing referent (the boy), having been mentioned in the previous clause. It could also be understood as being associated with the structural boundary, as per a discourse structure approach (eg. Fox 1987, 1996), discussed in chapters 8 and 9. We noted in previous chapters that Deictic Centre Theory (eg. Zubin and Hewitt 1995) provides one of the more comprehensive accounts of Tirax anaphora compared with other well-known frameworks, but that it does not give a complete account. The clauses in lines 29 to 32 are an example of a distribution pattern which challenges the theory. Marbih ŋe ‘the boy’ is the subject of a subordinate clause in line 29, and so according to Zubin and Hewitt (1995) cannot be the deictic WHO. However he is subject of the following clause, and a dependent pronoun is triggered, when a free NP would be expected, triggered by the shift in deictic WHO. The dependent pronoun could be accounted for by analysing the clause in line 30 as juxtaposed with the subordinate clause (line 29), rather than the main clause (line 28). However, in that case, there should be no need to have a free NP for the devil in line 32, since the devil would still be the deictic WHO.

Lines 32 to 34 express the first direct speech in the narrative between the antagonist and protagonist. The speech in line 34 makes explicit the threat to the boy – that he is in danger of being eaten by the devil, and so is obliged to do his bidding. Since there are presumably Tahitian chestnuts all over the ground, the devil’s dialogue serves simply to make the threat to the boy apparent.

In the devil’s speech, the Tahitian chestnut is referred to with the numeral, haxal, ‘one’, as it would be in a real world conversation, where the immediate context makes the reference clear to the hearer. The storyteller assumes that the audience has constructed a mental model of the story world which provides the same context for easily interpreting the reference. The reduced anaphoric expression reflects a cohesive tie between the discourse in line 33 and the story clauses preceding it, which in turn highlights the fact that it was the boy throwing down the chestnuts that attracted the attention of the devil in the first place. Reference tracking in text with embedded direct speech is complex because it relies on an accurate visual representation of the story world in the mind of the audience, in addition to the conventions of reference
tracking which operate in narrative discourse. Stirling (To appear) has a discussion of the methodological issues surrounding structural and distributional analyses in narratives with embedded direct speech.

In the following lines, the boy does the devil’s bidding:

35. … (0.9) marbih ɲɛ i=serex-i i=me litan \  
      boy DEF 3S:R=throw-3S 3S:R=come down  

    The boy threw one down.

36. … (1.0) tnah ɲɛ i=lev-i iw- i=wes-i \  
      devil DEF 3S:R=take-3S HES 3S:R=eat-3S  

    The devil took it and ate it.

Line 35 comprises a narrative clause relating the boy’s response to the devil’s order. There is extensive lexical and prosodic parallelism between the order (line 33) and the execution of the order (line 35), as the same expression is used with the same intonation contour and rhythm. Line 33 is in irrealis mode, and in 35 the same phrase is in realis mode, creating the impression of literally obeying the devil’s orders to the letter and turning the hypothetical into actuality. This adds to a sense of the boy being trapped by the devil, because his actions are so specifically prescribed and executed.

Line 36 relates the devil response. It comprises two simple realis clauses with no elaboration. As for line 19, the textual simplicity increases the dramatic impact, by giving the devil a no nonsense, business-like approach to putting the boy under pressure. The return to the lean narrative style also ups the pace of the narrative. The direct speech in lines 32 to 34 has been followed by three narrative events in rapid succession, creating a sense of momentum.

37. … (1.4) i=va "^e .. taweh lxen de=me" \  
      3S:R=say hey another.one back 3S:i=come  

    He (the devil) said “Hey! Throw down another one!”
38. … (0.2) ^vehxe da=wes nəx na^ \  
otherwise 1s:1=eat 2s now  

“or I’m going to eat you!”

39. … (1.1) ale: — = 
so  
So  

\[i=\text{væ} \quad \text{lxen} \quad \text{taw} \quad \text{h} \quad \text{i-s} \quad \text{ɔ} \quad \text{v} \quad \text{litan}\]  
3s:r=make back another hes 3s:r=fall down  

(the boy) threw another one down.

40. … (1.0) i=drlo\text{-}m-i —  
3s:r=swallow.whole-3s  

(The devil) swallowed it whole,

41. … (0.7) i=\text{va} t — (0.8) ^^ de=haxal \quad \text{lxen} ^^ —  
3s:r=say (mistake) 3s:1=one back  

He said “Another one!”

42. … (0.3) ^ veḥx̣e da=wes nəx \  
otherwise 1s:1=eat 2s  

“Or I’ll eat you!”

43. … (0.9) ale: —  
so  

So,

44. … (0.3) i=\text{serex} \quad \text{lxen} \quad \text{taw} \quad \text{h} —  
3s:r=throw back another  

(the boy) threw down another.

45. … (1.1) ale i=drlo\text{-}m-i —  
so 3s:r=swallow.whole-3s  

And (the devil) swallowed it whole.
The devil asks the boy to throw him down a chestnut three times. Table 11-3 summarises the pattern of events.

Table 11-3: Pattern of events within sequence 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Number</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32-34</td>
<td>IA</td>
<td>The devil asks the boy to throw him a chestnut and threatens to eat the boy if he does not obey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>IB</td>
<td>The boy throws down a chestnut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>IC</td>
<td>The devil (picks up and) eats the chestnut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-38</td>
<td>IIA</td>
<td>As for IA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>IIB</td>
<td>As for IB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>IIC</td>
<td>As for IC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-42</td>
<td>IIIA</td>
<td>As for IA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43-44</td>
<td>IIIB</td>
<td>As for IB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>IIIC</td>
<td>As for IC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of the imperatives in this sequence shows that there is an increasing amount of ellipsis with each successive utterance, as shown in table 11-4.

Table 11-4: Comparison of imperatives in sequence 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>No. of syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>&quot;Babusde haxal, baserexi deme litan!&quot;</td>
<td>‘Pick one and throw it down!’</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>&quot;Taweh lxen deme!&quot;</td>
<td>‘Another one to come!’</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;Dehaxal lxen!&quot;</td>
<td>‘One more!’</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the threat is almost identical in each telling, as shown in table 11-5.
Over the repetitions of the order and threat, there is an increasing sense that the devil is moving in on the boy, heightening a sense of danger. The decreasing phonological length of the imperatives reflects an increasing boldness on the part of the devil, an increasing trend towards informality, as per Haiman’s observations about the iconic parallel between length of utterance and formal distance (1983:800). By contrast, the threat is succinct and to the point, which gives it a decisive quality and therefore makes the danger more potent. It is almost identical with each repetition, creating a sense of inevitability.

In lines 42 to 46, the third section of the sequence, there are no novel lexical items, so there is a high level of lexical cohesion, which is partly epiphenomenal, due to the fact the same kind of events are being narrated. Other cohesive devices include the discourse marker *ale* and pronominal markers. Both the devil and boy are referred to with full NPs in the first part of this sequence (lines 32 and 35), and with dependent pronouns in the following two parts, which each paraphrase the first. No free NPs are triggered with the shift in subject role from one character to the other. This suggests the pairs of direct speech turns function as a single unit for the purposes of reference tracking; a free NP is not triggered unless the pattern is disrupted. This pattern of distribution of anaphora coheres the sequence internally and distinguishes it from adjacent sequences.

The lines relating each narrative event in sequence four are compared in tables 8.6 and 8.7.

**Table 11-5**: Comparison of threats in sequence 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>“vehxe dawes nxx!”</td>
<td>‘Or I’ll eat you!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>“vehxe dawes nxx na!”</td>
<td>‘Or I’m going to eat you!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>“vehxe dawes nxx!”</td>
<td>‘Or I’ll eat you!’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11-6: Comparison of the boy’s response in sequence 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Marbih ſe iserexi ime litan ‾</td>
<td>‘The boy threw one down.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Ale: — ivery taweh ir- isɔv litan —</td>
<td>‘So, he dropped another one down.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Ale: iserex lxen taweh —</td>
<td>‘So, he threw down another.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11-7: Comparison of the devil’s response in sequence 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Tnah ſe ilevi iwesi ‾</td>
<td>‘The devil took it and ate it.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Idrlomi —</td>
<td>‘He gulped it down.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Ale idrlomi —</td>
<td>‘And he gulped it down.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This sequence is effective in terms of the narrative goal of engaging an audience, because speaker creates a sense of the boy trapped in a situation where time is speeding up towards an inevitable doom. This is achieved by:

- the use of *ale*, indicating a chain-of-cause and effect, trapping the boy into a pattern of reacting. This is a passive role for the protagonist, taking away his power to act independently, and so creates a undesirable state, a state of imbalance.
- a reduction in length of utterance through successive paraphrases, iconically indicating that the devil is getting closer
- continuing intonation, indicating an inevitability or a sense of no-end-in-sight.

This sequence illustrates the *rule-of-three*, a tension-building device widespread in all genres of narrative discourse, from jokes to folktales. In his analysis of Russian folktales, Propp observes that a *function*, a significant narrative event associated with the folk tale genre, is sometimes negated or obstructed twice, so that it has to happen a third time in order to have consequences for the plot (1928:74). A triplet of events
or chain of events is found in European folktales, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and *the Three Little Pigs*. Three occurrences of an event or chain of events unequivocally establishes it as a pattern. Usually the third time the event or chain of events is repeated, such as in a joke or story, the final component of the event is different or unexpected, creating a source humour in the case of a joke, and creating a breakthrough, with either positive or negative consequences, in the case of a story. In the *Chestnuts* narrative, the sequence of events is instigated by the antagonist, and each repetition of the chain of events is the same as the previous. There is no breakthrough. The rule-of-three functions here to establish the fact that the boy is trapped; the circumstances in which he finds himself are pretty grim, getting worse and have no end in sight.

11.2.5 Episode 5: Protagonist pretends to co-operate with devil

Sequence five relates how the boy tries to take back control of his fate:

46. ... (1.0) ^marbihŋe i=at linha /=
    boy DEF 3S:R=sit high

*The boy sat above (in the tree),*

ve i=drodrom dax ^ \ 
but 3S:R=think PERF

*and he wondered*

47. ... (0.3) ^^ de=dla-hxa na^^ !
    3S:1=be.like-what now

*Now in what way*

48. ... (0.2) ^de=winim selivan han^ \ 
    3S:1=defeat(B) life 3S:POSS

*can he save his life?*

We saw above that the final clause of previous sequence has continuing intonation, signalling an ongoing sequence of events. However a structural boundary is signalled prosodically by a longer pause and a change to a higher pitch, and the line is twice as
long as the preceding lines, breaking out of the pattern of increasing succinctness. There is also a free NP to refer to the boy. We saw in chapter 8 that free NPs can be associated with paragraph-initial clauses, and in this case it appears to be associated with a shift away from the turn-taking pattern established in the previous lines, in which dependent pronouns were used. The first clause in line 46 recaps the boy’s physical position, and in doing so reorients the audience to the boy’s point of view, before going on to report the boy’s thoughts. Using the camera lens analogy from Deictic Centre Theory (Zubin & Hewitt 1995): it is as though the lens through which the audience is viewing the story world has shifted from a wide angle, seeing the two characters interacting, to close up to the boy in the tree.

The perfective marker *dax* gives the cognitive verb *drodrom* ‘think’ a punctual aspect, and marks the clause as a prominent narrative clause. Lines 47 and 48 are an example of F(ree) I(ndirect) D(iscourse), discussed in chapter 7 (§7.4.5). The prosody suggests direct thought, while the morphosyntax suggests indirect thought. It is strongly evocative of the boy’s point of view, and is an effective means for creating empathy with his plight. The following lines relate the action that the boy takes in response to his reflecting on the situation:

49. ... (0.9) ale i=ver xini tnah ñe i=va ^e^ —
    so 3S=R=say OBL devil DEF 3S=R=say hey

   *So he said to the devil, he said “Hey!”*

50. ... (3.0) ^b- ba=at litan ^//
    HES 2S:1=stay down

   *“You stay down (there)”*

51. ... (0.3) ^ ba=vle-i ^\  
    2S:1=gather-3S

   *“and gather them up”*

---

7 See §4.6.1 for a description of the grammatical function of *dax*, and §7.7.1 for its role in marking prominence in narrative clauses.

8 Here and elsewhere, words which are especially loud are in bold.
Line 49 relates a narrative event, and introduces nine lines of direct speech. The long length of the speech iconically reflects the boy buying himself time. The boy appears to have a plan, although it is not obvious how making the devil pick up chestnuts is going to save his life. However it represents a turning point, as the boy is now the instigator of action, reversing the roles of leader and follower, and breaking out of the pattern established by the devil. There is a development in the sequence, from the
initial narrative event to the dialogue with the devil. The development from thought to
dialogue is summarised in table 11-8.

**Table 11-8**: Development of story in sequence 5 from reported event to instantiation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>narration</td>
<td>the boy has a thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-8</td>
<td>FID</td>
<td>the thought is revealed in the form of an indirect question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-58</td>
<td>direct speech</td>
<td>the goal of the indirect question is instantiated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Agentivity* is a traditional characteristic of a protagonist and can drive a plot forward. It helps engage an audience; it is unlikely that an audience will invest in a protagonist who is entirely passive and at the mercy of villains and circumstances. Therefore if a protagonist in a traditional tale is being passive, the situation is in a state of imbalance, and this sequence relates a turning point in the fortune of the protagonist. The narrative clause that relates the turning point is encoded for prominence with the perfective *dax* (line 46).

There is a paragraph break, triggered by a shift in discourse mode and focus of character:

59. … (0.8) **ale** tnah nɛ i=at litan / =

    so  devil DEF 3S:R=be down

    So the devil got down

60. i=vle-i   i=vle-i   i=vle-i   i=vle   kokortox-i

    3S:R=gather-3s  3S:R=gather-3s  3S:R=gather-3s  3S:R=gather in.a.heap-3s

    i=vle kokortox vɔ-vɔ /

    3S:R=gather in.a.heap DUP-DUR

    and gathered them and gathered them and gathered them and piled them all up

    into a heap, he piled them up until
61. … (0.2) \ i=nev \ 3S:\ R=finish \\
                   it was done.

62. … (0.5) \ ale \ i=va \ i=nev \ na \ 3S:\ R=say \ 3S:\ R=finish \ now \\
                    So he said “That’s enough now!”

63. … (0.5) \ ale \ marbih \ ndef \ i=sbul \ litan \ 3S:\ R=climb.downwards \ LOC.ground \\
                         And the boy climbed down to the ground.

The storyteller creates momentum in the narrative by using the adverbial locative *litan* ‘on / to the ground’ to give otherwise atelic clauses an endpoint (lines 59 and 63). The rhythm of the iterated VP in 60 evokes the repetitive work of gathering the chestnuts. The final line has a steeply falling intonation contour, signalling an upcoming structural boundary. Here and in previous sequences we can see that the narrative pressures of vivid storytelling and creating momentum influence lexical choice, morphosyntax and prosody.

11.2.6 Episode 6: Protagonist gets further into danger
The first line in the new sequence is a tail-head linkage construction:

64. … (0.7) \ i=sbul \ litan \ 3S:\ R=climb.downwards \ down \\
                  He climbed down

65. … (0.3) \ ale: — \ then \\
           and

66. … (1.9) \ r=hlo- \ r=hlox-i \ na \ HES \ 3D:\ R=carry-3S \ now \\
                           and now the two of them carried them.
67. \( \text{i=va} \quad \text{\^{a}le} \quad \backslash \quad \text{3S:R=say} \quad \text{so} \)

(The devil) said “So!”

68. \( \text{\ldots (0.5) \endash bar=h\text{\^{u}non} \quad \text{lal} \quad \text{haxa} \quad \backslash} \quad \text{2D:i=fill} \quad \text{inside} \quad \text{what} \)

“What are we going to put them in?”

69. \( \text{\ldots (0.7) marbih} \quad \text{\^{n}e} \quad \text{i=v-va \endash} \quad \text{child} \quad \text{DEF} \quad \text{3S:R=DUP=say} \)

The boy said

70. \( \text{\ldots (0.2) m\text{\^{m}}-} \quad \text{\^{\bar{b}e}r=vr\text{\^{a}k}\text{\^{e}}} \quad \text{\^{b}e} \quad \backslash} \quad \text{HES} \quad \text{2D:i=carry.in.hand} \quad \text{DIM} \)

“We’ll just carry them in our hands.”

71. \( \text{\ldots (0.3) \quad \text{\text{\^{a}le} \quad \text{tnah} \quad \text{i=vr\text{\^{a}k}\text{\^{e}}} \quad \text{n\text{\^{e}}}} \quad \backslash} \quad \text{so} \quad \text{devil} \quad \text{3S:R=carry.in.hand} \quad \text{PART} \)

So the devil carried some,

72. \( \text{\ldots (0.5) \quad \text{\text{\^{a}le}}} \quad \text{\endash} \quad \text{so} \)

and

73. \( \text{\ldots (0.2) \quad \text{xain} \quad \text{i=vr\text{\^{a}k}\text{\^{e}}} \quad \text{n\text{\^{e}}}} \quad \backslash} \quad \text{3S} \quad \text{3S:R=carry.in.hand} \quad \text{PART} \)

he himself carried some.

We have seen that clause parallelism is common in Tirax narratives. There was extensive clause parallelism in the third sequence, where the story was being set up; new information was being drip fed to the audience and the story was given a steady momentum building up to a major plot point, where the devil discovers the boy. Once the story is set up, clause parallelism tends to be restricted, particularly in this narrative, to straddling structural boundaries. This is illustrated in line 64, where the tail-head linked clause functions as a *transition clause*, reflecting cohesion across a
structural boundary. The boundary is triggered by the shift in discourse mode, from narrative to speech. The clause in line 66 does not fit the description of transition clause well, since it introduces new information (see §8.4). It in fact pre-empts the outcome of the dialogue, and interestingly it caused some problems with two of my consultants as to how to interpret it, particularly as the boy and devil did not hlox the chestnuts (carry on back), but vrake them (carry in hands).

In line 67 the devil is grammatical subject, and is referred to with a dependent pronoun, despite the potential for ambiguity, and despite the fact that the boy was the subject (line 64) prior to the dual subject (lines 65-66). This is an example of a dependent pronoun where a free NP would be expected, and it challenges all the approaches to anaphora canvassed in chapter 9.

In lines 67 to 70 the devil asks a question and the boy responds. The significance is that the devil appears to be deferring to the boy for now, and the boy is apparently in control of the situation. Underlying this though is that the boy is in jeopardy, and the audience is likely to be wondering how the boy will get away from the devil and save his life.

Lines 71 and 72-3 form a symmetrical pair. The strong syntactic and prosodic parallelism create a sense of balance between the protagonist and antagonist, in terms of apparent power. At the same time they suggest a sense of constraint and inevitability; the boy’s actions are not free and unpredictable, but are constrained by the devil and the situation, and this straight-jacketing is reflected in the strong syntactic and prosodic parallelism. The choice of the free pronoun to refer to the boy in line 73 enhances the prosodic parallelism, as well as creating a sense of intimacy with him, as discussed in §9.5.3.

The following sequence relates the boy hatching a plan to try and escape the inevitable.
11.2.7 Episode 7: Protagonist hatches an escape plan, finds out key information

Sequence seven begins with ale in its own intonation unit, followed by a line which prosodically and syntactically breaks out of the pattern established in the previous few lines:

74. … (0.3) ale /
   so

Now

75. … (0.6) marbih *n* / = xain / = *a* ren-te i=*v* i=dla *n* /
   boy DEF 3S HES time-SUB 3S:r=make 3S:r=be.thus DEF

As for the boy, while he was doing this,

ve drodroman han kle i=vles dax \ 
but mind 3S:POSS too 3S:r=wander Perf

he had another idea.

76. … (0.3) i=ɾŋɔdrɔ-i \ 
   3S:r=know-3S

He realised

77. … (0.2) de=winim selivan han a de=dła-hxa \ 
   3S:l=defeat(B) life 3S:POSS HES 3S:l=be.like-what

how he could save his life.

This passage of text relates another important plot point, marked as prominent with the perfective marker dax (line 75): he realises (again?!) how he can save his life. The narrator gives the audience insight into the mind of the boy, and this is marked with a double reference expression, comprising a pronoun, associated with a sense of intimacy, and a free NP, which disambiguates the reference and is associated with the shift in degree of penetration from the outside to inside the mind of the boy, which triggers the structural boundary, as discussed in §8.3.1. Rente ‘meanwhile’ encodes the clause in line 75 for simultaneity, contrasting the inner workings of the boy’s mind with the external appearance of co-operating with the devil, and this contrast is
reinforced by the anaphoric expression *idla ye*, ‘be doing this’, which creates a strong cohesive tie to the previous lines.

Lines 74 to 77 create anticipation in the audience by letting the audience have partial knowledge: we know that the boy has had an idea about how to save his life, but not what that idea is. The audience therefore knows more than the devil, but less than the boy.

78. … (0.6) ale i=m-mex xini tnah — so 3S:R=DUP-ask OBL devil

*So he asked (the) devil,*

79. … (0.4) i=v-va ^e ^— 3S:R=DUP-say hey

*he said “Hey!”*

80. … (0.2) be: — but(B)

*“Hang on -”*

81. … (0.2) ^ dar=at xan nɔx x=mtaxit xini morti te i=dla-hxa \ 1D:1=be PRX 2S 2S:R=be.afraid OBL person REL 3S:R=be.thus-what

*“Wait! What kind of man are you afraid of?”*

82. … (0.6) morti te i=vkɔr // person REL 3S:R=white

*“A light-skinned man?”*

83. … (0.4) haxa morti te i=net ^ \ or person REL 3S:R=black

*“Or a dark-skinned man?”*

84. … (0.4) tnah i=narxat i=va ^ ^ o ^^ — devil 3S:R=get.up 3S:R=say oh

*(The) devil went and said “Oh!”*
85. … (0.5)  ^^ xnɔ: n — ^^  
1S  HES

“Me,”

… (0.5)  ^^ n=mtaxit  xini morti te  i=net  ia ^\  
1S:R=be.afraid  OBL  person  REL  3S:R=black  that(B)

“I’m afraid of the dark-skinned man.”

86. … (1.0)  na marbih  ŋe  i=va  ^ a ^  
now  boy  DEF  3S:R=say  aha

Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha!”

^ xain  bɔ  xan  n=ve-ve  da=rɔdrɔ-i ^\  
3S  DIM  PRX  1S:R=DUP-want  1S:R=know-3S

“That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

The devil answers the boy’s question, unaware that he is giving the boy the information he needs to escape. The devil’s dialogue, in line 85, has a very high pitch contour. It is likely that the very high pitch here indicates innocence or guileless-ness, as it would in English dialogue. It reinforces that the devil is not aware of the boy’s ulterior motive for asking the question, and suggests that the answer the devil gives is true. The direct thought in line 86 indicates the boy’s plan is on course.

These lines of direct discourse result in a shift in mood, from suspense to anticipation. The audience need no longer fear for the boy, but can look forward to how he is going to outsmart the devil.

87. … (0.6)  ale: —  
so

And he said

88. … (0.7)  i=va  ^ ale  bar=vrako  nmab ^\  
3S:R=say  okay  2D:R=carry.in.hand  T.chestnut

“OK, let's take (these) chestnuts.”
And the two of them got going, carrying the chestnuts.

Having got the necessary information, the boy instigates the following event of continuing on. No sooner does he make the command of moving off, than they carry it out. The narrator moves on quickly, propelling the narrative forward with a rapidly spoken rhyming couplet: barvrake nmab (line 88) and r’vrakei r’van (89), which increases pitch as well as tempo, creating a sense of acceleration.

This completes sequence seven. The action described in the final line is the same as the action at the beginning of this sequence - the two of them are carrying chestnuts and walking along, however the balance of power has now shifted in the boy’s favour. The audience, though not the devil, is privy to this shift in power, and so the mood has changed from suspense to anticipation.

11.2.8 Episode 8: Protagonist gets into deeper danger

In the eighth sequence, the stakes are raised as the boy is led further astray by the devil into an increasingly dangerous situation:

Now the two of them were carrying them all,

and the fellow asked (the) devil:

“But whereabouts are we going to cook the chestnuts?”
93. … (0.5)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tnah} & \text{ i=narxat} & \text{i=v-va} \\
\text{devil} & \text{ 3S:R=get.up} & \text{3S:R=DUP-say}
\end{align*}
\]

*The devil went and replied*

94. … (0.2)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bar=tin} & \text{ lot} & \text{hɔk} \\
\text{2D:1=cook} & \text{ place} & \text{1S:POSS}
\end{align*}
\]

“We'll cook them at my place.”

95. … (0.5)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{i=va} & \text{ ^ale^} \\
\text{3S:R=say} & \text{ ok}
\end{align*}
\]

*(The boy) said “Ok!”*

96. … (0.4)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{na} & \text{ r=van} & \text{r=van} & \text{r=van} & \text{vɔ} & \text{na} \\
\text{now} & \text{ 3D:R=go} & \text{3D:R=go} & \text{3D:R=go} & \text{DUR} & \text{now}
\end{align*}
\]

*Now the two of them walked and walked, on and on,*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{r=van} & \text{ nŋa} & \text{… (inbreath 0.3)} & \text{blɔ} & \text{nvet} & \text{he} & \text{tnah} \\
\text{3D:R=go} & \text{LOC} & \text{hole} & \text{stone} & \text{POSS} & \text{devil}
\end{align*}
\]

*they walked on until they came to (the) devil's cave.*

In this passage, the boy learns they are going to the devil’s cave, and then they arrive there. The sense of jeopardy is increased by the extensive reduplication of the VP, which iconically emphasises the length of the journey into the bush towards the devil’s cave, deeper into unknown territory and further from home.

Note that the narrator continues to manage the *relative knowledge* of plot information for maximum suspense and anticipation by manipulating the focus of character and degree of penetration: the audience knows the boy has a plan, though does not know what the plan is. The devil does not know the boy has a plan, and the audience also knows this. The devil has a plan of his own, to eat the boy, but the boy (and the audience) are aware of this. The status of awareness of the characters and audience is represented in table 11-9.
Table 11-9: Relative knowledge of plot points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Boy</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Devil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: the devil intends to eat the boy</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boy knows A</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: the boy has a plan to escape</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The devil does not know B</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What the boy’s plan is</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mentioned above, is that by controlling the relative awareness of information, the narrator maximises suspense and anticipation. The shifts in focus of character and degree of penetration in turn trigger structural boundaries, such as between episodes 6 and 7, and 7 and 8. So we can see that narrative pressures can influence narrative structure.

11.2.9 Episode 9: The devil puts his plan into action
The following sequence begins with a tail-head linked clause, functioning as a transition clause:

97. ... (0.6) \( r=\text{van} \) \( n\eta \) \( \text{blo} \) \( \text{nvet he} \) \( \text{tnah na: /—} \)
     \( 3d:\text{R}=\text{go} \) \( \text{LOC} \) \( \text{hole} \) \( \text{stone} \) \( \text{POSS} \) \( \text{devil now} \)

*Now they went into the devil’s cave,*

98. ... (0.5) \( ^{\text{tnah}} \) \( \text{i=kreh-i} \) \( \text{na} ^{\backslash} \)
     \( \text{devil} \) \( 3s:\text{R}=\text{deceive-3s} \) \( \text{now} \)

*but the devil was tricking him!*

Lines 97 and 98 increase the jeopardy for the boy. By relating that the devil is deceiving the boy, subtext has become fact, and the sense of danger is heightened. The narrator highlights the danger by using several markers of prominence for the clause in line 98. The previous clause has a clause-final *na* with rising intonation, which is loud and has a lengthened vowel, heightening the anticipation of the following event and marking it as prominent, as discussed in §7.7.3. Line 98 is louder
and higher pitched than previous clauses, and the clause-final *na* with downward intonation also gives the clause prominence. The clause is given further prominence by being repeated (line 99), in one of the few tail-head linked constructions not associated with a structural boundary following the set up of the narrative. In fact, the actual deception is 6 lines away in the dialogue: line 104, where he tells the boy he is ‘going to the toilet’, when in fact he is going to go and get his devil friends:

99. ... (0.4) \ i=kreh  marbih  \ na / va \ \ ale \\
    \ 3S:R=deceive  boy  DEF  now  3S:R=say  ok

*He was tricking the boy, saying “Okay!”*

100. ... (0.4) \ nɔɔx  ba=delex  nadxan^ / \\
    \ 2S  2S:I=light  fire

“You light a fire.”

101. ... (0.2) \ ba=tintin-i ^ / \\
    \ 2S:I=roast-3

“*and roast (the chestnuts).*”

102. ... (0.4) \ ale — \\
    \ so

“*Ok,*”

103. ... (0.3) \ xɔɔnɔ — \\
    \ 1S

“*as for me...*”

104. ... (0.2) \ xɔɔnɔ  da=van  a  leniḥ  tr-tra ^ \ \\
    \ 1S  1S:I=go  HES  bush  DUP-big

“I'm going to go to the toilet.”

105. ... (1.8) \ marbih  \ na / va \ ale  \ Ø=van ^ \ \\
    \ boy  DEF  now  3S:R=say  so  IMP:S=go

*The boy said “Ok, you go!”*
The treachery is dramatised using dialogue. There is at least one other story in the corpus, where the villain tells the victim that he is ‘going to the toilet’ (*van leniθ trtra*), in order to perpetrate a deception. In that story, *Cat and Dog*, when Cat finally returns from acting out his treachery, Dog asks why he took so long. Cat replies that he had ‘a really really bad stomach ache’. So ‘going to the toilet’ is a convenient excuse for getting away alone in order to deceive the protagonist.

In the boy’s reply, he uses a bare imperative to address the devil, in response to the devil’s formal imperative. The politeness of the devil belies the subterfuge which is taking place, and the casualness of the boy’s reply belies his knowledge of the danger he is in. The dialogue is sophisticated in its mismatch of surface appearance with actual intent.

The following lines make clear that the boy knows what the devil is really up to:

106. ... (0.3) ve marbih ηε i=ŋodrc dax te i=dla —

*But the boy already knew how*

... (0.3) mar ηε i=dla i=kreh bo \

*the man was just tricking him like that -*

.. tnah ηε i=kreh bo \

*the devil was just tricking him.*

107. ... (0.3) te de=an xini ηε dr-duenar ia \

*in order to go and get the rest of those (devils).*

These lines have a dual effect of increasing the jeopardy by relating the likelihood of the devil getting more devils, but at the same time demonstrating that the boy is in
control, because he is aware of the danger he is in - and the audience knows he has a plan.

11.2.10 Episode 10: Protagonist puts his plan into action

The following lines sum up the result of the previous sequence:

108. … (0.8)  

so

So,

109. … (0.2)  

xain  iv- tnah  ñe  i=van  \  
3S  HES  devil  DEF  3S:R=go

the devil went.

110. … (0.4)  

ale  marbih  ñe  i=at  \  
so  boy  DEF  3S:R=be

And the boy stayed behind.

The clauses are textually simple and exhibit a strong morphosyntactic parallelism. Prosodically, the lines have a similar rhythm and rhyme and identical downward intonation contour. This pair echoes the parallelism between lines 71 to 73. In those clauses, the emphasis was on an equal share of the burden. Here the pair of clauses represents a parting of the ways.

As observed by Labov (1972) and others (eg. Rimmon-Kenan 2002), strong parallelism is associated with dramatic power. Minimal changes between adjacent lines throw into relief the meaning differences, giving the differences in meaning more force. Here, the parallelism dramatically emphasises that the boy is trapped in the devil’s cave.

The following lines describe what he does while he’s there:
111. … (0.6)  
\[ \text{i=delex nadxan} \]
\[ 3S.R=light fire \]

*He lit a fire.*

112. … (0.3)  
\[ \text{i=tin} \]
\[ 3S.R=cook \]
\[ n\text{mab} \]
\[ \etae \]

*He cooked the chestnuts.*

113. \[ \text{^i=tin i=tin vVv-vO s=xebu we s=xebu ^} \]
\[ 3S.R=cook 3S.R=cook \]
\[ \text{DUP-DUR} \]
\[ 3P.R=burnt so 3P.R=burnt \]

*He cooked them and cooked them on and on until they were really burnt*

114. \[ \text{^s=vlxn\text{et} ^} \]
\[ 3P.R=turn\text{.black} \]

*and they turned black.*

Each line has downward intonation. There is none of the lilting, sing-songy, pairing of upward-downward intonation contours, that we saw in the set up of the story. This gives a methodical momentum to the telling, implying a business-like approach to the boy’s actions. Each line represents a development on the previous line. The methodical nature of the labour is also emphasised by the repetition within each line. The last two lines are spoken rapidly and in a higher pitch, and there are no pauses between the lines, iconically reflecting the haste with which the boy executes his plan and increasing the sense of excitement. The prosody and repetition imbues the boy’s actions with a sense of purpose, though the audience still does not know what his plan is.

Here and in the following paragraph, the chestnuts are encoded with a definite-marked lexical NP. We saw in chapter 10 that inanimate NPs typically do not attract definite marking, and up until this point the chestnuts have been tracked with a bare NP, dependent pronoun and zero. The definite-marked lexical NPs both occur in a narrative clause, and reflect the important role of the chestnuts at this point in the
story in the boy’s enacting of his plan. The definite marker is therefore associated with ‘prominent foreground’.

115. … (0.6) ale i=narxat na / so 3S:R=get.up now

So he got up

116. … (0.2) i=lev nmab əne ^ i=tve- i=tveh drul xini xain ^\$

and took the chestnuts and rubbed them all over himself.

117. … (0.3) ^nede-n xar i=vlxntdrul ^\$

That body of his became black all over.

118. … (0.3) lal mta=na bih bo i=vuh \$

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

There is a paragraph boundary between lines 114 and 115. In section §8.3.3, we saw that for long passages of narrative text with no major shifts in deixis, small shifts in location are enough to trigger a structural boundary. The shift also corresponds to a shift in the audience’s awareness of plot, since in this paragraph the audience learns what the boy’s plan is. The narrator creates excitement by increasing the momentum, through increasing the relative proportion of narrative clauses, and by raising the pitch of his voice. Lines 117 and 118 have the same number of syllables and intonation peaks, and a partial rhyme with the vowel /u/. The reiteration of the /u/ sound enhances a sense of frightened excitement: as observed in §5.4.5, an exclamation with a high back rounded sound is associated with surprise or fear in Tirax narratives.

119. … (0.8) ale: —

So,

9 Broatchie 2006 discusses the role of the definite marker in marking salience at the time of mention for inanimate NPs.
now he went

and stood in the entrance of the cave.

He stood now, blocking the stone entrance

facing outside.

After carrying out his plan, the boy takes his position in the doorway, and the narrator slows down the narrative momentum: *ale* is in its own intonation unit, there is extensive repetition and clause parallelism, and the event of standing in the doorway is elaborated with additional detail, so that the audience can properly visualise the location and position of the boy. It is important that the audience fix the image of the boy in their mind, since the narrator is about to leave the boy and the next time we return, a band of devils will be coming towards him.

11.2.11 Episode 11: Devil gathers strength
The eleventh sequence tells the story of what happened after the devil left the boy. It begins with a recap of the devil leaving, which initiates a new timeline for the devil.

So the devil went off.
He went to (get) the others.

124. … (0.2) i=va ^ o ^ —
He said “Oh!”

125. … (0.7) n=tebex am \ 1S:R=find HES
“I’ve found —”

“I’ve found a meal for us!”

126. … (0.3) n=tebex dax a tdadr haxal \ 1S:R=find PERF HES food:1P:POSS INDEF

“I’ve found a meal for us!”

127. … (0.7) xan dax i=at // 3S PERF 3S:R=be
“He’s already there.”

128. … (1.0) o i=at lot hak \ HES 3S:R=be place 1S:POSS
“He’s at my place.”

129. … (0.5) tɛ am —
“to —”

130. … (0.2) n=me n=ver-i tɛ n=ver-vih-i tɛ ^ bas=an na ^ \ 1S:R=come 1S:R=say-3S SUB 1S:R=say-aloud-3S SUB 2P:i=go now
“So I came to say, to tell you about it, so we should all go now.”

The devil’s address to the other devils reveals his true intentions: to eat the boy. The danger to the boy is confirmed by this direct speech, whereas it was previously implied, or expressed through the thoughts of the boy. This makes the threat to the
boy more concrete, raising the stakes. Summoning his devil friends also increases the threat to the boy, so increases the drama and the anticipation of the climax.

131. … (0.4)  na  nŋe  dr-druenar  i=va  —
       now  ANA.PRO  DUP-others  3S R=say

   Now one of the others said,

132. … (0.2)  ^  ale ^\ 
      okay

   “Okay!”

133. … (0.2)  ^  bas=an ^\ 
       2P I=go

   “Let’s go!”

134. … (0.5)  ale  s=va  ^^  ale  nɔx  Ω=telamu  ^^ \ 
       so  3P R=say  so  2S  IMP S=go.first

   Then they said, “Ok, you lead the way!”

135. … (1.0)  ale:  —
       so

   So,

136. … (0.3)  nŋe  nŋe  xain  i=telamu  \ 
       ANA.PRO  DEF  3S  3S R=go.first

   that one he lead the way.

The narrator keeps the pressure on the boy, raises the stakes and increases the drama using direct speech. The very high pitch of the dialogue in line 133 creates a sense of urgency. The stakes are raised further in the following section, with the devils arming themselves to kill the boy:

137. … (0.5)  xair  drul  =  i=va  ^  tɛ  bas=hlox  vɔr  nte  de=mal  ^ \ 
       3P  all  3S R=say  SUB  2P I=carry  EMPH thing  3S I=many

   To all of them he said, “We have to bring lots of weapons!”
138. … (0.2) bas=hlox txan \ 
    2P:1=carry gun

    “We have to bring rifles,”

139. … (0.6) a bas=hlox nhar \ 
    HES 2P:1=carry spear

    “We have to bring spears”

140. … (1.0) te — = 
    SUB

    “to -”

141. bas=hlox nerid \ 
    2P:1=carry knife

    “We have to bring knives!”

142. … (10.4) te m: — = 
    SUB HES

    “to -”

    bas=ve-din xini \ \ 
    2P:1=make-dead OBL:3

    “use to kill (him) with.”

In this passage, prominence is given to those NPs which increase the jeopardy: the indirect object xair drul ‘they all’ is topicalised in line 137, emphasising plural number of the villains. The weapons mentioned in the direct speech are prosodically marked by loudness. The boy is referred to with a zero in line 142, which is typically associated with inanimate objects, reflecting the devils’ attitude to the boy.

143. … (0.5) ale ^ xair drul i=dla ^ \ 
    so 3P all 3S:R=be.thus

    So they all did so.
They all brought rocks,

they brought rifles,

they brought knives,

they brought axes,

in order to go and do the deed – to kill (the boy).

The narrator highlights the danger to the boy by elaborating a list of weapons which the devils take to kill him with. The danger to the boy is further highlighted with the high pitch of the final clause. The final line in the sequence, line 148, is spoken rapidly and with a steady rhythm, which helps increase the sense of drama and momentum. There are prosodic features further enhancing the rhythm and momentum of consonance and partial rhymes.

11.2.12 Episode 12: Flashback - protagonist’s plan

There is a sequence boundary, as the narrator shifts the focus of character back to the boy. The sequence begins with the boy expressed as a topicalised, full NP in its own intonation unit, which serves to reorient the audience:

Now the fellow,
he waited until he suddenly heard that they were coming.

Line 150 progresses the narrative to the point where he hears the devils coming. Thus the two storylines, the boy’s and the devils’ merge. The narrator highlights the event with the perfective aspect particle *dax*.

The audience has been privy to the devil’s exploits and now has all the information, knowing more than each of the main characters. The audience knows the boy’s plan, whereas the devils do not. It knows the devils are carrying lots of weapons to kill the boy; the boy suspects it, but he does not know it. By returning the story to the boy’s point of view, where he is passively waiting, the suspense is increased.

The storyteller then delays the climax, by taking time out to recap the situation of the boy, paraphrasing the action described previously in lines 116-122:

When he had finished painting himself with the chestnuts until

he turned black,

and he went and stood right in the entrance of the cave.

And he looked outside.

The recap ensures that the audience has a vivid image of the boy in the doorway. It also takes up real time, while not furthering the story the timeline, and therefore also
increases suspense. It is interesting to compare the recapping with the original. The retelling is simpler and more concise. The event of rubbing himself all over with charcoal chestnuts until he turned black, described over several lines in the original telling, is neatly captured with the word ser ‘paint’. There is a single elaboration: the adverb vɔvɔ, exactly, to specify the location of the boy. This sequence does not advance the story, and so is kept concise, but including enough vivid detail for the audience to visualise the boy and his location, which is the main purpose of the flashback.

11.2.13 Episode 13: Protagonist’s plan works
The narrator restores the momentum and sense of danger by shifting the focus of character back to the devils:

154. … (0.7) tnah ɲɛ xneř s=me s=me s=me vvv-vɔ
devil DEF P 3P.R=come 3P.R=come 3P.R=come DUP-DUR

The devils came and came and came and then they looked and suddenly saw him.

The narrator emphasises the danger to the boy by highlighting the large number of devils with the plural marker, xneř. He builds suspense and increases excitement with extensive repetition of the verb phrase and reduplication of the durative marker, vɔ. The narrator increases the dramatic impact of the devils seeing the boy by using the perfective marker dax to give the clause a punctual aspect, contrasting it with the previous elongated, durative clause. The rising intonation helps build suspense by anticipating the following clauses, which describe the devils’ reaction.

155. … (0.6) ^ s=tb-tberer drul s=vla ^ 

They scattered and left.
156. … (0.2) \(^s=\text{ser-serex} \quad \text{drul} \quad \text{xini} \quad \text{ntɛ} \quad \text{tɛ} \quad s=\text{hlox-i} \quad \backslash\)  
\(3P:R=\text{DUP-throw} \quad \text{all} \quad \text{OBL} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{REL} \quad 3P:R=\text{carry-3}\)

They threw away all the weapons they were carrying.

157. … (0.6) \(^s=\text{vla} \quad \text{drul} \quad \backslash\)  
\(3P:R=\text{leave} \quad \text{all}\)

They all fled.

Lines 155 to 157 relate the climax of the narrative, that is, the ultimate reversal of fortune for the protagonist, which is the devils’ reaction to seeing the blackened boy. The narrator increases the excitement with rapid high pitched speech, which evokes the heightened emotion of the devils: surprise and fear.

11.2.14 Episode 14: Protagonist saves his life
The final sequence relates the denouement of the narrative, the events which take place following the climax and leading to the final state of equilibrium. The restoring of balance is reflected prosodically in the pitch being back to normal and a moderate tempo.

158. … (0.3) \(^\text{marbih} \quad i=\text{narxat} \quad i=\text{me}: \quad —\)
\(\text{child} \quad 3S:R=\text{get.up} \quad 3S:R=\text{come}\)

The boy got up and came -

159. … (0.4) \(^i=\text{narxat} \quad \text{ve} \quad —\)  
\(3S:R=\text{get.up} \quad \text{but}\)

He went and -

160. … (0.2) \(^i=\text{me} \quad \text{salin} \quad \text{ve} \quad i=\text{vla} \quad \text{nŋɛ} \quad \backslash\)
\(3S:R=\text{come} \quad \text{outside} \quad \text{but} \quad 3S:R=\text{go.away} \quad \text{PART}\)

*he came outside and got right away from there.*

So the boy outwits the devils and equilibrium is restored. His escape is given prominence by the emphatic use of the partitive *nŋɛ*, discussed in §3.5.3.
11.3 Summary of stylistic devices: linguistic features and narrative function

We have seen how this narrative illustrates the interplay between the demands of storytelling and the linguistic devices exploited to satisfy those demands. These devices can be broken down into the following non-orthogonal categories:

1. prosody
2. parallelism, such as tail-head linkage and clause iteration
3. cohesion
4. focalisation, or controlling the point of view
5. lexical choice
6. linguistic markers of prominence
7. timeline management
8. other storytelling conventions, such as the ‘rule of three’

These devices are briefly discussed in turn in the following section.

11.3.1 Prosody

The oral narrative presented in this study has a number of features which are conventionally associated with poetic form. There are passages comprised of lines which have a regular accentual-syllabic meter, having the same number of syllables and stresses. There are consecutive lines with rising intonation contours alternating with falling intonation contours, associated particularly with the early development stage of the story and with introducing new information. There are types of rhyme through the narrative, such as alliteration and consonance, this latter exemplified in the opening lines, where the final consonant of the first few lines in the narrative were identical.

We found that the storyteller used pitch, tempo, loudness and voice quality, to express a range of meanings within the text, such as:

- High pitch with increased tempo and loudness increases the sense of excitement and heightens the drama, for example at the climax of the narrative when the devils see the boy.
• High pitch is also associated with thought and speech in this narrative. The change in pitch helps distinguish the narrator’s voice from those of the characters.

• We also saw that pitch can be associated with emotional disposition or states of mind. When the devil discloses the secret of his vulnerability, he speaks with a very high pitch. The very high pitch implies a guilelessness at that point in time on the part of the devil, perhaps because a high pitch is associated with children and the innocence of childhood. A very high pitch and breathy voice is found in other oral narratives, such as *Cat and Dog*, and *How the Rat Got its Tail*. It is used in these narratives at points where one character is trying to deceive another, but feigning innocence.

• The weapons listed by the devils and the narrator were spoken with increased loudness, and were the contrasting element in a series of clauses which were syntactic and prosodically parallel. This gives the weapons increased prominence, thus increasing the sense of jeopardy.

Other prosodic features which are used by the narrator to evoke meaning include intonation contours, vowel lengthening and pauses. For example, when *na* ‘now’ occurs with a rising intonation contour it tends to accord prominence to the following clause. A rising intonation contour is generally associated with anticipating a new event; it primes the audience for the new information by raising the question: *what happens next?* Vowel lengthening and unexpected pauses can also be used to increase suspense by delaying the following event and building anticipation, such as in line 97, where the boy and devil arrive at the devil’s cave, and the narrator creates tension before relating the line how the devil is tricking the boy with a clause-final, elongated *na*, rising intonation contour and a relatively long pause.

The properties described here, such as intonation contour, meter, loudness and so on, are the prosodic features of everyday discourse. However in the narrative, the prosody exhibits a greater degree of parallelism than in everyday speech. This tendency for the intonation and meter to conform to a pattern may even have an influence on lexical
choice, such as when the pronoun, xain, was selected in line 73 instead of marbih (ŋe) ‘(the) boy’, when it matched with the monosyllabic tnah ‘devil’ in the previous line.

11.3.2 Parallelism
We saw throughout this narrative that there is a great deal of syntactic parallelism, as well as the prosodic parallelism. As observed by Labov (1972), parallelism can be a powerful tool in storytelling, because a minimal change between clauses will give prominence to the new element. We saw this principle at work with the listing of the weapons, mentioned above in §11.3.1. Repetition itself is regarded by Labov as a kind of evaluative device, giving prominence to the repeated element.

Prosodic parallelism refers to an echoing of intonation contour, pitch, loudness, number of syllables and/or accents, rhythm, rhyme or any combination of these. It is associated through sound symbolism with a number meanings in the narrative, often highlighting a lack of free will. For example in sequence 2, the succession of lines with a similar accentual-syllabic meter created a sense of inevitability, leading up to the devil discovering the boy. In lines 71 to 73, where the boy and the devil are carrying the chestnuts, and in lines 108 and 109, where the devil and boy part ways, the prosodic and syntactic parallelism help create a sense that the boy’s fate is tied to the devil.

There is also a kind of parallelism between the devil’s dialogue and the boy’s actions in sequence 4, reflected not only in the call-response structure, but also in the use of repeated vocabulary, from the dialogue to the text. This also creates an impression of a lack of free will of the protagonist and raises stakes.

Parallelism can have a different impact, depending on where it occurs in the narrative. We saw in §11.2.2 and §11.2.3, that the extensive clause parallelism is associated with the build towards the first turning point, where the boy encounters the devil. The clause parallelism, comprising clause iteration and tail-head linkage, is mostly confined to sequences 2 and 3, tracing the movements of a single character where the story is in an early development stage. In lines 13 to 20, where the boy leaves home and climbs the tree, the clause parallelism reflects a logical progression of events, emphasises the chain of cause-and-effect and drip-feeds new information, all of which
ensures the audience is following the story. In lines 21 to 24, where the devil arrives and senses the boy’s presence, it creates a rhythm, gives a sense of inevitability and builds suspense by delaying the climax of sequence. Subsequent clause parallelism occurs occasionally across sequence boundaries, functioning as transition clauses, reflecting textual cohesion at places of discontinuity. It also occurs at the climax, in lines 155 and 157, relating the devils all fleeing, where the repetition has an emphatic effect.

11.3.3 Cohesion
Halliday and Hasan (1976) identified various kinds of cohesive elements that can help unify the clauses of a text and give it integrity. We saw some types of cohesion exemplified in the Tirax narrative, particularly anaphoric and lexical, and saw that in addition to their role in binding the clauses of the text, they could be exploited by the storyteller to reflect narrative structure and to add meaning to the text. There is extensive lexical cohesion, for example, in the sequence where the devil is asking the boy to throw down a chestnut and the boy is doing so. The cohesion exhibited in this sequence helps unify it and distinguish it from adjacent sequences. In addition to this, the repetition of lexical items in narrating the boy’s actions helped create the impression of the boy obeying the devil’s order precisely, highlighting his situation of being trapped.

11.3.4 Point of view
*Point of view* is a literary term referring to the prism through which the narrator presents the story world. There is a distinction between first, second and third person, and literary theory traditionally distinguishes *omniscient* versus *limited* points of view within third person, and an *intrusive* versus *unintrusive* narrator (eg. Rimmon-Kenan 2002 and Genette 1980). The narrative in this study is told in the *third person*, by an *omniscient narrator*, meaning that the narrator has access to all the information in the story world including the thoughts and desires of the characters. The omniscient narrator is typical in European traditional tales, and perhaps is universal to the genre.

The degree of *intrusiveness* is less clear cut. Intrusiveness is associated with the degree of partiality versus objectivity displayed by the narrator. The narrator of the story in the present study has a lean narrative style, and tends not to add evaluation or
editorial in the form of textual elaboration. However, at the same time the narrator uses prosody, parallelism and other devices to increase the drama in the story. He is not impartially reporting the events of the story, but is manipulating audience expectations and heightening the drama and excitement, which is based, among other things, on a judgement about whose side the audience should be on: boy or devil. So the narrator is not impartial, but neither is he intrusive. Relevant here is another concept, presented by Rimmon-Kenan, the degree of perceptibility of the narrator (Rimmon-Kenan 2002:97). This refers to the extent to which the narrator’s presence is obvious to the audience. We could say of a storyteller who engages and manipulates an audience without the audience being aware of it, that he or she is partial, but invisible. The devices identified throughout this chapter, and summarised in this section, represent the linguistic and paralinguistic means of the narrator invisibly expressing his partiality.

A fifth concept useful to the broad category of point of view in this narrative is identified by Genette, who distinguishes between focus of narration and focus of character within third person point of view. As discussed in chapter 8, the focus of character refers to who, that is which character, is seeing the events that are being narrated. The focus of narration refers to who is telling the story (Genette 1980:206ff). We saw that the focus of character shifts between the devil and the boy throughout the narrative in order to make the story more compelling, and we noted in chapter 8 that shifts in focus of character are the major triggers of structural boundaries. We also saw examples of shifts in degree of penetration, which can be defined as the degree of knowledge or intimacy we have with the character, from an external point of view on the one hand, to inside the character’s mind on the other (cf. Rimmon-Kenan 2002:41-2). Focus of character and degree of penetration are independent variables which can be manipulated by the storyteller. They can be expressed through a number of linguistic devices, including direct and indirect speech and thought, verbs of perception and cognition, such as leh ‘see’, and rjqɔdrɔ, ‘know’, and deictic markers of space and time. And as we saw in chapter 8, they can both trigger structural boundaries. Discussed below are some of the examples of how the storyteller controlled the focus of character and degree of penetration, in order to increase the dramatic impact of the story.
The storyteller controls the focus of character, switching from the boy to the devil, and back again, to create suspense by dramatising the threat to the boy. The focus of character is on the devil for his arrival and his discovery of the boy (lines 20 to 30). Once the two characters are together in the one location, the focus of character shifts back and forth, as evoked by the use of verbs of perception and cognition, deictic markers and dialogue. The focus shifts back to the boy in line 37, with the verb of cognition *drom*, ‘think’. This also represents a shift in the degree of penetration into the character, as the audience is given access to the boy’s thoughts. The focus of character returns to the devil in line 98, with the cognitive verb *reh*, ‘deceive’, then back to the boy with the cognitive verb *djro*, ‘know’ (line 106). Once the devil leaves, the focus of character remains with the boy, then shifts to the devil at the second location, where he rounds up his friends to kill the boy. This sequence has the dramatic effect of raising the stakes and increasing the jeopardy. So the storyteller uses shifts in focus of character, in order to reveal information to the audience which will raise the stakes, increase the sense of danger, increase the suspense or otherwise heighten the drama.

There are numerous examples of direct speech in the *Chestnuts* story, and also an example of direct thought (line 86), which is introduced with the same generic speech verb as direct speech. There is also an example of indirect thought (lines 47 and 48), introduced by the cognitive verb *drom*, ‘think’. Li notes that while direct discourse is universal, indirect discourse is not, reflecting that it is more complex compared with direct discourse, since it involves paraphrasing rather than parroting the reported speaker (Li 1986:39-40).

We also saw an example of *Free Indirect Discourse* (FID), using the terminology suggested by McHale (1978: 258-9) and adopted by Rimmon-Kenan (1983: 110-111) and others. In terms of Genette’s distinctions between *focus of character* and *focus of narrator*, it is as though the two merge in FID, with the narrator’s voice, and not the character’s voice, expressing the point of view of the character. FID is another product of manipulating point of view encountered in the narrative, and is used to evoke a character more vividly.
11.3.5 Lexical choice
The choice of words can affect how vivid or detailed the representation of the story world is, potentially enhancing the audience’s immersion in the story. However, as noted in chapter 7 (§7.6), there is a tension between making the image as vivid as possible, and keeping up the momentum of the story. An image can be enhanced by using adjectives, adverbial or other satellite elements which take up real time, or a semantically complex expression can be used which does not take up additional real time. We have observed that this storyteller has a particularly lean style, and tended to use adjectives and adverbs sparingly. In line 12, the storyteller used the adjective bih, ‘small’, to describe the boy. The boy has already been introduced in line 6, and choosing to use bih to describe the boy in line 12 draws attention to the boy’s youth and vulnerability, and hence sense of jeopardy, at a time where it is revealed that the boy is to be left alone in his house. This forms part of the set up of the story, where story momentum is not a pressing issue.

Conversely, at dramatic turns of events, where the story is served best by increased momentum, there is a tendency to use semantically complex expressions, such as hakel ‘sit with legs dangling’ in line 29, which conveys the sense of vulnerability to without taking up real time. The use of ser ‘paint’ in line 151, the paraphrase of lines 116ff, is another example of choosing a prosodically light, semantically complex expression at a time when increased momentum is desirable.

Lexical choice can also be driven by an impetus to highlight certain characteristics of the entity or event. For example, the storyteller used a range of lexical items to refer to the boy, from netna ‘(someone’s) child’, ntebih ‘child’, literally ‘small thing’, to marbih ‘child’, literally ‘small person’, and the generic mar, ‘person’. The successive terms reflect the evolution of the protagonist, from someone’s child, to an independent person functioning as the main character in his own story.

11.3.6 Prominence
The Chestnuts narrative illustrates a range of tools that Tirax storytellers can use to mark prominence, including prosody, double reference, repetition and other forms of syntactic elaboration, and morphosyntactic markers, such as perfective dax, clause-
final *na* ‘now’ and imperfective *sar*. These tools enable the storyteller to control the direction and degree of audience attention to a particular event or entity. They help ensure that the point of the narrative is not missed (cf. Labov’s (1972) *evaluation*).

It is important to have independent evidence of the status of an event when accounting for the pattern of distribution of prominence markers, lest the hypothesis be unfalsifiable. In this case study, we used the conceptual criteria of a reversal of fortune for the protagonist or an unexpected development with consequences for the protagonist in order to rate the importance of an event. These criteria could be regarded as somewhat subjective, and the definition of ‘important’ or ‘unexpected’ event warrants closer attention in future work in this area. However, prominence marking tends to be cumulative, and the presence of other markers of prominence in a clause can be used to support any findings for a particular marker.

We noted that markers associated with the here-and-now have been found in other languages to be associated with dramatic peaks (cf. Ballantyne 2005). In chapter 7 we looked at Ballantyne’s *Situated Foreground Hypothesis*, and observed that it provides some insight into the use of aspect markers in Tirax narrative. However it does not give a complete account of the pattern of prominence marking. Clause-final *na* ‘now’ is used to mark prominence, but is a frequently encountered marker in the *Chestnuts* and other narratives and is associated with building a chain of events, as in the set up of the *Chestnuts* narrative, as much as with marking prominence. We saw in chapter 7, and in this case study, that the aspect markers, perfective *dax* and imperfective *sar* occur less frequently, and are more closely associated with turning points, or dramatic peaks, in the narrative, in narrative clauses and contextualising clauses respectively.  

We saw other markers of prominence which occur at important turning points. The one case of double reference with a lexical NP and pronoun in the narrative is associated with the turning point, where the boy ceases to be ‘passive’ and begins to try to take control of his fate. This turning point is associated with a shift in degree of

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10 We saw example (45) in §7.7.4, where *sar* is used in the climax of a narrative, and is perhaps comparable to switching to a conversational historic present during a narrative peak (cf. Schiffrin 1981). Section §7.7.4 discusses this example in relation to Ballantyne’s hypothesis.
penetration into the character, which triggered a structural boundary. The double reference expression therefore is paragraph-initial. We also saw the use of the distal demonstrative xar marking neden ‘his body’, highlighting the key plot point of the boy’s body turning black. We also saw that the chestnuts were encoded with the definite marker yje during this sequence, reflecting their salience at the time of mention.

This study has shown that the storyteller is using these marked expressions to highlight the important events in the narrative.

11.3.7 Timeline management
We discussed in chapter 7, that sequentiality is widely regarded as a fundamental, defining feature of narrative, although there are circumstances in which sequentiality is disrupted in Tirax narrative, which may be a property of oral traditions more generally. There are two independent dimensions to time in narrative: the story world has a time dimension, on analogy to real life, which we experience as a succession of circumstances and events. Verbal language is also linear in nature, since linguistic units are arranged in sequential order. Therefore linearity is imposed on the narrative both by the human subjective experience of time, and the linear nature of verbal language. The story’s timeline is the axis which extends in time on which narrative events are arranged. It can be understood as having two mutually independent properties, deriving from human experience of time and the nature of linguistic communication: linearity, the sequential arrangement of events, and pace, the relative speed at which the story unfolds. Pace derives from the relationship between the act of linguistic communication and the progress of real time. Both of these properties can be exploited by a storyteller for heightening the drama, as exemplified in the Chestnuts narrative.

Linearity can be disrupted by relating the activities of multiple characters who may be acting simultaneously but whose activities are necessarily reported consecutively. This kind of disruption to linearity creates multiple timelines. The example in the Chestnuts narrative is when the devil goes off to get the other devils (sequence 11), while the boy stays behind and enacts his plan (sequence 10). The two timelines then need to be related to each other in order to orient the audience to the point of the
sequence. In the *Chestnuts* narrative, the storyteller relates that the devil leaves (line 109) and the boy stays in the cave (line 110). Episode 10 follows, in which the boy prepares himself for the devils’ return. The transition between sequence 10 and sequence 11, which returns to the devil and his activities is effected by an exact repetition of the line 111, but with the addition of clause-initial discourse marker *ale*, followed by a brief pause (line 123). The disruption to linearity is therefore a consequence of switching between points of view, discussed above in §11.3.4. Returning to the boy, line 149, the audience is reoriented to the time, place and character with a reiteration of the boy’s position. There follows a flashback, paraphrasing the boy’s storyline while he was alone in the devil’s cave.

Flashbacks represent a second way of disrupting linearity. The flashback occurs following a dramatic clause marked with *dax*: where the boy suddenly hears the devils coming (line 150). The flashback is used here to reorient the audience to the boy’s point of view and re-enliven the image of the blackened boy in the doorway in the audience’s mind. It helps immerse the audience in the story and create suspense, by delaying the climax.

As mentioned throughout the chapter, *pace* is affected not only by tempo of narration, but by the degree of succinctness versus textual elaboration. The storyteller can repeat information or add descriptive detail and slow down the pace of the story, or relate the narrative events succinctly and increase momentum. If a storyteller wants to increase suspense leading up to an anticipated significant narrative event, such as the devil discovering the boy (line 29) in the *Chestnuts* narrative, they can slow down the pace using the techniques just mentioned. If they want to increase excitement, for example at a dramatic peak, they can increase the momentum by being succinct and using semantically dense expressions. There is a balance struck between vivifying the story and story world and keeping up the momentum. I suggest that the tension between creating momentum and providing description is one of the fundamental structuring principles in Tirax narrative, and may be a universal phenomenon in oral narrative.

11.3.8 Other narrative devices

There are other narrative devices found in the *Chestnuts* story which are expressed via linguistic structures. The protagonist’s desires and antagonist’s threats are expressed
in *irrealis mode*, to contrast a hypothetical world in which the desire or threat is enacted, from the actual situation. Expressing the protagonist’s desires help the audience identify with him and champion his cause, and expressing the antagonist’s threats helps increase the jeopardy and raise the stakes.

We saw in §7.7 that there are many ways of marking discourse prominence. Another way of giving prominence to an event is to elaborate its internal structure. A conventionalised way of elaborating the internal structure of an event in Tirax is via the *triplet*, discussed in chapter 7 (§7.5.2). It is exemplified by lines 112 to 113, repeated below, where the boy cooks the chestnuts.

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… (0.3) itin ə nmab ɛ \ =
He cooked the chestnuts.

^itin itin v-\ v-\ vɔ
He cooked them and cooked them until

s’xebu we s’xebu^ \ =
they became really burned
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Another narrative device exemplified in the Chestnuts story is the *rule-of-three*, comprising sequence 4, where it raises the stakes by highlighting the trapped-ness of the protagonist. Linguistically, each repetition of the sequence of events was progressively more succinct, for example employing semantically more complex words, *drlom*, ‘gulp down’, or through ellipsis of full NPs and verbs and the use of anaphoric expressions.

We can see that this Tirax traditional tale has attributes in common with European folktales. In *Morphology of the folktale*, Vladimir Propp (1968) characterises the folktale and distinguishes it from other types of stories, by delimiting and defining the kinds of important narrative actions that can be performed by the characters. He proposes that all folktales are comprised of a limited number of *functions*, or significant narrative actions performed by the characters, which he goes on to list and define. The first three functions are:
I One of the members of a family absents himself from home

II An interdiction is addressed to the hero

III The interdiction is violated

Another function is:

XI The hero leaves home

It is beyond the scope of this work to compare and contrast Tirax narrative with its counterparts in other cultures. However, it is worth noting these similarities. Assuming these common features are not due to contact, but have arisen independently, it must reflect something universal about the human brain and/or the human experience, and its expression in narrative.

11.4 Conclusion

The study of the Chestnuts narrative in this chapter shows that meaning and narrative function are intimately bound with form, and it reveals why certain structural choices available in language are implemented by speakers. This chapter has shown how narrative pressures, such as the need to vivify the story world, or to ensure the audience identifies the important events, underlie a range of linguistic phenomena encountered in Tirax narrative. We have identified four main features which a storyteller can manipulate to immerse the audience in the story: the amount of descriptive detail, amount of prominence given to an entity or event, the pace of the storytelling, and the control of point of view, particularly the focus of character and degree of penetration.

The amount of descriptive detail affects the vividness of a narrative; a speaker will give more semantic information about an event or participant to enhance the hearers’ visualising of the story. We saw in chapter 8, that descriptive detail can be associated with triggering structural boundaries, such as in The Old Hag with the Sores (§8.3.2, example 30), where the narrator begins a new paragraph in order to describe the sores on the legs of the old woman. Descriptive detail is also a way of giving prominence to an event or participant, such as by elaborating the internal structure of an event. Prominence is marked in other ways, such as with repetition, loudness or high pitch,
double reference and morphosyntactic markers such as the aspect markers perfective 
\textit{dax} and imperfective \textit{sar}. Thus prominence is reflected in the distribution of optional markers and syntactic elaboration. The triplet is a conventionalised structural unit encountered in Tirax narrative, which is directly associated with prominence and descriptive detail.

The need to keep the momentum of the story going potentially has at least two structural effects: speakers avoid syntactic elaboration at points in the narrative where the imperative is to tell ‘what happens next’ and there is no value in creating suspense. Secondly, speakers encode endpoints into otherwise atelic or non-punctual VPs, using adverbial expressions, such as \textit{litan} ‘to/on the ground’ or aspect markers perfective \textit{dax} and clause-final \textit{na}, which register the event on the narrative timeline. These strategies increase the momentum of the narrative and so keep the audience’s attention. We also saw in this narrative how shifts in focus of character and degree of penetration can trigger structural boundaries, such as between the devil and the boy at the separate locations. We saw how the narrator uses point of view to control how much information the audience has about the desires, fears, jeopardy and stakes involved for the protagonist.

These features of narrative are independently variable, and storytelling is a balancing act between the different needs and effects of these storytelling tools. There is a basic tension, for example, between amount of description and the pace of the story. We expect to find descriptive detail during set ups, when the audience’s mental labour can be dedicated to building a discourse model. Conversely at the climax, for example, it is important to create a sense of excitement through increasing the pace. When the pace picks up, we find that there is little description, just the minimum to create the basic picture of the event. We tended to find semantically dense expressions at dramatic peaks in the narrative, such as \textit{hakel} ‘to sit with legs dangling’ in line 29. At the same time dramatic peaks are typically marked as prominent, which can involve repetition of old information, such as in clause parallelism, and grammatical markers such as perfective \textit{dax}, which are associated with prominence.

Additionally \textit{iconicity} and \textit{textual cohesion} are important features influencing narrative structure. We saw in §7.5, that there is a general principle of \textit{iconicity} in
structuring stories, where the order of events in narrative reflects the order of events in the real world (cf. Haiman 1983, also Labov and Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972, Hopper and Thompson 1980, Zwaan 1996, Ballantyne 2005). And we saw that speakers have a variety of strategies for reflecting textual cohesion (cf. Halliday and Hasan 1976). In the *Chestnuts* narrative, for example, we noted that the repetition of phrases in the sequence where the devil asks the boy to throw down the chestnuts, unifies the sequence and distinguishes it from the neighbouring sequence. While transition clauses provide cohesion across structural boundaries, such as the repetition of the clause relating the boy climbing down from the tree (line 64).

The study of the narrative presented in this chapter reveals how Tirax morphosyntax and prosody interacts with and is motivated by the functional pressures of storytelling.
12 Conclusion

This work provides a detailed description of aspects of Tirax grammar and narrative. We began by identifying and describing the grammatical features of Tirax, then went on to study the patterns of distribution of some of those features in narrative. In this way, we deduced the narrative function of a range of grammatical and structural features encountered in Tirax. And in the case study we explored the link between these features and the discourse pressures which motivate them. We took a novel, holistic approach to the analysis of the Tirax narratives, observing and describing the interaction of grammar, prosody, semantic-thematic structure and discourse-pragmatic function of the constituents. Using this holistic approach, we discovered hitherto undescribed structures found in Tirax narrative: transition clauses, which are the result of a mismatch between prosodic-morphosyntactic and discourse-semantic levels of structure.

Many of the grammatical features and behaviour we have seen in Tirax is typical of Vanuatu languages in general, and Malakula languages in particular. The major typological features which Tirax shares with its neighbours include nominative-accusative morphosyntax, unmarked SVO constituent order, obligatory subject-mood markers distinguishing realia and irrealis mood, ‘alienable’ versus ‘inalienable’ possession, a range of possessive classifiers for possessions belonging to people, verbal numerals, a ‘lexically ergative’ subcategory of verbs, nuclear serial verbs, optional aspect markers, reduplication, and a range of constructions for combining VPs, clauses and sentences, such as core-layer SVCs, clause-chains and tail-head linkage respectively.

These similarities throw into relief the contrasts between related languages. We saw, for example, that the Tirax numeral two *iru* has a different, and more flexible syntactic distribution compared with other numerals. We noted that the numeral two *xeru* in Unua is also different in its pattern of behaviour to other Unua numerals, however its distribution is more restricted than other numerals (Pearce forthcoming). Following Pearce’s (forthcoming) account of *xeru*’s distribution, I suggested that the cause of the distinction in Tirax might be the same: the loss of a productive dual
number in the grammatical system, but that this loss has played out in two different ways in the two languages. And the work done here on Tirax narratives has potentially given some insight into the function of some of the grammatical features encountered in other languages, such as tail-head linkage, topicalisation and aspect markers (cf. Crowley 2006a).

Vanuatu languages, as is typical of languages with oral traditions, have extensive parataxis (cf. Fleischman 1990), and this work has contributed a detailed analysis of the paratactic linkages encountered in Tirax. We saw that clause is a ‘fuzzy’ category in Tirax (cf. Pawley’s (1987) observations for Kalam); the constituents of Tirax clause-chains function as independent clauses at the syntactic level, since they have filled argument slots, but at a discourse level clause-chains function as a single clause, since they are available for discourse linkage operations such as tail-head linkage which typically operate on a single clause. The behaviour of core-layer SVCs and clause-chains in Tirax challenges the robustness of the clause as a universal unit of discourse.

Turning to a description of Tirax narrative, we found that the ‘fuzziness’ of the syntactic category of clause was one of several issues encountered in the identification of functional clause-types. The analysis of functional clause-types, or grounding, is part of a traditional approach to narrative in linguistics, and has been found to be associated with, among other things, reference tracking and prominence marking (cf. eg. Hopper and Thompson 1980, Fleischman 1990, Hooper 1998, Ballantyne 2005, Nagaya 2006, also Labov & Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972, and Du Bois 1980). The fundamental criterion traditionally used to distinguish functional clause-types is the presence or absence of temporal sequencing. However we saw that Tirax narratives can have disruptions to sequentiality, and often without any marking of the out-of-sequence clauses. Also problematic for the analysis, is that most Tirax clauses are basic realis clauses, and a detailed understanding of the lexico-semantics and context is required in order to determine the function of the clause, that is, whether or not it is moving the temporal reference point forward on the timeline. The issues identified here represent a challenge to each of the contemporary approaches to the analysis of narrative clause-types.
A new framework and diagnostic for functional clause-types was developed for the Tirax narratives. A multiple-timeline analysis was proposed to account for the many disruptions to sequentiality encountered in the Tirax narratives, which are typically unmarked. And the criterion for distinguishing narrative and non-narrative clauses, adapted from Labov (1972), was that of an endpoint: if an endpoint is encoded into a clause, then it functions as a narrative clause, progressing the narrative along the timeline. For non-punctual, atelic verbs, we saw that an endpoint can be encoded by the speaker with an adverbial element or aspect marker. Using the criterion of a defined endpoint to the event, we distinguished narrative clauses, which have an endpoint encoded in them, from non-narrative clauses, which do not.

Narrative clauses progress the narrative by relating ‘what happened next’, and we introduced the idea that a narrative clause contributes to the momentum, and therefore the excitement, of the story. Descriptive-durative clauses elaborate on narrative events, vivifying the characters and events in order to immerse the audience in the story and convey the important points. We saw that speakers can control the momentum of their narratives so that the audience remains engaged through the set up, development, climax and denouement. Speakers can increase the momentum of their stories by choosing to express an event as a narrative clause; that is, in a main clause with an endpoint encoded by the lexico-semantics of the verb, and / or adverbial or grammatical elements, such as the perfective marker, dax.

The narrative analysis presented in chapter 7 revealed the discourse function of aspect markers in Tirax. We found that speakers use aspect markers, such as the perfective marker, dax, the imperfective marker, sar, and clause-final na to encode different clause-types and to mark prominence. This work has illustrated that aspect markers have a function in narrative over and above their grammatical function of encoding aspect, and that a full account of their meaning can only be determined through studying their distribution in discourse.

In chapter 8 we looked at constituency in Tirax oral narrative. The approach taken was to assess each layer of structure independently for evidence of breaks or discontinuities, beginning with prosodic structure, supplemented by an analysis of morphosyntactic cues at structural boundaries. Having defined structural boundaries
in Tirax oral narrative we turned to the discourse-semantic triggers of those boundaries, and found that the boundaries are triggered by discontinuities in the discourse-semantic structure. The two main triggers of structural boundaries are shifts in deixis and shifts in *discourse mode*, defined as the overall function of a passage of text. It was observed that strong structural boundaries typically correspond to major discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure, and weak boundaries typically correspond to minor discontinuities in discourse-semantic structure. This work invokes the concept of the thematic and processing constituent of ‘episode’ (cf. eg. Tomlin 1987, Stirling 2007), and shows how it corresponds to the textual unit of sequence, with subepisodes corresponding to paragraphs (cf. Ji 2002, 2008).

The major finding using this holistic approach to narrative analysis was that boundaries in the different layers of structure often do not coincide in Tirax narrative, and that typically the prosodic boundary pre-empts the episode boundary. The result of this mismatch between the layers is a structural unit that has not previously been identified in the literature, referred to in this work as the *transition clause*. Transition clauses retain the discourse-semantic features of the preceding episode or subepisode, reflecting textual coherence at places where there are disruptions to the discourse-semantic structure. We saw that they can also be used by storytellers to create suspense by delaying an expected shift in discourse-semantic structure, thereby giving prominence to following event. Transition clauses are likely to be a feature of oral traditions, and point to the need for a future cross-linguistic study. Languages with written traditions may also have vestiges of transition clauses. Many English paragraph-initial adverbial clauses, for example, such as those reported by Thompson (1987), could be considered transition clauses.

The detailed analysis and description of the Tirax narratives from the two approaches described in chapters 7 and 8 revealed symmetries between different levels of structure. The *functional clause-types* identified in chapter 7 have their counterparts in *discourse modes* at the level of the paragraph, which are involved in structuring Tirax narrative. Similarly, *transition clauses* are a paragraph-level phenomenon which function similarly to the way *tail-head linkage* and other clause iteration devices function at the level of morphosyntax.
The description of Tirax narrative structure provided a solid foundation for the analysis of reference tracking. We saw in chapter 8 that focus of character is one of the fundamental structuring principles in narrative; shifts in focus of character typically trigger discourse boundaries. In chapter 9 we found that shifts in focus of character can also trigger free NPs for entities already established in the discourse. We tested several frameworks for reference tracking analysis, including a topicality approach (eg. Givón 1983a,b, 1992), a discourse structure approach (eg. Fox 1986, 1987, 1996, Stirling 2001) and a deictic shift approach (eg. Zubin and Hewitt 1995) and found that while all had insights to provide, none by itself gives a complete account of the Tirax data. The Deictic Centre approach provided a more accurate account of the distribution of free NPs than the other approaches, but it still did not predict, for example, a large number of dependent pronoun occurrences, as well as free NP occurrences at structural boundaries when there was no shift in focus of character. These free NPs were referred to as transition NPs.

Transition NPs were the major finding of chapter 9. They perform the same function in reference tracking as transition clauses do in narrative structure. Syntactically, a transition NP is a fronted or topicalised NP. It follows a structural boundary that has been triggered by a shift in focus of character, and the referent of the transition NP was the focus of character in the previous episode. None of the approaches canvassed in this work predict transition NPs or easily account for them. A discourse structure approach predicts the free NP form, but does not account for the nature of the reference. Transition NPs are typically used to shift the focus of character from a human to a body part or possession belonging to the human. An inanimate entity typically cannot trigger a new paragraph, and in the cases where a paragraph does centre on an inanimate entity, a transition NP is used to introduce it. The discovery and description of these NPs was enabled by the comprehensive approach to narrative description taken in this work, since transition NPs are defined in terms of narrative structure (occurring at a paragraph boundary, triggered by a shift in focus of character) and discourse-semantic structure (focus of character of previous episode). The distribution of the definite marker and other optional NP markers in Tirax narrative is also influenced by animacy. Following McGregor’s (In press) semiotic approach to the analysis of optional case marking in Australian languages, we directed our attention to the possibility that an absence of marking may be just as
meaningful as the presence of marking for grammatically optional markers. We found that there was a split system in the discourse-pragmatic meaning of grammatical marking, along the lines of animacy: for lexical NPs, an absence of a definite marker signals prominence in a background, or Descriptive, clause, and if in subject position, it appears to function as an ‘anti-shifter’, using the terminology of Zubin and Hewitt (1995), meaning it does not attract the focus of character. Conversely, animate definite-marked lexical NPs occur in all kinds of clauses and the definite marker does not appear to be associated with any additional discourse-pragmatic meaning. For inanimate NPs, the definite marker is far less frequently encountered, and when it does occur it appears to draw attention to the entity, marking it as prominent. It typically occurs when the entity is playing an important role in the narrative at the time of mention.

The analysis of the function and distribution of the definite marker yielded some unexpected results. The anti-shifting’ function described above was not predicted, and we also observed that the definite marker appears to have a ‘depersonalising’ function when marking genitive NPs and principle characters in animal fables. In both these situations, the definite marker is not typically used, and when it is used, it appears to be associated with antagonists, with object function and with narrative clauses at dramatic peaks.

We have seen in chapters 9 and 10 that the pattern of distribution of anaphora is due to a combination of the following interrelated features:

• a shift in focus of character, degree of penetration or narrowing of focus
• topicality of referent, particularly potential ambiguity
• animacy of referent
• NP category: genitive versus lexical, and
• discourse-pragmatic function, such as whether the referent is salient to the plot, and therefore candidate for prominence marking

 Speakers must be able to negotiate all these factors when selecting a referring expression. The findings of chapters 9 and 10 are summarised in table 12-1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic category associated with it</th>
<th>Topicality</th>
<th>Discourse-pragmatic function(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Free pronoun                        | 100% human / anthropomorphised entities | Very high | • Mark shift in focus  
• Highlight focus  
• Evoke intimacy with character |
| Bare lexical NP                     |            |                               |
| Human tales: Mostly inanimate       | Med-low    | • Animate NPs: marks background prominence or functions as ‘anti-shifting’ device  
• Inanimate NPs: no discourse-pragmatic meaning |
| Animal fables: mostly animate       |            |                               |
| Definite lexical NP                 |            |                               |
| Human tales: mostly human / anthropomorphised entities | Medium | • Animate NPs: no discourse-pragmatic meaning  
• Inanimate NPs: marks prominent foreground, specifically plot salient entities at the time of mention  
• Animate NPs: for main characters: ‘depersonalises’ referent, associated with antagonists and non-subject functions; marks prominent foreground / dramatic peaks  
• Inanimate NPs: marks prominent foreground, specifically plot salient entities at the time of mention |
| Animal fables: DEF-marker not strongly associated with any semantic category |            |                               |
| Genitive NP                         | Mixed animacy | Med-low | • Animate NPs: ‘depersonalises’ referent, associated with antagonists and non-subject functions; ‘anti-shifter’  
• Inanimate NPs: predicted to be associated with prominent foreground, more data required |
| Double reference expression         | 100% human / anthropomorphised entities | High | • Combination of discourse-pragmatic meaning of individual NPs |
The holistic approach taken in this work to the study of the Tirax language highlights the interaction between the grammatical and lexical resources of the language and the functional pressures of storytelling. These narrative pressures are reflected in patterns of distribution of grammatical markers, structures and other features associated with the task of immersing the audience in the story and conveying the point of the narrative. This interrelationship is schematised in figure 12-1.

**Figure 12-1**: Relationship between language and use

We have seen a range of narrative pressures illustrated in this work, and how they influence the various features of narrative. A primary imperative is to package the story into manageable chunks for ease of processing. This imperative is expressed as narrative constituent structure, in which the text is broken into sequences and paragraphs, which correspond to the semantic-thematic constituents of episode and subepisode. The principle of *iconicity* which is generally reflected in the texts can also be related to ease of processing. The default sequencing pattern within a timeline is for consecutive clauses to be temporally ordered and logically connected, as they are perceived to be in real life (cf. Labov 1972, Hopper & Thompson 1980, Thompson 1987, Ohtsuka & Brewer 1992, Zwaan 1996, Zwaan et al 2000), although we also saw in chapter 7, that sequentiality can be overridden as a result of other narrative pressures, such as the need to mark prominence of events. Related to processing issues are the techniques for managing the flow of new information, primarily clause-chains, in which new information can be drip-fed into the narrative, and presentative clauses, which are dedicated to introducing main characters into the narrative. Tail-head linkage and transition clauses can also be regarded as techniques for managing the flow of new information, at sentence-level and paragraph level respectively.
Another imperative is to orient the hearer to the centre of deixis in the discourse. Structures available for orienting an audience include story frames, which bridge the real world and story world, and recapitulative clauses, which repeat or paraphrase information and are typically associated with new timelines. Asides are also used to orient the hearer. We have seen that the imperative to create a coherent text expresses itself not only in the pattern of distribution of anaphora, but also in transition NPs, and at paragraph level, transition clauses. Transition clauses mitigate the impact of the discontinuity in semantic-thematic structure, and prime the hearer for a new episode.

Labov (1972) and others observe that a storyteller also needs to highlight, or give prominence to, those elements that they consider important in order to convey the point of the story. In Tirax, markers of prominence include prosodic marking, such as high pitch or loudness, repetition or elaboration of a constituent in a descriptive-durative clause, optional grammatical markers, such as aspect markers and the definite article, and in the case of higher animate NPs, the absence of a definite article can also give prominence to a NP in a non-narrative clause. Double reference expressions can give prominence to NPs, and clause iteration gives prominence to an entity which has been introduced in the previous clause. Storytellers can also control the focus of character and degree of penetration to give prominence to a character or highlight a key prop or body part.

Another narrative pressure is to keep up the momentum of the story by perpetually answering the question ‘what happens next’. This is achieved morphosyntactically by encoding clauses as narrative, and prosodically with a rapid tempo. There is a tension between keeping up the momentum of the narrative and creating a vivid image of the story world and its inhabitants. The story world can be brought to life by the speaker with direct discourse and F(ree) I(ndirect) D(iscourse), as well as contextualising and descriptive-durative clauses. ‘Semantically dense’ expressions can be used to vivify the story world at points in the narrative where it is important to keep up the momentum.

Finally, there is an imperative to make the story as engaging as possible; to maximise the drama, empathy, jeopardy, stakes and suspense. We have seen that Tirax
storytellers have a variety of strategies for achieving this. They can control the focus of character and degree of penetration to increase empathy, and they can set up multiple timelines, and use relative knowledge to increase jeopardy and raise the stakes. Relative knowledge creates dramatic irony, where the audience is placed in a privileged position, having more information than the characters, as we saw in The Story of the Snake and the Coconut, where the wife is picking vegetables in the garden, while back home her family are preparing to burn the house where her mother is sleeping. Other techniques for engaging an audience include modulating the prosody, such as using high pitch to evoke characters and emotions, and raising tempo, pitch and intensity to create excitement. We also saw that skilled storytellers can exploit narrative conventions, such as transition clauses, to create new meaning. For example, the narrator of The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores used several transition clauses to create anticipation of the shift in discourse-semantic structure following a paragraph boundary. The high number of transition clauses gave prominence to the incoming episode, which turned out to be the introduction of a character who became the protagonist.

We have further seen how the functional clause-types and shifts in deixis each affect narrative structure. Shifts in deixis can trigger structural boundaries, and functional clause-types are related to discourse mode, and shifts in discourse mode can also trigger structural boundaries.

The discourse pressures discussed above and the grammatical and structural features which reflect them in narrative are summarised in table 12-2.
Table 12-2: Summary of discourse pressures and corresponding features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse imperative</th>
<th>Corresponding grammatical and structural features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ease of processing</td>
<td>narrative constituent structure; iconicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manage the flow of (new) information</td>
<td>clause-chains, presentative clauses, tail-head linkage; transition clauses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orient the audience</td>
<td>story frame, recapitulative clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coherence</td>
<td>coherence devices, such as anaphoric expressions, transition clauses and transition NPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prominence</td>
<td>grammatically optional morphosyntactic markers, clause-reiteration, descriptive-durative clauses, repetition, prosodic marking, control POV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>momentum</td>
<td>narrative clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vivification</td>
<td>semantically rich expressions, contextualising clauses, descriptive-durative clauses, direct discourse and FID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maximise audience engagement</td>
<td>control POV, multiple timelines, relative knowledge, prosody; (transition clauses, repetition and contextualising clauses can be used to increase suspense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study of Tirax grammar and narrative has also exposed the privileged status of *humans* in discourse. People are most interested in stories about people, so there is the potential for empathy with the main characters. An animal or other entity is anthropomorphised if it has a central role in a story, and in animal fables this is reflected in the ‘personal noun’ status of the bare nouns used to refer to the main characters. This preoccupation with other humans percolates right through the different levels of structure. At the level of narrative structure, the sensitivity to animacy is reflected in patterns of distribution of old free NP subjects: inanimate NP subjects typically do not occur in paragraph-initial position, since a paragraph is not likely to be triggered by an inanimate entity. If a prop or body part is salient, then a paragraph can be structured around a narrowing of focus from a human / anthropomorphised referent to the inanimate NP subject. We saw that two features associated with this structuring were a high proportion of paragraph-final inanimate subject NPs, and transition NPs, used for when the inanimate referent is the centre of
a new paragraph, illustrated by the example from *The Old Hag with the Sores*, where the focus narrowed from the old woman, to her legs, to the sores.

At phrase level, we see that the distribution of the definite and indefinite marker is sensitive to animacy, and that NPs referring to a plural number of inanimate entities rarely attract a plural marker. An inanimate entity can be marked as prominent using markers, such as the definite marker, which are associated with human referents. There is also a correlation of animacy with the grammatical role of subject. At the morphological level, we see that number tends not to be distinguished for the third person object marker when it refers to an inanimate entity, and that inanimate direct objects are frequently encountered as zeros. Possessive marking is also sensitive to animacy, with human possession marked with a range of possessive classifiers, and other kinds of possession and association relationships encoded with the associative marker.

It is hoped that this work has demonstrated the fruitfulness of a holistic, integrated approach to language description. The kinds of findings reported here are only possible with such an approach. The analysis of the distribution of the definite marker, for example, draws on a description of grammar, narrative constituent structure, narrative analysis of clause-types, discourse-semantic features, such as focus of character, as well as insights into roles of characters, such as protagonist and antagonist, and events such as turning points and climaxes. Several of the findings described in this work are unexpected and present a challenge for existing frameworks of narrative theory and reference tracking. Transition clauses, transition NPs and the absence of a definite marker on higher animate NP subjects as an ‘anti-shifting’ device are not predicted by any existing approaches.

The findings also point to areas of further study, both within Tirax language and discourse, and cross-linguistically. For example, to what extent do the findings presented in this work apply to other genres of discourse in Tirax, such as conversation or expository texts? And a cross-linguistic study would determine to what extent some of these findings, such as transition clauses, are universal, or regional, or a product of an oral traditional or peculiar to Tirax. A useful area of
research would be a psycholinguistic investigation into some of the phenomena reported here, to determine whether the findings have psychological validity. For example, a test could be designed to determine how speakers interpret the reference of a dependent pronoun subject in a clause following a subject NP with absent definite marker. If the absence of the definite marker functions as an ‘anti-shifter’, then speakers will interpret the following dependent pronoun as being co-referential with the previous NP at the focus of character. If speakers interpret the dependent pronoun as co-referential with bare noun, then there may not be psychological validity to the text-based findings.

The approach used in this work has revealed the interaction between the resources of the language and the functional pressures of storytelling, via the range of strategies used by Tirax storytellers to immerse their audience in the world of their story. The findings presented in this work were made possible by the integrated, holistic approach to the description of grammar and narrative.
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APPENDIX I

Illustrative texts

The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts

(There was) a man,

(who had) a son.

He and his wife,

they went to the garden.

That child of theirs,

he wanted (to go with) them.

His mother and father said "You stay here!"

So their little child stayed behind.

Now he stayed for a while,
and (the) Tahitian chestnut tree bore fruit.

When (the) Tahitian chestnut tree bore fruit,

he went and climbed up it.

He climbed up (the) Tahitian chestnut,

he went up till he reached the top.

Then he was getting (the) chestnuts to drop down.

Now (the) chestnuts were dropping down,

and a devil came along.

A devil came,

and he heard the chestnuts dropping down.
Now he heard the chestnuts falling down.

“The smell of my food is someplace here!”

He looked up high in the Tahitian chestnut tree.

now he looked and he saw

the boy sitting high above with his legs dangling.

He was making the chestnuts continuously fall.

He said to the boy, he said “Hey!”

“Pick one and throw it down,”

“or I’ll eat you!”
The boy threw one down.

The devil took it and ate it.

He said "Hey! Throw down another one!"

"or I’m going to eat you!"

So, so

So

(The boy) threw another one down.

(The devil) swallowed it whole,

He said "One more,"

"or I’ll eat you!"

So,
(the boy) threw down another one.

And (the devil) swallowed it whole.

The boy was in the tree, and he thought of he had an idea about how, now, he could save his life.

So he said to the devil, he said "Hey!"

“You stay down”

“and gather them up”

“gather the chestnuts in a heap.”

“Look to see,”
“veve-ve i=sdér te veveve-ve i=nev,”
DUP-if 3S:R=reach SUB DUP-if 3S:R=finish
“when there is enough,”

“ale i=nev!”
so 3S:R=finish
“and then stop.”

“nox i=tóx sxí-m na,”
2S 3S:R=be OBL-2S:POSS now
“Now it’s up to you”

“te ba=ver-i!”
SUB 2S:1=say-3S
“to say when.”

“ale ba=vle kokortox nmab dradr!”
so 2S:1=gather in.a.heap T.chestnut PC.FOOD1:POSS
“So go and gather our chestnuts in a heap.”

ale tnah ng i=at litan,
so devil DEF 3S:R=be down
So the devil got down

i=vle-i i=vle-i i=vle-i i=vle kokortox-i,
3S:R=gather-3s 3S:R=gather-3s 3S:R=gather-3s 3S:R=gather in.a.heap-3s
and gathered them and gathered them and gathered them and piled them all up
into a heap,

i=vle kokortox vɔ-vɔ
3S:R=gather in.a.heap DUP-DUR
he piled them up until

i=nev.
3S:R=finish
it was done.

ale i=va “i=nev na!”
then 3S:R=say 3S:R=finish now
Then he said “That’s enough now!”
And the boy climbed down to the ground.

He climbed down

the two of them (wanted to) carry them.

(The devil) said “So!”

“What are we going to put them in?”

The boy said

“We’ll just carry them in our hands.”

So the devil carried some,
he himself carried some.

Now

As for the boy, while he was doing this,

he had another idea.

He realised

how he could save his life.

So he asked (the) devil,

he said "Hey!"

"but"

"Wait! What kind of man are you afraid of?"
“morti te i=vkɔr?”
person REL 3S=R=white
“A light-skinned man?”

“haxa morti te i=net?”
or person REL 3S=R=black
“Or a dark-skinned man?”

tnah i=narxat i=va “o ,”
devil 3S=R=get.up 3S=R=say oh
(The) devil went and said “Oh!”

“xɔɔo n”
1S HES
“Me, ”

“n=mtaxit xini morti te i=net ia!”
1S=R=be.afraid OBL person REL 3S=R=black that(B)
“I'm afraid of the black man.”

na marbih ṇe i=va “a!”
now boy DEF 3S=R=say aha
Now the boy said (to himself) “Aha!”

“xain bɔ xan n=ve-ve da=nɔdɔ-ɔ-i!”
3S DIM PRX 1S=R=DUP-want 1S:1=know-3S
“That is precisely what I wanted to know!”

ale —
so
So

i=va “ale, bar=vrakɛ nmab!”
3S=R=say okay 2D:1=carry.in.hand T.chestnut
he said “OK, let's take (these) chestnuts.”

r=vrakɛ-i r=van.
3D=R=carry.in.hand-3S 3D=R=go
And the two of them got going, carrying the chestnuts.
Now the two of them put them down,

and the fellow asked (the) devil

"But whereabouts are we going to cook the chestnuts?"

The devil went and replied

"We'll cook them at my place."

(The boy) said "Ok!"

Now the two of them walked and walked, on and on,

they walked on until they came to (the) devil's cave.

Now they went into the devil's cave,

but the devil tricked him!
He lied to the boy he said, “Okay!”

“You light a fire.”

“and roast (the chestnuts).”

“Ok,"

“as for me...”

“I'm going to go to the loo.”

The boy said “Ok, you go!”

But the boy already knew how

the man was just tricking him like that -

the devil was just tricking him,
So, in order to go and get the rest of those (devils).

So, the devil went.

And the boy stayed behind.

He lit a fire.

He cooked the chestnuts.

and they turned black.

Then he got up

and took the chestnuts and rubbed them all over himself.
His body became black all over.

Only the whites of his eyes were white.

now he went

and stood in the entrance of the cave.

He stood blocking the stone doorway

facing outside.

So the devil went off.

He went to (get) the others.

He said “Oh!”
"n=tebex ōm"
1s:r=find Hes
"I’ve found - "

"n=tebex dax a ṭadradr haxal!"
1s:r=find perf Hes food:1p:poss indef
"I’ve found a meal for us!"

"xan dax i=at,"
3s perf 3s:r=be
"He’s already there."

"ŋ i=at lot hɔk."
Hes 3s:r=be place 1s:poss
"He’s at my place."

"tɛ ōm —“
SUB Hes
"to - "

"n=me n=ver-i tɛ n=ver-vih-i tɛ bas=an na!"
1s:r=come 1s:r=say-3s sub 1s:r=say-aloud-3s sub 2p.1=go now
"So I came to say, to tell you about it, so we should all go now."

na næ dr-druenar i=va —
now ana:pro dup-others 3s:r=say

Now one of the others said,

“ale!”
okay
"Okay!"

“bas=an!”
2p.1=go
"Let's go!"

ale s=va "ale nɔx ɔ=telamu."
sō 3p:r=say sō 2s imps=lead

Then they said, “Ok, you lead the way!”
So, that one himself lead the way.

To all of them he said, “But we have to bring lots of weapons!”

“We have to bring rifles,”

“We have to bring spears”

“We have to bring knives!”

“use to kill him with.”

So they all did so.
They all brought rocks,

they brought rifles,

they brought knives,

they brought axes,

in order to go and do it – to kill (the boy).

So the fellow,

he waited until he suddenly heard that they were coming.

When he had finished painting himself with the chestnuts until he turned black,

and he went and stood right in the entrance of the cave.

And he looked outside.
The devils came and came and came and then they looked and suddenly saw him.

They all banged into each other as they (tried to) flee. (one action nomo)

They threw away all the weapons they were carrying.

They all fled.

The boy got up and came -

He went and -

he came outside and got right away from there.
The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores

Storyteller Lesa-Rita, female, 55yrs approx
Recorded Saturday night September 11, 2004 7.30pm approx.
inside Marie-Nicole and Jean-Marc's kitchen hut, Mae. Family present.

It's me again,

I've been speaking for a while and I'll speak for the third time now.

It's just me, Lesa - my name is Lesa

I just want to tell another story.

This is traditional talk now, this is a custom story.

Once,

there were five brothers.

The five brothers lived together

(then one day) the oldest brother said

"Let's go down to the beach!"

The others replied
“a’ a’ deak!”
yes  ok

“OK, sure!”

“bas=van !”
2P:i=go

“Let’s go!”

ale  s=van  i=dla  ηε ,
so  3P:R=go  3S:R=be.thus  DEF

So off they went.

tete-amu,  i=tɛs  txan-vivies  har,
child-first  3S:R=cut  gun -bow  3P:POSS

The oldest one cut bows and arrows

i=t-vox  xin-ɛr  vɔ-vɔ ,
3S:R=DUP-share  OBL-3P  DUP-DUR

and handed them around until

xair  drul  si=uh  txan-vivies.
3P  all  3P:R=hold  gun-bow

each one had a bow and arrow

te  des=van  dxi-n  laltah
SUB  3P:i=go  COM-3S:POSS  to.the.sea

to take with him to the beach.

s=van,  a
3P:R=go  HES

Off they went.

s=vla  i=dla  ηε ,
3P:R=go.away  3S:R=be.thus  DEF

They went away like this

tete-amu,  xain  i=telamu,
child-first  3S  3S:r=lead

They went off with the oldest leading the

tete-srcε   i=srcε-i,
child-next  3S:R=follow-3S

way and the others following him, following him,
xair drul vɔ-vɔ,  
3p all dup-dur

one after the other,

tete-tax i=teltax.  
child-last 3s:r=walk.behind

with the youngest one walking in the rear.

s=vial sar, s=van i=dla nɛ,  
3p:r=walk impf 3p:r=go 3s:r=be.thus def

They walked along like that

s=van vɔvɔ-vɔ,  
3p:r=go dup-dur

on and on until

s=sder la[tah,  
3p:r=reach to.the.sea

they reached the sea.

ale s=sre ntah na!  
so 3p:r=follow sea now

Then they walked along the reef:

s=sre ntah vɔ-vɔ,  
3p:r=follow sea dup-dur

They walked on and on along the reef,

s=vin e nas,  
3p:r=shoot hes fish

shooting fish,

tete-amu xain nɛ dran i=til,  
child-first 3s ana.pro pc.food.3s:poss 3s:r=three

The oldest with his three fish

nɛ tete s=sre xair, ɔ  
apa.pro child follow 3p hes

and the ones that followed

ɔ s=vin nas drar!  
hes 3p:r=shoot fish pc.food.3s:poss

they speared their fish

iŋvɔ i=lɔŋvex nŋa spia har te s=hloξ-i!  
hes 3s:r=be.filled loc arrow(b) 3p:poss sub 3p:r=carry-3s

and stacked them on their arrows that they were carrying.
- the arrows.

And when they headed back with them

tete-amu  i=telamu,
child-first  3S:R=lead

the first one lead the way.

They started to come back.

They walked on and on until they reached the road

A woman was standing on the road with her small daughter.

The young daughter of hers was covered in sores -

She was completely covered in sores.
Now, she begged for the oldest brother’s fish.

tete-amu  i=v-va —
child  first  3S:r=Dup-say

The oldest said-

ua  i=ver  xini  =  i=v-va,
HES  3S:r=say  OBL 3S  3S:r=Dup-say

She said to him, she said

i=ver  xi(ni)  tete-amu  i=va,
3S:r=say  OBL  child-first  3S:r=say

She said to the eldest she said

“Oh, those fish,”

“(u)sa  ! =  ba=lev  bo  nes  xar  nηε  xini”
please  2S:l=take  DIM  fish  DST  PART  OBL

“oh please could you give some of those fish for”

“net-uk  vaven  xan  de=wes-i ?”
child-1S:poss  female  3S  3S:l=eat-3S

“my daughter here to eat?”

a  tete-amu  nηε  ,  i=va —
HES  child-first  DEF  3S:r=say

The eldest replied

“ahaha’!”
no

No,

“xono  nas  drak  vɔr !”
1S  fish  PC:FOOD:1S:poss  emph

“These fish are mine!”

“n  nah=lev-te  nηε  xini  net-um  vaven  xar  nηε!”
HES  1S:NEG=take-NEG  PART  OBL  child-2S:poss  female  DST  PART

“I absolutely can’t give any to your daughter there
for (her) to eat at all!"

"This is MY food!"

"These fish are really hard to catch!"

"It's me who'll be eating this food!!""

The woman said “Very well.”

"I wanted you to give my daughter here some food to eat."

“but you don't want to."

"You go with your fish.

Then the next child came along.

The next brother came and

(the woman) said

she said to him she said
Oh! Your older brother has come by already,

and I begged for his fish because I wanted,

to my daughter here to have something to eat.

but he didn't agree to it.

(The second brother) said

Well as for me,

this fish is mine, I don't agree to it (either).

These fish that

are hard to catch, I would never agree!

There are some that are coming behind me.

You can ask them.
They did the same thing,

tete-tax xain i=teltax.

and then the youngest brother arrived last.

After that, as for him, as for his fish,

there was just one small one on the prong of his four-pronged spear.

Just one small one.

He came right up to the woman.

(And) the woman said

“Will you give – I’d like -”

“and I begged for their fish”

“but they absolutely wouldn’t give me any.”

“As for you, will you not agree to it?”
(The youngest brother) said “Sure,”

“That fish there, I will give it to you, that’s ok!”

She said “I’d like my daughter here to eat it.”

So he gave it to the woman

and she gave it to her daughter.

(The girl’s mother) said “That is so very wonderful,”

“So (the woman) let her daughter (go) with the youngest brother.

They went and arrived home
they were chatting.

They were chatting on and on

the others suddenly heard them and said

The eldest said “hey!”

“Someone can be heard —

“there's two people chatting in the house!”

“Who are they?”

Then one of the others said

Then one of the others said “I’ll just go and have a look!”

So he left.

He went (and had a look and came back) and said

“Oh! It's a woman,”
"The woman (with the sores) and (our youngest brother)."

"But now she is really really amazingly beautiful!"

"Really beautiful!"

(The oldest brother) said “Let's go and have a look!”

They came and stood around,

They went and stood around (the outside of) the house

They were peeping through the bamboo at the woman on and on

(and then) with

their youngest brother.

After that they went back.
They left,

then they came back again

and stood and peeped in through the bamboo.

They kept staring at them through the bamboo (ie because she was so beautiful)

(child first) and then the eldest said

“da=rub-din”
1S:I=kill-dead
“*I will kill*”

“e  mar  xar!”
HES  man  DST
“*that guy!*”

The others agreed with it.

But by that time

the man, his wife there had already spoken to him.

She gave him a magic herb

She said
She said, "I will give you a herb for you to eat,"

"and I will also eat one."

"If they come to kill you, then you will (appear to) be dead."

"and I will (appear to) be dead,

"but because (we ate the magic herb) really we will still be alive."

The two of them ate up the herbs.

and then they waited.

made a pact with the others,

and they went and killed the boy,

their little brother.
They killed him,

but they could no longer kill the woman,

because she had knotted a rope

and put it around her neck

and hanged herself.

They saw her like that

and their hearts sank.

Their hearts sank,

and they got right away from there,

and went back to their place.

They said “Oh!”

“We have just done something that is really bad.”
We did it so that we could take that one

but it didn’t happen at all they are both dead.

They went back to their place, then after a while

they heard them come back to life and start chatting

because the woman had untied

the rope that was around her neck

and got down

and took a leaf

and whipped her husband with it.

the youngest brother.
i=rub-i,
3S:R=hit-3S

She whipped him

i=tehix lxe'n,
3S:R=get.up back

and he came back to life.

r=drar na!
3D:R=chat now

And the two of them started chatting again.

r=drar vvvvvv-vɔ,
3D:R=chat DUP-DUR

They were chatting for a while,

r=res-res sar vɔ
3D:R=DUP-talk IMPF until

they were talking until

r=ŋa dax tɛ
3D:R=hear PERF SUB

they suddenly heard

ŋɛ ŋɛ xner tete-amu ŋɛ i=v-va
ANA.PRO DEF P child-first DEF 3S:R=say

one of them, the eldest (brother) saying

“he mřɛ ru ŋɛ xar klɛ r=res!”
INTJ people two DEF DST too 3D:R=talk

“Hey guys! Those two are talking again!”

i=va “ken(i) de=hxal de=an klɛ de=leh-i!”
3S:R=say 2P 3S:1=one 3S:1=go again 3S:1=see-3S

He said “One of you go back and have a look!”

i=van klɛ i=leh-i i=v-va “o!”
3S:R=go again 3S:R=see-3S 3S:R=say INTJ

He went back and had a look and said “oh!”

“mřɛ ru xar bɔ!”
people two DST DIM

“It’s those two!”

“r=nek-te ńŋɛ!”
3D:R=die-NEG PART

“They’re not dead at all!”
"r=neh k-krah lad bɔ tewɛ!"
3D:R=die pretend big DIM maybe

"Maybe they were just pretending to be dead!"

"xar klɛ dax r=seliv!"
DST again PERF 1D:1=be.alive

"They're suddenly alive again!"

ale tete-amu i=ver-i i=va
so child-first 3S:R=tell-3s 3S:R=say

Then the eldest (brother) he said to him,

"bas=ve de=vihxa xin-er xoṣan!"
2P:1=make 3S:R=do OBL-3p LOC.DX1

"What will we do about them there?"

tete-amu i=v-va "xas=lixdre-er!"
child first 3S:R=say 2P:R=leave-3p

The eldest (brother) said "leave them!"

"xas=lixdre-er,"
2P:R=leave-3p

"Leave them,"

"xair der=lev-lev-er na nje der=at na nje."
3P 3D:1=DUP-take-3p now PART 3D:1=be now PART

"they are married now. They'll be together now."

"bas=at bɔ."
2P:1=be DIM

"We'll let it be."

xas=lixdre-er der=uh-uh-er
2P:R=leave-3p 3D:1=DUP-take-3p

"Leave them, they are married now."

i=nev na
3S:R=finish now

That's it now.
APPENDIX II

Tirax phonology

Tirax is a member of the (Eastern) Oceanic language family. Oceanic languages tend to be phonologically less complex than many other languages (Lynch, Ross et al. 2002:34-35). Typically they have:

- a basic CV syllable structure
- small phoneme inventories
- relatively few complex articulations
- predictable stress, usually falling on the penultimate syllable of a word
- no contrastive tone

Resan Tirax roughly matches this picture, though it is phonotactically more complex than some other Vanuatu languages, allowing complex syllable onsets, and stress assignment is not so straightforward as to be covered by a single rule.

§1 Phoneme inventory

Tirax has twenty-two phonemes: fifteen consonants and seven vowels.

§1.1 Tirax consonants

The Tirax consonant inventory is given in table 1. It shows that four places of articulation are contrasted, and that voicing is contrastive only for oral stops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental-Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless Stops</td>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-nasalised Voiced Stops</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Like many Malakula languages, Resan Tirax has a series of pre-nasalised voiced oral stops, but otherwise has no complex articulations.\(^1\) Like Naman, Tirax does not have a series of labiovelars, present in many other Vanuatu languages, such as Neve'ei, Avava and Northeast Malakula (Crowley 2006a:25), Navahaq (Dimock 2006), and South Efate (Thieberger 2004). It also lacks the apicolabials attested in its traditional neighbour, V’onen Taut (Fox 1979).

Like many North-Central Vanuatu languages, including Neve‘ei, Nese, Naman, Laravat and Neverver, and Lolovoli, Resan Tirax lacks a voiceless oral stop \(/p/\). POc *\(p\) is generally reflected as \(/v/\) in Tirax:

| PNCV\(^2\) | *\(pati\) | /\(vat/\) | ‘stone’ |
| POc | *\(sanapuluq\) | /\(ŋavil/\) | ‘ten’ |

There is one occurrence of contrastive \(/p/\) in the data, in an exclamation: \(/po/\). This onomatopoeic word was used to represent the sound of a conch shell. As exclamations in a language can sometimes contain non-phonemic sounds, it is not considered here to be evidence of a phoneme \(/p/\). Similarly, there is a glottal stop \([\text{/}\)]\) in the data, but it only occurs contrastively in the interjections \([\text{/a/a/}]\) ‘yes’, and \([\text{m}^{\text{a}}.m/]\) ‘no’.

Interjections can also contain non-phonemic sounds, and these sound strings are not considered by Tirax speakers to be actual ‘words’. Therefore, a glottal stop is not analysed here as part of the phoneme inventory. Crowley (2006a:26) comes to the same conclusion for Naman, based on the same reasoning. There is no evidence from distribution for a palatal glide phoneme; \(/j/\) only occurs between a high front vowel and second vowel, and never word-initially or finally. Diphthongs involving a high first vowel are pronounced with a glide, as in \(/\text{nial}/\), \([\text{n}^{\text{i}}\text{al}]\) ‘sun; red’.\(^3\)

There is some simplification in the representation of consonant phonemes in table 1:

\(^1\) There is some evidence for a pre-nasalised voiced alveolar stop with trilled release \(/\text{dr}/\), likely to be a reflex of the POc *\(\text{*dr}\) phoneme, which is well into an historical process of becoming simplified to \(/\text{d}/\), as discussed in 1.

\(^2\) Proto-forms are from Lynch (2005).

\(^3\) The Tirax community has suggested the two meanings, ‘red’ and ‘sun’, could be distinguished by spelling one with a \(y\), so that ‘red’ is \(\text{nial}\), and ‘sun’ is \(\text{nyal}\), though the words are pronounced the same.
• the phonemes /s/ and /r/ are alveolar, while the rest of that series are dental.
• there is considerable allophonic variation in the consonant system, particularly in the fricatives /β/, /x/ and /h/ and liquids /l/ and /r/.

Tirax has both /s/ and /h/ phonemes, as demonstrated below:

/s/ and /h/    /su/  ->  [su]  ‘bone’
/huβ/   ->  [hʊp*]  ‘bathe’

/naβis/  ->  [naβis]  ‘type of banana’
/naβih/  ->  [naβiç]  ‘grey’

However POc /*s/ is reflected in contemporary Tirax as /s/ for some words and /h/ for others. The following pairs of words shows POc /*s/ reflected as Tirax /s/ :

/*siko/  /nasix/  ‘kingfisher’
/*sus/    /nasus/  ‘breast’

The Tirax /h/ derives historically from POc /*s/ and */t/, through /s/. There is evidence to support this from Tirax songs, which preserve an earlier version of the language, as shown in table

Table 2: Evolution of Tirax contemporary words ᵉnᵊvᵊl ‘ten’ and kᵊh ‘pinch’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>*s &gt; h</th>
<th>*t &gt; s &gt; h</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proto Oceanic</strong></td>
<td>*sanapulu?</td>
<td>*kinit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tirax Song word</strong></td>
<td>sanavelo</td>
<td>kis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contemporary Tirax Word</strong></td>
<td>ᵉnᵊvᵊl</td>
<td>kᵊh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English translation</strong></td>
<td>‘ten’</td>
<td>‘pinch’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An interesting feature in the development of Tirax consonant system is an historical shift from labial to dental articulation for voiced stops. The Tirax words are compared

---

4 All reconstructions in this work are taken from Ross, Pawley and Osmond (1998) and (2003), unless otherwise credited.
with those of nearby languages Naman (Crowley 2006a) and Neve’ei (Musgrave 2001) in table 3.

Table 3: Voiced dental phonemes in Tirax words and their cognates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Neve’ei</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lidax</td>
<td>libaɣ</td>
<td>libax</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sder</td>
<td>cəber</td>
<td>seber</td>
<td>‘reach’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dr</td>
<td>(sesov) (bəɾ ‘break’)</td>
<td>bir</td>
<td>‘break wind audibly’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dlex</td>
<td>bəley</td>
<td>nibilaʔ</td>
<td>‘banded rail’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tnah</td>
<td>demes</td>
<td>netemah</td>
<td>‘devil’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilin</td>
<td>iləm</td>
<td>ilim</td>
<td>‘five’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>netur</td>
<td>metəɾ</td>
<td>matur</td>
<td>‘sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nain</td>
<td>neim</td>
<td>niyim</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For some other words there has been no shift, as indicated in table 4.

Table 4: Voiced labial phonemes in Tirax words and cognates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tirax</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Neve’ei</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labuŋ</td>
<td>buŋ</td>
<td>buŋ</td>
<td>‘night’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mleun</td>
<td>miliun</td>
<td>miliwun</td>
<td>‘chief’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batin</td>
<td>batən</td>
<td>nebatn</td>
<td>‘head’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A probable mechanism relating the labial-dental counterparts is via apicolabials, also known as linguo-labials. The articulators for apicolabials are the top lip and tongue. There is a group of languages in North Malakula and South Santo that have, or have had, an apicolabial series of consonants. The apicolabials appear to have developed from labials when they occurred before non-round vowels (Lynch 2005). As observed by Lynch, the series appears to have undergone one of three fates in the descendent languages:
• the majority of descendents, such as Naman and Neve'ei, reverted to labials and no longer have apicolabials in their inventories
• for some languages, such as V’ənen Taut and Vao, the apicolabials persisted and are present in the phoneme inventories
• and in a few of the descendents, such as Tirax and Nese, there was a further shift from apicolabial to dental or alveolar articulation.

Like Nese, there are several apparent exceptions in Tirax to the shift from labial to alveolar articulation. For example Proto North Central Vanuatu *batavu, ‘breadfruit’, is reflected in V’ənen Taut as p’atei, where p’ is the orthographic representation of the apicolabial. However, it is reflected in Tirax as btav, with a labial consonant, /b/, rather than the expected dental-alveolar. Other examples include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POc</th>
<th>PNCV <em>mata-</em></th>
<th>PNCV *maRi</th>
<th>POc *rodrom</th>
<th>PNCV *domi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*barapu</td>
<td>*brav</td>
<td>mta-</td>
<td>*me</td>
<td>drom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘long’
‘eye’
‘come’
‘think about’

It is likely that for these words, the environment required for the shift from labial to apicolabial was lost prior to the apicolabial shift, possibly through vowel lenition and loss. However, there are many more examples where the shift to alveolar articulation, presumably via apicolabial articulation, has occurred despite vowel loss, as in tnah ‘devil’ and dlex ‘banded rail’ given in table 3. An exploration of the pattern of shift in place of articulation of the consonants is beyond the scope of this work. Suffice to say there must be an influence in addition to, or even instead of, vowel lenition and loss, to explain the pattern of bilabial to alveolar shift.

---

5 The PNCV forms are from Lynch (2005).
§1.2 Consonants: phonological rules

The consonant phonemes can occur word-initially, -medially and -finally, with the exception of the voiced velar /g/, which is not attested word-initially in the corpus of 1200 words collected by the author. It appears that there has been a historical process of /g/ leniting to /k/ in word-initial position: the initial /k/ in ker ‘comb’ shows up as medial /g/ in the corresponding noun neger ‘comb’.

This section gives a summary of the phonological rules for Tirax consonants.

§1.2.1 Stops

There is no allophonic variation in the voiceless stops; /t/ and /k/ are realised as unaspirated voiceless stops in all environments.

There is a tendency for voicelessness to bleed into a following consonant. For /tn/ and /tl/ clusters, the result is that the /t/ is not released orally, but released nasally in the first case and laterally in the second. This happens both within a morpheme and across morpheme boundaries:

/tnah/ -> [t̥nah] ‘devil’
/i+at+njə/ -> [i̬a̝tn̥jə] ‘he/she sat/is sitting on’
/i+at+litan/ -> [i̬a̝t̥l̥itan] ‘he/she sat/is sitting down’

For pre-nasalised voiced stops, the oral stop element is devoiced in word-final position, and the pre-nasalisation becomes more prominent.

/vivnì/+g/ -> [vivn̥ŋk] ‘my sister’

Word-final voiced stops are clearly distinguished from voiceless stops by the prominent pre-nasalisation:

/nerid/ -> [nermt] ‘knife’
/nerit/ -> [nerit] ‘rope’
Note that this means that the contrast between a pre-nasalised voiced stop and a nasal followed by voiceless stop is neutralised in word-final position. A word final nasal followed by voiceless stop is realised as a voiced stop.

Pre-nasalised stops in neighbouring languages have tended to be analysed as single phonemes, largely on phonotactic grounds: the phonotactic rules for consonant clusters are simplified if these phonetically complex segments are treated as single phonemes (Crowley 2006a:27). There is evidence for and against the single-phoneme analysis in Tirax. On the one hand, Tirax speakers usually pronounce foreign words with homorganic nasals where the original word has a voiced stop, such as for the Bislama words below.

\[
/\text{bas}/ \rightarrow [^{\text{n}}\text{bas}] \quad \text{‘bus’}
\]

\[
/\text{kabis}/ \rightarrow [\text{k}^{\text{n}}\text{bis}] \quad \text{‘edible vegetables, greens’}
\]

Secondly, word-initial voiced stops are often pronounced without pre-nasalisation, as per the rules for the phonetic realisation of /b/, given below.

When a voiced oral stop follows a nasal stop, the pre-nasalisation is effectively neutralised, also shown in the rules given below for the realisation of /b/.

On the other hand, it tends to be only the nasal segment of a pre-nasalised stop that is involved in the process of reduplication:

\[
/\text{sbɛ}/ \rightarrow \text{DUP+sbɛ} \rightarrow /\text{smsbɛ}/ [s^{\text{m.s}}\text{mbɛ}] \quad \text{‘crash into’}
\]

I have followed the single-phoneme analysis for Tirax, largely for the phonotactic reasons of simplifying rules for permissible syllable onsets as well as on the balance of evidence given above. The spelling system is based on this single-phoneme analysis. This analysis means that the reduplication process can apply to part of a phoneme; for ease of pronunciation, the oral stop element of the complex phoneme is deleted at a word-internal syllable boundary when followed by a [−Sonorant] phoneme.
The following phonological rules for /b/ are applicable to all voiced stops:

\[
\begin{align*}
{b} & \rightarrow [b] \sim [mb] / \# _ \_ \\
& \rightarrow [b] / N _ \\
& \rightarrow [mp] / _ # \\
& \rightarrow [mb] / \text{elsewhere}
\end{align*}
\]

The Proto-Oceanic pre-nasalised alveolar trill, *dr, typically analysed as a single complex phoneme in the proto language (Lynch et al 2002:65), appears to have mostly merged with *d in Resan Tirax, as it has in many Malakula languages. There is at least one exception to this encountered in the corpus so far: nadre- ‘blood’ is a reflex of POc *драRaq.⑥ Most sequences of /dr/ in contemporary Tirax appear to have resulted from the loss of vowels between *d and *r, which has presumably occurred following the merger of *dr with *d. The word dr ‘fart audibly’, for example, listed in table 3 above, is cognate with Neve‘ei bir. /dr/ sequences occur contrastively with /d/, as the pair of examples below shows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{/dax/} & \rightarrow [^d\text{xax}] \quad \text{PERFECTIVE} \\
\text{/drax/} & \rightarrow [^d\text{rax}] \quad \text{‘get a fright’}
\end{align*}
\]

When /d/ is followed by /r/ in a Tirax word, they are analysed here as separate, juxtaposed phonemes.

However, there is evidence that the historical merger of /dr/ and /d/ is still underway in Tirax. There are several words in the lexicon which have complex onsets and codas, due to the presence of a /dr/ sequence, such as nidr ‘ripe’, and drvi- ‘mucous (in nose). Furthermore, ["d] has a restricted distribution, in that it never occurs contrastively before back vowels; where it does occur in that environment, it is in free variation with ["d].

For the present work, lexemes that have ["d"] and ["d"] forms in free variation are listed in the lexicon with both spellings. Where there is no free variation, the ["d"] sequence is analysed and spelt as /dr/. At this time there are very few words recorded with complex onsets and codas due to a /dr/ sequence. There are also some words with complex onsets and codas which do not have a /dr/ sequence, so positing a complex phoneme /d'/ does not necessarily simplify the phonotactic rules for Tirax. Finally, there are cases where /dr/ clusters are demonstrably two phonemes, such as in dr ‘fart’, where the /r/ is syllabic. For these reasons, a complex phoneme /d'/ has not been set up in the present analysis.

§1.2.2 Fricatives
There are four fricatives, distinguished by the place of articulation. Voicing is not contrastive for fricatives. The phoneme /s/ only ever occurs as [s], while /x/ and /h/ are voiced intervocalically and generally voiceless elsewhere. The fricative phonemes are analysed as voiceless, with the exception of the bilabial phoneme /β/, which unlike the other phonemes is usually voiced word-initially, even before unvoiced segments. Each fricative also has different phonotactic constraints, given in 3.

The pattern of pronunciation for the bilabial fricative /β/ is given by the following rules. There are several variants which occur word-initially, medially it tends to be lenited to a semi-vowel [w], and word-finally it is typically realised as allophone [p˚], an unreleased bilabial voiceless oral stop:

\[
/\beta/ \rightarrow [\beta] \sim [v] \sim [\phi] \sim [f] / \_#
\]

\[
\rightarrow [p˚] \sim [\phi] / \_#
\]

\[
\rightarrow [\beta] \sim [w] / \text{medially}
\]

\[
\rightarrow [\beta] / \text{elsewhere}
\]
For phoneme /s/, like its voiceless stop counterpart, when the following segment is a nasal, the feature of voicelessness typically carries across into the following segment. This occurs both within morphemes and across morpheme boundaries:

\[
\text{/s/} + /\text{m}/ \rightarrow [\text{s}n\text{m}] \sim [\text{sm}] \quad \text{‘they drink’}
\]

The velar fricative /x/ is cognate with that of neighbouring languages. However, it is generally pronounced as a uvular fricative, sounding similar to the French uvular r.

\[
\text{/dx}/ \rightarrow [\text{d}\text{x}] \quad \text{‘and’}
\]

This is particularly prevalent in the speech of younger speakers and may be due to the influence of French, since Mae is a francophone village.

Speakers with the uvular allophone have a velar allophone syllable-finally following non-front vowels:

\[
\text{/tirax/} \rightarrow [\text{tirax}] \quad \text{‘Tirax’}
\]

Vowel quality is affected when the uvular allophone follows front vowels. There is an epenthetic glide and schwa immediately preceding the uvular fricative.

\[
\text{/nanix/} \rightarrow [\text{nani}^\text{b}x] \quad \text{‘bird’}
\]

For speakers who do not have the uvular allophone, the fricative is palatal or palatalised before high front vowel, /i/. So returning to /dx/ we have:

\[
\text{/dx}/ \rightarrow [\text{d}ji] \sim [\text{dy}i] \quad \text{‘and’}
\]

The velar fricative is voiced between voiced segments and unvoiced elsewhere.

Positing a velar rather than uvular phoneme captures the general patterns of the Tirax phoneme inventory and also makes it more directly comparable to that of related languages.
The glottal fricative is usually voiced before a vowel, both word-initially and word-medially. It has a palatal fricative allophone when it occurs syllable-finally after the high front vowel /i/:

/bih/ \rightarrow [ⁿbič] ‘small’

This makes the glottal fricative clearly distinct from a velar fricative in that environment.

Since /h/ is often voiced word-initially, it might be plausible to set up a voiced phoneme, as for /B/. Word-final devoicing is then accounted for by a global phonological rule: voiced (non-nasal) segments are devoiced word-finally. However, the voiceless allophone occurs before a nasal consonant; the aspiration and [-voice] feature are carried across to the following segment. There is no palatalisation of the /h/ in words such as ihjon ‘it is filled (with)’, due to the co-articulation of /h/ and adjacent nasal.

/i+hjąn/ \rightarrow [Ihrjòn] ‘it is filled (with)’

Positing a voiced phoneme would mean there would have to be a rule to account for the devoicing between a vowel and a nasal, which seems unmotivated.

Some speakers drop their h’s, particularly when the /h/ precedes a vowel, so that huv ‘bathe’ is typically pronounced [uv] by some speakers. There are also pairs of h-initial / vowel-initial counterparts in the lexicon, such as hev / ev ‘pull’.

§1.2.3 Sonorants

Sonorant consonants tend to be devoiced following voiceless sounds:

/tnah/ \rightarrow [tnah] ‘devil’
/ri+at/ + /ri+at/ \rightarrow [riʔatrjat] ‘they two stayed and stayed’

/ri+at/
The phoneme /r/ has three allophones: the flap, [R], the trill, [r], and a voiceless trill [r•] which occurs following voiceless consonants and word-finally after /d/:

\[
\begin{align*}
/xriv/ & \rightarrow [x्रv] \quad \text{‘nearby’} \\
/Binadr/ & \rightarrow [βina^d dr] \quad \text{‘woman, wife’}
\end{align*}
\]

The flap tends to occur intervocalically in free variation with the trill, and the trill occurs elsewhere.

The rules for /r/ are:

\[
\begin{align*}
/r/ & \rightarrow [R] \sim [r] / V _ V \\
& \rightarrow [r] \sim [r] / V _ # \\
& \rightarrow [r] / C [- \text{Voice}] _ , C _ # \\
& \rightarrow [r] / \text{elsewhere}
\end{align*}
\]

The trill is pronounced with an epenthetic [d] following /n/. This occurs within and across word boundaries:

\[
(1) \quad |r+βan| + |r+ŋar| \rightarrow [rβan^d ŋar] \quad \text{‘they two went and cried’} \quad \text{Ref: AB1-001-A 28:30}
\]

This effectively neutralises the contrast between /dr/ and /nr/ sequences. For example the sound string for ‘food’ is [nɔndran], which could be either:

\[
\begin{align*}
/nɔdran/ & \rightarrow [nɔ^d rαn] \\
/nɔŋran/ & \rightarrow [nɔŋ^d rαn]
\end{align*}
\]

Unless the etymology or morphology of a word can be used to determine the actual phoneme sequence, a convention is used here of analysing the sequence as /dr/.

\footnote{Consonant clusters in syllable codas are rare in Tirax; /dr/ is one of the few attested, and likely to be a reflex of the POc complex phoneme *dr (see 3.2 for permissible consonant clusters).}
§1.2.4 Summary

In summary, below are the main phonological rules which apply to consonants:

- All phonemes, with the exception of /t/, /s/ and /k/, have several allophones.
- The main features which influence pronunciation are voicelessness of adjacent consonant and frontness of adjacent vowel.
- For voiceless consonants, the [-Voice] feature carries over to the following sonorant consonant, with the exception of the velar fricative /x/.
- Several phonemes, such as /x/ and /d/ have allophones in free variation with each other, and are likely to represent a phonological change currently in progress. /x/ has a uvular allophone mainly in the speech of younger speakers, and POc */d'*/ has merged with /d/ in most environments, except before back vowels, where /dr/ is in free variation with /d/.

We also saw that Tirax /h/ derives historically from POc */s/, or */t/ via */s/.

§1.3 Tirax vowels

Table 5 shows there are seven vowel phonemes in Resan Tirax.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Mid</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Mid</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td></td>
<td>ɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tirax differs from many of its relatives and neighbours in distinguishing three front and three back vowels; many Vanuatu languages have only five vowels. Schwa is widespread in Resan Tirax discourse, but there is currently no evidence of it having phonemic status; its distribution can be accounted for through rules of epenthesis and of vowel weakening.
Many eastern Oceanic languages have contrastive vowel length (Lynch et al. 2002:35), however there is no evidence of contrastive vowel length in Resan Tirax.

§1.4 Vowels: phonological rules
All the phonemes occur contrastively with phonetically similar vowel sounds in all environments.

§1.4.1 Minimal pairs
For example, the following minimal and sub-minimal pairs contrast the three front vowels:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/i/ \text{ and } /e/ & /dxin/ & \rightarrow & [\text{'dχin}] \quad \text{‘with him/her’} \\
 & /lxen/ & \rightarrow & [\text{Iχen}] \quad \text{‘back, again’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/e/ \text{ and } /ɛ/ & /kle/ & \rightarrow & [\text{kle}] \quad \text{‘look’} \\
 & /kle/ & \rightarrow & [\text{kle}] \quad \text{‘exchange’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/he/ & \rightarrow & [\text{heχ}] \quad \text{‘tap’} \\
/heɛ/ & \rightarrow & [\text{heχ}] \quad \text{‘climb’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/nes/ & \rightarrow & [\text{nes}] \quad \text{‘fish’} \\
/nɛs/ & \rightarrow & [\text{nɛs}] \quad \text{‘defecate’} \\
\end{array}
\]

The three back vowels are contrasted in the following minimal pairs:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/u/ \text{ and } /o/ & /drum/ & \rightarrow & [\text{drom}] \quad \text{‘wild’} \\
 & /dromom/ & \rightarrow & [\text{dromom}] \quad \text{‘think (about)’} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
/o/ \text{ and } /ɔ/ & /drɔr/ & \rightarrow & [\text{dɔr}] \quad \text{‘turn over’} \\
 & /drɔr/ & \rightarrow & [\text{dɔr}] \quad \text{‘knock’} \\
\end{array}
\]
And /a/ is contrasted with the low mid vowels in the following examples:

\[
\text{/a/ and } /\text{ɛ/)} \quad \text{/dada/ -> } [^\text{a}^\text{d}^\text{a}] \quad \text{‘silly’}
\]

\[
\text{/dɛd/ -> } [^\text{d}^\text{ɛ}^\text{d}] \quad \text{‘give birth’}
\]

\[
\text{/a/ and } /\text{o/} \quad \text{/nmat/ -> } /[n^\text{m}^\text{a}^\text{t}] \quad \text{‘snake’}
\]

\[
\text{/mɔt/ -> } [mɔt] \quad \text{‘cut’}
\]

§1.4.2 Syllabification and vowel quality

The high vowels both have two allophones, occurring as tense allophones [i] and [u] in open syllables, and as lax allophones [ɪ] and [ʊ] in closed syllables, illustrated here:

\[
\text{/ti.tin/ -> } [ti.tin] \quad \text{‘cooking’}
\]

For certain words, /e/ has a particularly tense realisation even in closed syllables. For example, /lev/, ‘give’, and /natev/, ‘sugarcane’, can almost sound like [lɪv] and [nɑtɪv] respectively in ordinary speech. This phenomena of tense realisations of mid vowels also occurs in Naman, where it has historically led to some inconsistency in transcription of words containing /e/ (Crowley 2006a:31). Elsewhere in the languages of North-Central Malakula, the mid vowels /e/ and /o/ tend to be realised as [ɛ] and [ɔ] in closed syllables, with tense allophones /e/ and /o/ in open syllables (Crowley 2006a:31).

§1.4.3 Mid vowels

For many Tirax words the distinction between [ɛ] and [ɛ] is difficult to hear in ordinary speech. Results from a spectrographic analysis of vowel sounds from both fast and careful speech shows that there is considerable overlap between the ranges of pronunciation of /ɛ/ versus /ɛ/, and /o/ versus /ɔ/. This suggests that where there is no ambiguity, the distinction between the open and closed mid vowels may not be significant for the speakers.
§1.4.4 /a/ ~ /e/ alternation

Tirax has an /a/~/e/, and less frequently an /a/ ~ /ɛ/ alternation in the root of some words. /a/ and /e/ can be demonstrated to be distinct phonemes with minimal pairs, such as in the example below:

/a/ and /ɛ/  /ladlad/ -> [la`dlant] ‘big’
/ledled/ -> [le`dlent] ‘lake’

However many common Tirax words have alternate forms with /a/ and /ɛ/:

/tnah/ ~ /tneh/ -> [tna̞h] ~ [tne̞h] ‘devil’
/nani/ ~ /neni/ -> [nani] ~ [neni] ‘coconut’
/nabu/ ~ /nebu/ -> [nambu] ~ [nebu] ‘bamboo’

The alternate forms appear to be in free variation with each other. This could be due to an historical dialectal variation within Tirax, in which both pronunciations have come to be incorporated into each speaker’s speech. However, it is interesting to note that there is also /a/ - /ɛ/ alternation in some neighbouring languages. In V’őnen Taut, for example, there are several morphophonemic rules defining the conditions under which /a/ becomes /ɛ/, such as when a noun or verb root with stressed /a/ takes an affix (Fox 1979:14-16):

/na`tan/ ‘basket’
/natenak/ ‘my basket’

However /a/ and /ɛ/ stem alternations in V’őnen Taut are all accounted for by a morphophonemic rule; there are no freely occurring alternate forms.

---

8 There may be a meaningful difference in some cases for some speakers. For example, nanih is more often used to mean ‘bush’ and nenih for grass, though both words are used for both meanings. In the case of the n(V)- alternation in nouns, there can also be a number distinction, with the /a/ form associated with singular and /ɛ/ with plural, as discussed in §4.
§1.4.5 Schwa

There is a schwa sound in Tirax, which has a demonstrably different spectrographic analysis to other vowels. A commonly occurring word, for example, is /nəɛ/ ‘some’, which is variously pronounced ['nəɛ] and [n̩əɛ]. However Tirax speakers do not recognise the schwa as a meaningful sound, and do not want it in the orthography. There is also not enough phonological evidence to set up schwa as an independent phoneme. Schwa sounds almost never occur in stressed syllables, or where they do there is always an alternate form of the word with schwa in an unstressed syllable. All schwas can be accounted for either by rules of epenthesis, to break up certain consonant clusters, or other morphophonemic rules such as labialisation and reduction of peripheral vowels in unstressed environments (discussed below).

As for /nəɛ/, mentioned above, when it occurs in speech following an open syllable, the first consonant is reanalysed as the coda of the previous syllable and the schwa disappears:

(2) …/te+/nəɛ/… → [tɛ.nɛ] ‘…which some…’

Ref: AB1-001-A 4:20

Schwa is not in the POc vowel inventory but is an innovation in some of Tirax’s neighbours, including V’әnen Taut, Naman and Tape. In Tape, Tirax’s closest traditional neighbour, a phonological change appears to be in progress, whereby some vowels are being lost after passing through a schwa phase [Crowley 2006b:99 and pc]:

\[ V_{[-\text{BACK}]} \rightarrow \circ \rightarrow \emptyset \]

It is possible that this process has also occurred in Tirax. There is evidence from words such as dlex ‘banded rail’, from an older form *dilexa, which is preserved in Tirax songs. Synchronic evidence comes from alternate pronunciations of words with non-back vowels in unstressed syllables, such as the oblique preposition xini, pronounced variously as ['xini] and [xɔːni]. And nəɛ itself is sometimes pronounced [nɪŋɛ] by older speakers. Further evidence comes from cognate words in other
languages, such as the Naman word *demès, ‘devil’ which appears as *tomes ~ *times, in Tape (Crowley 2006b:94), and turns up as *māh in Tirax.

§1.4.6 Nasalisation and labialisation

All vowels tend to be nasalised following nasal consonants. For diphthongs, often both vowels are affected, as in the example below.

(3) /nua ikǝl/ -> [nûa] ikǝl] ‘(the) water is flowing’

Bilabial consonants also influence the pronunciation of the following vowel. There is rounding of non-round vowels, particularly following bilabials /β/ and /w/, and front vowels tend to be pronounced centrally. Sometimes the labialisation is quite prominent:

(4) s=weðr i=nev
3:P:R=eat.something 3:S:R=finish

[s̥ˈwədrj’nep˚]

They finished eating.

§1.4.7 Diphthongs

A diphthong is a sequence of two vowels within a word that functions as a prosodic unit, forming a syllable nucleus $V_1V$ If $V_1$ is lower than $V_2$, the quality of the vowel will change gradually moving from $V_1$ to $V$. If $V_1$ is higher than $V_2$, then there is often an epenthetic glide: [j] if $V_1$ is /i/, [w] if $V_1$ is /u/.

Below are the diphthongs attested in the corpus of around 1200 words collected by the author. There do not appear to be any diphthongs involving the open mid-vowel phonemes /e/ and /ɔ/, which may reflect that these vowels are a relatively recent offshoot of /e/ and /o/ respectively. Vowel length is not contrastive in Tirax, and these alternatives are shaded in table 6. Some theoretically possible combinations are not attested in the corpus, and those boxes are asterisked. The gaps mainly involve the back vowels. Interestingly, there are no diphthongs attested ending with /o/, and only one beginning with /o/. There are also no diphthongs attested comprising a sequence
of high vowels, /iu/ or /ui/. The most frequently encountered diphthongs involve sequences of maximally distinct vowels with respect to height: /ai/, /ia/, /au/ and /ua/, as in /nain/ ‘house’, /nial/ ‘red; sun’, /naur/ ‘crayfish’ and /nua/ ‘water’.

Table 6: Attested Tirax diphthongs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V2</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VV sequences tend to be treated as a unit for the purposes of stress assignment, and therefore are analysed as diphthongs. However some Tirax VV sequences appear not be diphthongs, but discrete syllables. On one end of the spectrum, some diphthongs are so intimately bound together that there are alternate forms with a pure vowel, such as naut ~ not ‘place, garden’ and mleun ~ mlon ‘chief’. Others are pronounced as discrete syllables, such as nauh ‘rain’. We could be witnessing a gradual change, from discrete syllables to diphthongs to monophthongs. Naut is a common word with high frequency. Nauh is also a reasonably common word, but is composed of two morphemes, a nominalizer, na, a reflex of the POc article, and uh ‘rain’, and so may be more likely to resist a process of diphthongisation.

For reduplication involving diphthongs, only the first part of the complex sound is involved in reduplication, similar to the behaviour of pre-nasalised voiced stops:

(5) n=vi-vial
    1SR=DUP-walk
    [ɪˈbɹiˌβial] 'lain

I am/was walking along home.
§2 Orthography
The writing system used in this work has been chosen by the community from a small range of recommendations. Most phonemes have a direct correlate in the Roman alphabet. Of the IPA symbols which have no Roman correlate, $B$ is represented with $v$, and the others, $\eta$, $\epsilon$ and $\sigma$, are represented as their IPA form. The community prefer to use $\eta$ rather than digraph $ng$, which would create problems of ambiguity for word pairs such as $ngar$ ‘sore’ and $\eta ar$ ‘cry. They also prefer IPA symbols over using diacritics for the vowels.

$Kh$ is used to represent the velar fricative in several other Malakula languages, such as Naman, Neve’ei and Tape, however $kh$ is not a viable alternative to $x$ in Tirax, since both $k$ and $h$ phonemes are attested. Recently developed orthographies for Malakula languages are also opting for $x$, such as Unua (orthography developed by Elizabeth Pearce), Aulua (Martin Pavoir-Smith) and Neverver (Julie Barbour).

For lexemes with $a/e$ vowel alternations, the attested variant is the one transcribed.

§3 The syllable

§3.1 Syllable structure
The most common Tirax syllable is CV. However there is a range of permissible syllable structures. Unlike many Vanuatu languages, Tirax allows consonant clusters in syllable onsets. These consonant clusters appear to have resulted due to a historical process of vowel deletion, discussed in 4.3.

Most Tirax syllables end in a vowel or a single consonant. Of the Tirax lexemes encountered so far, only five end in a consonant cluster: $vinadr$ ‘woman’, $wedr$ ‘eat’, $nidr$ ‘ripe, $mumudr$ ‘whisper’, and $helv$ ‘give off smoke’. Additionally, the first person dual inclusive, $nekidr$ ends in $dr$ and the first person plural possessive suffix, $–dr$, forms portmanteau morphemes that end in $–dr$, such as in the 1P possessive classifier for food, $dra$ $dr$. The [r] sound in the word final $dr$ clusters is often subtle, and shows up mainly when followed by a vowel-initial syllable. This $/dr/$ sequence is likely to be a reflex of the POc $*dr$, a complex phoneme in the process of becoming simplified.
Since there are other examples of consonant clusters in syllable-initial and final positions, positing a complex phoneme /dr/ does not simplify the Tirax phonotactic rules. For this and other reasons discussed in 1.2, a complex /dr/ phoneme has not been included in the inventory.

The acceptable syllable structure in Tirax for syllables containing vowels is therefore:

$$(C)(C)(C)V(V)(C)(C)$$

with the following restrictions:
- the permissible syllable-final consonant clusters are /lv/ and /dr/.
- the maximum number of phonemes in a syllable is five
- syllable-initial tri-consonant clusters are restricted to /brt/, /vrk/, and clusters combining /dr/ with any consonant excluding oral stops.

Some examples of Tirax syllables include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V</th>
<th>/i/</th>
<th>third person singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCV</td>
<td>/sde/</td>
<td>‘touch’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVV</td>
<td>/hlau/</td>
<td>‘arrive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVC</td>
<td>/nain/</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCVC</td>
<td>/mkan/</td>
<td>‘dance’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCVC</td>
<td>/brtet/</td>
<td>‘always’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCV</td>
<td>/drxe/</td>
<td>‘break off’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCC</td>
<td>/wedr/</td>
<td>‘eat’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nasals and liquids may also form syllable nuclei, with permissible structures:

$$(C)(C)L$$

The three options are exemplified below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L</th>
<th>/nab.l/</th>
<th>‘plank’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>/sm.sbx/</td>
<td>‘count’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCL</td>
<td>/drl.ŋa.ro/</td>
<td>‘listen’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If a syllable with a complex onset follows a morpheme ending in an open syllable, the first consonant in the cluster is usually assigned to the coda of the previous syllable.

\[i=\text{vle} \quad \text{xn}\)

3S:R=\text{cut} \quad 1S

\[\text{[Iβ.ˈlɛx̂.nɔ]}\]

*It cut me.*

The exception to this are words beginning with h-initial consonant clusters, such as *hyavl* ‘ten’ and *hlau* ‘arrive’, where the h is typically co-articulated with the following sonorant.

Conversely, if a morpheme with a consonant in the coda precedes a vowel-initial morpheme, then the consonant is assigned to the onset of the following syllable.

(6) kreh-i

deeve-3s

krɛ.hi

*Trick him.*

§3.2 Phonotactics

The attested combinations of consonant phonemes in syllable onset are given in table 7. Italicised words in the table have consecutive identical consonants, many of them are the result of a process of reduplication. These C1,Ci combinations are pronounced with an epenthetic schwa.

---

9 The 1S pronoun *x hà* has an alternate form *xnɔ* that appears in fluent speech, and has been transcribed whenever it was encountered.
Table 7: Consonant clusters attested in syllable onsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>phoneme</th>
<th>+ voiceless stop</th>
<th>+ voiced stop</th>
<th>+ fricative</th>
<th>+ nasal</th>
<th>+ liquid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>tɛra</td>
<td>tɛhrɛ</td>
<td>tβɛh</td>
<td>tnah</td>
<td>tɛhrɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>kkreh</td>
<td>kɛn</td>
<td>kɛn</td>
<td>kle</td>
<td>kkreh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>bblɡiɡan</td>
<td>bsis</td>
<td>bxsɡh</td>
<td>blat</td>
<td>brafβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>ddal</td>
<td>dxɛ</td>
<td>dne</td>
<td>dɛak</td>
<td>drax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>βkɛr</td>
<td>βsok</td>
<td>βxah</td>
<td>βnɛv</td>
<td>βɛn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>sbe</td>
<td>sβɛ</td>
<td>sξɛ</td>
<td>sniv</td>
<td>sɛaβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>xβen</td>
<td>xsgɛ</td>
<td>xβɛ</td>
<td>xνɛ</td>
<td>xβɔnα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>hβɛn</td>
<td>hβɛlɛnɡ</td>
<td>hξal</td>
<td>hνɛ</td>
<td>hlaβɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>mdrax</td>
<td>mxɛl</td>
<td>mɛsɛ</td>
<td>mɛkɛl</td>
<td>mɛrɛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>ntah</td>
<td>nbɛh</td>
<td>nβat</td>
<td>nɛmat</td>
<td>nɛat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>lβɛ</td>
<td>lβɛk</td>
<td>lɛn</td>
<td>lɛmɛ</td>
<td>llɛe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>rkleh</td>
<td>rdoɛh</td>
<td>rso</td>
<td>rɛmɔx</td>
<td>rɛnɛ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all phonemes can be part of a syllable onset, with some classes participating in more combinations than others. Table 8 shows that fricatives form the greatest number of attested combinations, appearing in 27 different combinations in C1 position, and 24 in C2 position. They are followed by nasals and liquids, which both participate in a large range of attested clusters. Stops occur in fewer attested clusters, and there is some asymmetry in the table, with voiceless stops preferring cluster-initial position, and voiced stops preferring C2 position. C,Ci combinations are most likely to be the result of reduplication and have been excluded from table 8. Note that
some of the liquid-initial combinations may actually be analysable as syllabic liquid, followed by consonant-initial syllable, such as \textit{lba} ‘root’.

\textbf{Table 8}: The number of possible consonant combinations attested for each consonant class (excluding CiCi combinations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C1</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>voiceless stop</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiced oral stop</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricative</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquid</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are some gaps worth noting:

- there is only one cluster encountered involving /g/: \textit{hge}, ‘not be’, and it has an alternate form: \textit{hxе}.
- the voiced velars /g/ and /ŋ/ are never in cluster-initial position. This follows from the fact there are no g-initial and few ƞ-initial words attested in the corpus.
- there are no fricative-stop or stop-fricative \(C_1C_2\) combinations where \(C_1\) and \(C_2\) are at the same place of articulation
- there are no liquid-liquid clusters.

There are nine words attested which have three consonants in the syllable onset:

\textit{brtet} ‘always’

\textit{vrkeh} ‘spray’

\textit{rdrh} ‘broken’

\textit{mdrax} ‘grow’

\textit{xdro} ‘do repeatedly or intensively’

\textit{drlom} ‘swallow whole’
The vowel in each of these words takes the primary stress, so there is no evidence from stress assignment that the nasals and liquids in the clusters are syllabic. The first two clusters comprise a bilabial followed by /r/, followed by a voiceless stop. The remaining words involve a /dr/ sequence. A sequence of three consonants in syllable onsets appears to be restricted to the few permissible combinations exemplified above.

All phonemes are attested in syllable codas. Vowels, nasals and fricatives are most frequently encountered in this position, as in the following examples:

**Vowel final**

| /dxı/  | COMmitative |
| /tata/ | ‘father’ |
| /dr̥narɔ/ | ‘listen’ |
| /-ru/ | ‘two’ |

**Nasal final**

| /bram/ | ‘your (sg.) arm’ |
| /ntan/ | ‘ground’ |
| /ntan/ | ‘basket’ |

**Fricative final**

| /xriβ/ | ‘nearby’ |
| /mlas/ | ‘crack’ |
| /βsox/ | ‘both, altogether’ |
| /tnah/ | ‘devil’ |
Liquids and voiceless stops are also attested:

/lu:l/ ‘river (LOC)’
/xær/ ‘they’
/not/ ‘place, garden’
/dlak/ ‘fine (of money)’

Voiced stops are attested, but are realised as nasals with a voiceless oral release, as discussed above in 1.

/tab/ ‘dry, dried up’
/dɛd/ ‘give birth’
/nuag/ ‘canoe’

The semi-vowel /w/ is attested word-finally only in an exclamation:

/hi:a:w/ EXCLAMATION

§3.3 Stress
Stress is defined here as the syllable with the highest pitch. The conventional criteria of frequency and intensity often do not coincide in a Tirax word; the loudest syllable is often not the highest pitched.

Like most Vanuatu languages, stress generally falls on the penultimate syllable, with secondary stress(es) falling on every other syllable counting backwards.

/a:weh/ ‘far away’
/be.ti/ ‘mat’
/be’tu.l.ŋa/ ‘source (of river)’
/’na.li’bau.wa/ ‘green sugarcane’

However, stress can also fall on the final syllable of multi-syllabic words. In this case, the rule for assigning secondary stress is the same.
/naˈuh/ ‘rain’
/ˈnau.ti.ˈren/ ‘dawn, daylight’, daytime’

In the above cases, the assignment of stress is likely to be due to the fact that these words are multi-morphemic. *Nautiren* is comprised of *naut* ‘place’ and *i=ren* ‘it passes (of time)’, and subject markers, such as the third person singular *i=*, typically do not carry stress, as discussed in section 4.3. The Tirax nominaliser, *na-*, encountered in *nauh*, is a reflex of the POc article *

\( n(V) \), which appears to have historically not taken stress. The fact that the POc article did not take stress has led to a great many *n*-initial nouns beginning with a consonant cluster, as in the examples below, since the unstressed vowel in the reflex of the article has been subsequently lost.

/ntah/ ‘sea’
/ntan/ ‘basket’
/nbah/ ‘penis sheath’
/nhal/ ‘track, way’
/nlan/ ‘wind, breath’

Note however there are just as many exceptions, where the *n(V)*- morpheme is stressed, including:

/ˈnelan/ ‘(wooden) stake’
/ˈnebih/ ‘little one’
/ˈnasih/ ‘breast’
/ˈnasix/ ‘kingfisher’
/ˈnaxnal/ ‘men’s house’

There may be a prosodic shift in progress, such that the Tirax nominaliser is able to carry stress. This shift may have been going on for some time, since the *n(V)* segment is also stressed for some words such as *nasix*, from POc *siko*, and encountered in Bislama as *nasiko*, where the article has been reanalysed as part of the root. A survey of words with stressed *n(V)*- versus word-initial consonant-clusters to reveal the
mechanism and timing for such a shift in Tirax is beyond the scope of the present work.

Many syllable-final stress patterns are likely to have resulted from word-final vowel loss. Table 9 shows two examples of multi-syllabic words where the final vowel has been lost, leaving a consonant final word with syllable-final stress:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9: Etymology of two Tirax words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proto-Oceanic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tirax Song word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contemporary Tirax Word</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Syllabic liquids and nasals can also carry stress. The pattern of stress is the same as for other syllables, occurring penultimately:

/ˈr.dreh/ ‘broken’
/ˈkl.kle/ ‘stare’
/ˈβl.xnet/ ‘turn black’
/roˈs.ˈr.vxe/ ‘miss (someone or something)’
/ˈsm.sbex/ ‘count’
/ˈm.ˈtm.tax/ ‘hunt’

<sup>10</sup> Thanks to John Lynch p.c. (22/11/07) for providing this word, a Proto North-Central Vanuatu reconstruction via Ross Clarke.
§4 Morphophonemic rules
The morphophonemic rules given below apply to phonemes, and the output is phonemes. The main morphophonemic rules are epenthesis of /d/, degemination of consecutive identical phonemes, and vowel elision. Schwa epenthesis is also discussed below.

§4.1 Epenthesis
We have seen that there are many possible combinations of consonants in syllable onsets. Most of these are articulated with a reduced schwa breaking up the consecutive consonants. Generally, all consecutive consonants in syllable-onset position will be pronounced with an epenthetic schwa, with the following exceptions:

1. clusters comprising voiceless stops and homorganic nasals have no epenthetic schwa, (that is, \(tn\) and \(nt\) clusters; there are no \(k\eta\) or \(\eta k\) clusters, and no \(p\))
2. clusters where \(C_2\) is [-stop] have no epenthetic schwa, (except when \(C_1\) is a liquid)

These exceptions are exemplified by the following words:

Voiceless stops and homorganic nasals:

- /tnah/ \([tn\acute{a}]\) ‘devil’
- /ntan/ \([nt\acute{n}]\) ‘ground’

\(C_2\) is [-stop]:

- /dxi/ \([d\acute{r}\i]\) comitative
- /hlau/ \([hl\acute{a}]\) ‘arrive’
- /nl\acuten/ \([n\acute{l}\acute{n}\acute{\acute{n}}]\) ‘wind’
- /mr\acute{r}\acute{e}\i/ \([m\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{\acute{e}}]\) ‘niece, nephew’
C₂ is [-stop], C₁ is a liquid:

/lxen/ [l³xen] ‘back, again’

Note that reduplication of single consonants results in consecutive identical consonants. These are separated by a schwa, and so resist degemination (discussed below):

REDUPLICATION

/rxiv/ -> /xxriv/ [x³xriv] ‘approach’
/lxɛ/ -> /lxɛ/ [l³lxɛ] ‘sew, weave’

There is also a reduced schwa before /r/-initial clusters, whether the /r/ is consonantal or syllabic, as in the following two examples respectively:

r -> ɔr / #_ C
    #_ $

/rxah/ [ɔrxah] ‘lift up’

/r+βan/ [ɔr.βan] ‘they two go / went’

An epenthetic schwa also occurs when a consonant-final word is followed by a consonant-initial word, such as in example (7) below:

(7) s=v-va nas=sɔ bɔ nabor mren-ren
3P:R=say 1P:R=eat DIM mushroom dried-DUP

[ˈsɔ.βə.βa na.ˈsɔ.ə.ˈməbo] …
They replied: “We’re just eating dried mushrooms.”

They replied: “We're just eating dried mushrooms.”

The epenthetic schwa appears to be largely motivated by ease of pronunciation. When it occurs between words, epenthetic schwa appears to create an additional syllable to tend to a CV.CV.CV structure. However it does not count as a syllable nucleus for the purposes of stress assignment.
As mentioned above in 1.1.3, there is also an epenthetic /d/ which occurs between /n/ and /r/ both within a word and between words, as in example (8) below:

(8) r=van ri=at sar len har
3D:R=go 3D:R=be IMPF house 3P:POSS

[ˈr.βan.ˈri.ˈat] …

Then went (home) and were sitting in the house.

§4.2 Degemination

If two identical phonemes appear on either side of a morpheme boundary, the phonemes are pronounced as a single phone. This occurs for both consonants and vowels, and is given in the rule below, where P stands for phoneme:

\[
/P_i/+/P_i/ \rightarrow /P_i/
\]

(9) /smemex+xini/-+/smemexini/-+ [smemexi.ni] ‘they asked (them)’

The example below shows the interaction of some of the rules discussed so far, using the example of …bih + he …, as in:

(10) tuuxtxunmaltxun bih he nekir
story small POSS 1PI

our little story

In this example, /h/+/h/ manifests as [β], suggesting the following rule ordering:

(1) Degemination

\[
/h/+/h/ \rightarrow /h/
\]

Degemination removes the condition for the palatalisation of /h/ following /i/ given by the rule from section 1.1 above, repeated below:
/h/ => [ç] \ i_ $ \\

The palatisation rule requires a syllable final /h/ as input. However the remaining /h/ is in the onset of the following syllable.

(2) Voicing

/h/ V - > [ni] V

The final result is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) DEGEMINATION</th>
<th>(2) VOICING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…/bih/+he/…</td>
<td>/bihe/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=&gt; [“bihie]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the degemination results in morphological information being lost altogether, then the consonant is optionally saved by inserting an epenthetic schwa:

/n/+/nin/ - > [nⁿ₂nn] ~ [nn] ‘I drink’

Note that rules for epenthesis and degemination do not apply to syllabic consonants, such as in *hnavl*-lin: [hₙa.ˈbl.lin] ‘fifty’.

§4.3 Elision

Word-final unstressed vowels are often elided in Tirax speech when they precede vowel-initial morphemes. This applies to words such as the discourse marker ale ‘so, then’, the subordinate marker te and intensifier we. The final vowel is lost when preceding /i/-initial words:

/e/+/i/ - > /i/
(11)  \( i=nxav \quad \text{we} \quad i=nxav \quad 3s:r=\text{covered.in.sores} \quad \text{so} \quad 3s:r=\text{covered.in.sores} \)

\[ \ldots /\text{winxaβ}/ \]

She was completely covered in sores.

Similarly, the durative particle \( vɔ \) is reduced to \(/v/\) before vowels:

\[ /vɔ/+[i]/ \rightarrow /vι/ \]

(12)  \( \text{ale} \quad \text{mar} \quad ŋɛ \quad i=at \quad vɔ \quad i=ŋɛ \quad \text{dax} \quad ɛ \quad s=mɛ \quad 3p:r=\text{come} \)

\[ \ldots /\text{virŋɔ}/ \ldots \]

Now the boy stayed on until he heard that they were coming.
APPENDIX III

Spectrographic analysis of *ihŋavil*

The syllable with the highest intensity, indicated by the yellow line, is often not the same as the syllable with the highest pitch, indicated by the blue line. The spectrographic analysis of *ŋavil* in the phrase *ihŋavil dromana ilin* ‘fifteen’ shows that the highest pitch falls on /vil/, and the highest intensity on /ŋa/.

**Picture 1: PRAAT analysis of *ihŋavil dromanan ilin***
APPENDIX IV

Determining boundaries between IUs in Tirax discourse

Chafe (1994) gives a methodology for determining boundaries between Intonation Units, defined as discrete units of speech stream, reflect whole, discrete ideas in the speaker’s mind just prior to and during articulation. The methodology used in this work for determining boundaries between IUs in Tirax is based on his descriptions of acoustic phenomena which generally occur at such boundaries.

There are several useful prosodic cues to IU boundaries: pauses, intonation contour, tempo of syllables and changes in voice quality. These are each defined below.

**Pauses** are gaps in the speech stream. They are typically prima facie evidence of an intonation unit boundary (cf. Chafe 1994).

An **intonation contour** comprises a fluent, undulating pitch and intensity, with an **intonation peak**, defined in this work as the highest pitched syllable in the unit. An IU generally contains a single intonation contour with a single primary peak. The main intonation contours identified are rising contour, transcribed with a forward slash (/), falling (\), continuing (—), exclamation (!) and question (?). Some IUs appear to have an intermediate contour. For example, a combination of a falling and question intonation contour is written as !\.

**Tempo** is the speed of the utterance, which manifests as syllable length: the beginning and middle of IUs tend to have rapid tempo and therefore shorter syllables (time-wise), and the final syllable(s) tends to be slower, therefore longer.

**Voice quality**: The intonation unit will generally maintain an even voice quality and pitch. A shift in voice quality or pitch can be evidence of an IU boundary.

An IU is understood to be an expression of a semantic or thematic unit, roughly corresponding to the syntactic unit of ‘clause’.
Sometimes the cues to IUs coincide, so that there is no ambiguity as to the boundaries of the IU. The following example shows three IUs. The first IU is lower pitched and the final vowel is lengthened, with a pronounced creaky voice. The following IUs are pitched higher and each have a full intonation contour with single primary peak:

EXAMPLE (1)

- ...(0.4) i=v-va: —
  3S:R=say
  
  She said

- .. da=lev roxa de=hxal xi(ni) nox ba=wes-i /
  1S:1=take leaf 3S:1=one OBL 2S 2S:1=eat-3S
  
  She said “I will give you a herb for you to eat,”

- ...(0.3) nxo da=wes de=hxal \ 
  1S 1S:1=eat 3S:1=one
  
  “and I will also eat one.”

Often these indicators give conflicting evidence. There may be no pause, but a long syllable coming at the end of a fully articulated intonation contour, for example.

EXAMPLE (2)

- ...(0.3) i=rub-i: / =
  3S:R=hit-3S
  
  She whipped him

- i=tehix lexen /
  3S:R=get.up back
  
  and he came back to life.

Conversely, a pause can occur where there is evidence from the intonation contour and tempo that there is no IU boundary. These non-structural pauses are typically associated with problems with word retrieval, as in the following example, where the speaker searches for the indigenous word: tuxtxunmaltxun ‘traditional story’:
Therefore a pause is not necessarily evidence of an IU boundary, but has to be used in conjunction with the other criteria.

Another issue encountered in the identification of IUs is that some streams of speech appear to have several prominent intonation peaks, but no other cues to IU boundaries, such as in the example below:

EXAMPLE (4)

- i=mɛ litan / = 3S:R=come down
  and got down
- i=lev ṭọxə / = 3S:R=take leaf
  and took a leaf
- i=rub ɭxen xini lex han ɲɛ / 3S:R=hit back OBL husband 3S:POSS DEF
  and whipped her husband with it.

Where there are strings of intonation contours with no signs of internal boundaries, they are analysed as a single IU, comprised of sub-IUs.

Although the IU or sub-IU typically corresponds to a clause, discourse markers, and especially conjunctions are often encountered at the end of IUs, rather than the beginning of the IU expressing the clause they encode:
EXAMPLE (5):

They walked on and on until they reached the road

A woman was standing on the road

with her small daughter.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The following four features were used for identifying IU boundaries:

- presence and length of a pause
- presence of a fully articulated intonation contour with a single primary intonation peak
- change in voice quality
- elongation of any syllable(s) / change in tempo

There are degrees of discreteness, with some boundaries having all cues, and other boundaries having only one or two cues. On this basis, a subcategory of IU was proposed: sub-IU, which has a primary intonation peak and typically no other cues to IU boundary.

There is often a mismatch of morphosyntax and prosody; clauses do not always match IUs. Many discourse markers, primarily conjunctions such as rente ‘meanwhile’, typically occur at the end of the IU preceding the IU which contains the clause of which it is syntactically a part. This suggests that markers of logical relationships are more accessible than events and participants.
APPENDIX V

Corpus of Ten Narratives

Twenty-two traditional narratives were recorded during the 2004 field trip, ten of which form the basis of research for chapters 7 to 11. The ten narratives represent both male and female storytellers across a range of ages. There is also a range of folktale sub-genres represented, including animal fables, boys outwitting devils, and doomed mixed-marriages between humans and supernatural beings. The ten narratives are listed in the table below. Additional material and examples are taken from the remaining twelve narratives where appropriate. The storytellers did not give names for their stories, so the names of the tales are devised by me, based on the main character(s) and props in the story.

Table: Ten traditional Tirax tales and their storytellers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape &amp; item no.</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Sub-genre / main characters</th>
<th>Storyteller Gender</th>
<th>Storyteller Age-group</th>
<th>Length (IUs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02A-01</td>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Tahitian Chestnuts</em></td>
<td>Boy &amp; devil</td>
<td>M₁</td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02A-07</td>
<td><em>The Dove and her Ten Children</em></td>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>M₂</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02A-08</td>
<td><em>The Boy, the Devil and the Five Planks</em></td>
<td>Boy &amp; devil</td>
<td>M₃</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09B-05</td>
<td><em>The Story of the White Flying Fox</em></td>
<td>Animal &amp; human</td>
<td>F₁</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09B-06</td>
<td><em>The Boy and the Old Hag with the Sores</em></td>
<td>Boy &amp; witch</td>
<td>F₂</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18A-05</td>
<td><em>The Five Brothers and the Girl with the Sores</em></td>
<td>Brothers &amp; wife</td>
<td>F₃</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18A-10</td>
<td><em>The Snake and the Coconut Palms</em></td>
<td>Animal &amp; human: explanation of origin</td>
<td>F₄</td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>165</td>
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<tr>
<td>18B-01</td>
<td><em>Cat and Dog</em></td>
<td>Animals: teleological fable</td>
<td>F₃</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>144</td>
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<tr>
<td>18B-03</td>
<td><em>The Woman Tree-Spirit in the Garden</em></td>
<td>Human &amp; supernatural being</td>
<td>F₃</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>175</td>
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<tr>
<td>18B-05</td>
<td><em>The Cat and the Ant</em></td>
<td>Animals: teleological fable</td>
<td>F₃</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>81</td>
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