Maisin: a grammatical description of an Oceanic language in Papua New Guinea

A thesis submitted to fulfil the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics at the University of Otago by Joanna Margaret Frampton, October 2014
Abstract

*Maisin: a grammatical description of an Oceanic language in PNG* is a descriptive study of the Maisin language, spoken in Collingwood Bay, on the north coast of Oro Province, Papua New Guinea, with particular treatment of those features that distinguish the language from other Austronesian languages within the Papuan Tip cluster.

Some of the distinctive features of Maisin described here include its topic and focus marking system; its use of postpositional phrases (showing proto-Austronesian forms, but following Papuan categories); chaining of co-ordinate dependent clauses preceding an independent clause; marking of tense, mood and aspect by suffixes rather than by prefixes; the existence of a closed set of intransitive verbs which mark subject person and number by suffixation only; and a typically Papuan style marking of medial and final verbs.

After providing an overview of the phonology and syntactic structure of the language, the thesis concludes by giving particular attention to the topic and focus marking system, and some tentative suggestions regarding the interaction of these markers within the information structure system of the language.
Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to my supervisor, Dr. Jae Jung Song, for his patience and flexibility in taking me on, not only as a long-distance student but as one long removed from the world of academic study. I have appreciated his prompt and helpful comments provided at each stage of writing.

I’m also grateful to many of my colleagues within the Papua New Guinea SIL branch – especially the late Cindi Farr, who gave much assistance in the early stages of my coming to grips with Maisin grammar, and whose deep familiarity with Korafe helped to shed light on the influence that language may have had on its Austronesian neighbour. Britten Årsjö also provided valuable input, and René van den Berg has been of huge encouragement in his passionate advocacy of the need to see the languages of Papua New Guinea documented, even if (as in the present case) incompletely and imperfectly.

From the very beginning of our fieldwork in Uiaku village, John Barker has been endlessly generous in making available not only the fruits of his own extensive anthropological research among the Maisin community, but also the many Maisin texts he collected during his own fieldwork, which have supplied some of the linguistic data for the present work. The maps in Chapter One are adapted from his earlier drafts, by means of technical assistance kindly provided by my sister, Catherine Ward.

And thanks to Margaret McLagan’s eagle eyes and insightful comments towards the final stages of this work, the errors that remain (all my own!) are considerably fewer than they would otherwise be.

To date the primary work on Maisin has been Malcolm Ross’s Maisin: a preliminary sketch, which has been an invaluable guidebook to me from the earliest stages of fieldwork. Notwithstanding differences in analysis at some points, the huge debt owed to that study will be regularly apparent in the following pages.

An even bigger debt is owed to the Maisin people of Uiaku and Ganjiga villages, not only for their patient and tireless tutelage in their language and culture but for the warmth and kindness with which they welcomed two clueless bariyawa momorobi into their community. I especially want to acknowledge the late George Sevaru and his family, Aaron and Leah Kasai, Reuben and Christabel Seri, Copland King and Dulcie Ganeba and Roland and Celestine Wawe and their families for what their friendship, hospitality and practical help has meant to me and Marisa. Bada asane akuteren areregeti!

Here in New Zealand I want to gratefully acknowledge NZCMS and the community of St. Christopher’s Church, Avonhead, whose practical, prayerful and pecuniary support has made it possible for me to give time to this work, and whose encouragement throughout the process has been so valued.

Last of all, and most of all, I want to thank my friend Marisa McHenry for her God-given and treasured companionship in the steep learning curve and rich privilege of exploring together Maisin language and culture (and so many other things along the way!) It has been a joy to share this adventure with you.
Maisin family, Uiaku Village

Maisin children, Uiaku Village

Tending the cooking pots, Ganjiga Village.
Maisin women dancing,
Uiaku Village

Maisin men dancing,
Uiaku village

Tapa cloth designing,
Ganjiga Village
Some aerial views of Uiaku Village
List of gloss conventions and abbreviations

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1 Introduction

1.1 Environment
The Maisin people live in two distinct regions of Oro Province (see Map 1, page 15.) Latest census figures\(^1\) indicate that there are around 2000 people resident in the coastal Maisin-speaking villages of Collingwood Bay, and about 600 in the Kosirava-dialect area in the Musa Basin. In addition, several hundred Maisin speakers are living in other parts of the country, most of them employed in towns or cities, or undertaking further education.

The Kosirava-speaking Maisin live in 6 small villages in the Musa basin, an area widely regarded as the place of origin for all Maisin speakers prior to their later migration to the coast of Collingwood Bay. They are entirely surrounded by speakers of Baruga, a Papuan language of the Binandere family, with which there is widespread bilingualism. (See Map 1) There is now little regular interaction between the Kosirava and coastal Maisin speakers, who are widely separated from each other geographically, and the present dissertation will confine its focus to the speakers of the coastal dialect, often referred to as 'Uiaku', taking its name from the name of the largest Maisin-speaking village in the area.

The coastal Maisin inhabit 9 villages covering an area of about 45 kilometres along the shores of Collingwood Bay, southeast of Cape Nelson. (See Map 2, page 16). Most of the villages are contiguous but there is a settlement of Maisin speakers in Uwe village in the midst of the Arifama-Miniafia community and bordered by the Ubir and Korafe languages. Uwe village is, in fact, unusual in that it is jointly populated by Maisin and Miniafia speakers. A boundary marker demarcates the two communities, but the whole village population is effectively bilingual in both languages.

The remaining 8 villages are are gathered in 4 main areas, Yuwayu, Uiaku, Sinapa and Airara (see Map 3, page 17). Uiaku includes the sizable village of Ganjiga, from which it is separated only by a river, Sinapa includes the smaller neighbouring hamlets of Konyasi and Sinipara,

\(^1\) This data is from the census taken in 2000. A further census was conducted in 2011 but figures are not yet available.
and Airara includes the adjacent settlement of Marua at the southernmost end of the language group, close to the border with Milne Bay Province. There is regular and frequent interaction between the members of these communities, and much interconnection through marriage and kinship. There is no road access to Collingwood Bay and travel within the area is by foot, outrigger canoe or motorised dinghy.

Much of the shoreline between the villages consists of mangrove swamps, or of volcanic sand beaches. Although their territory stretches back to the Gorofi mountains, most of the Maisin have established their villages and gardens within about 4km of the coast. They live by subsistence gardening and practise swidden agriculture. Although occasionally affected by drought and flood, the area is generally fertile and the Maisin enjoy a good variety of garden food. The primary staple is taro, but sweet potato, plantain, pumpkin, corn, and various greens are also plentiful, as are such fruits as bananas, pawpaw, pineapple, mangoes and guava. Sago, traditionally a famine food, tends to be used mostly nowadays for feasts and special occasions.

The Maisin diet is also enriched by their ready access to an abundant supply of wildlife (pigs, cassowaries, bandicoots and wallabies) in the grasslands and bush behind the villages, as well as of shellfish in the mangrove swamps and of a large variety of fish in the waters of Collingwood Bay. There are two main seasons to the year, the rainy season from late November to April, and the drier, windy season from May to early November. Annual rainfall averages anywhere between 1800mm and 3300mm.

1.2 Culture and lifestyle
The Maisin community live a subsistence lifestyle whereby their extensive forest and garden land furnishes them not only with their food but also with the wherewithal for their housing, canoes and many other material needs (mats, fishing equipment, spears, drums etc.) There is a gender-based division of labour to the effect that the work of house-building, canoe-making, garden clearing, fishing with nets, hunting and sago-making is an exclusively male domain. However the regular work of garden maintenance and food-gathering, firewood collection, water fetching, childcare and cooking primarily falls to the women. Planting the garden is perhaps the main sphere of labour jointly engaged in by both sexes.
Maisin people have long been known within their immediate area, and in more recent years even further afield, for their distinctive tapa cloth designs. The cloth is made from the beaten bark of the paper mulberry tree and painted with natural dyes. It was regularly traded with the neighbouring Ubir people for the clay pots produced in and around Wanigela. Traditionally the cloth was used for clothing although its use in that form is now reserved for feasts and ceremonial occasions. Tapa cloth production and design were once exclusively the province of women, and while the laborious task of stripping and beating the bark remains a feminine chore, men have more lately become involved in designing the beaten cloth. Since it has become a commercial product, its uses have also diversified, and Maisin people now make such items as hats, bags, purses, and tablemats from it, and market them in towns and cities around the country, as well as overseas.

Significant occasions traditionally marked by the Maisin community include the birth of children, especially of firstborn offspring, the bride price ceremony which gives final validation to a marriage, the coming of age rites and the mortuary feasts. Over the last twenty or thirty years, the coming of age rites in particular have largely slipped out of usage, perhaps partly because of increasing numbers of Maisin teenagers leaving the village for High School education, and because church rituals such as confirmation are seen as taking over some of the function of the original ceremonies. The intricate facial tattoos of Maisin women, which formed part of their coming of age rites as teenagers, are no longer carried out and are now only visible on the faces of women in their thirties and over. However the other life events cited continue to provide an occasion for traditional feasting, in particular the mortuary rituals which are analysed in some detail by John Barker (1986, pp. 271-285).

1.3 Language Use

Within the community, the Maisin language is readily used in all domains of life, although with a degree of code-mixing at occasions such as church services, public meetings etc, where the national languages, English and Tok Pisin (Melanesian Pidgin) may also be used. English has traditionally been the preferred language for use with those from outside the area, but as a result of increasing movement around the country in recent years, Tok Pisin is becoming more widely known and used and is particularly popular with young men. The other national language, Hiri Motu, sometimes known as Police Motu, seems to be understood primarily by older members of the community and is little used in the village setting.
English is the official language of schooling, although in the mid 1990’s, the Maisin community began to establish pre-schools in the main centres (Yuwayu, Uiaku, Sinapa and Airara) with a view to giving children their first introduction to literacy in their mother tongue, before transferring to English. Since around 2000, these have tended to be absorbed into the government-sponsored Elementary system, which has sought to provide vernacular literacy for the first year or two of schooling, bridging into English instruction thereafter. This policy is currently under government review and looks likely to be replaced by a return to English medium education, but with a vernacular component retained in some form.

Literacy and education in general are highly valued among the Maisin for both sexes and most village children attend primary schooling through to Grade 6. Factors such as cost and distance mean that a minority continue on to High School. Nevertheless, a significant number of Maisin people have carried on to higher education and attained positions of responsibility and influence in the government, the medical profession, the Anglican church and elsewhere. Small communities of Maisin people are resident in Port Moresby, Lae, Popondetta and Alotau.

While many Maisin marry within the language group there is also considerable intermarriage of Maisin men with women from the surrounding languages especially Korafe, Ubir, and Miniafia. Since all the Collingwood Bay communities tend to be both patrilineal and patrilocal, many women from these language groups, and to a lesser extent from further afield as well, have come to settle in Maisin villages. With rare exceptions they have all become fluent speakers of Maisin, although they will often choose to use their mother tongue with their own children. As a result, there is within the Maisin community a high degree not only of kinship connection with these neighbouring languages, but also of passive bilingualism in them.

1.4 History of Contact
Maisin speakers trace their beginnings to a cave in the ground in the Musa basin, near the area where the Kosirava Maisin community still live. The date of their departure from there and their settlement, in stages, along the coast of Collingwood Bay, cannot be definitively asserted, but has been tentatively suggested as taking place in the latter half of the 19th century (Barker, 1986, p. 36). What is more certain is that by the last decade of that century they had established a fearsome reputation as warriors and raiders throughout Collingwood Bay and even as far as Cape Vogel. The first resident magistrate of the area has chronicled some stirring accounts of their successful inroads on neighbouring communities as well as their own vulnerability to the incursions of the mountain-dwelling Doriri tribes behind
them (Monckton, 1927, pp. 17-22, 53-62, 75-102). He also tells of the Maisin’s submission to the colonial administration, and acceptance of government authority around 1900, after which time the inter-tribal raiding parties largely came to an end (1927, p. 69.) Maisin contact with Europeans had, however, occurred even earlier than that, when William McGregor, Lieutenant Governor of the Territory and Albert McLaren, leader of the Anglican Church mission to New Guinea, made a preliminary tour of the north coast in 1890, which included a visit to Uiaku village. An Anglican mission station was then established at the neighbouring Ubir-speaking settlement at Wanigela in the late 1890’s. After pacification of the Maisin in 1900, the first Anglican missionary was stationed at Uiaku, and in succeeding years the Maisin were served by a succession of missionary teachers recruited by the Anglican Mission from other parts of Melanesia, especially the Solomon Islands and New Hebrides (Wetherell, 1977, p. 105). The first Anglican priest, Rev. Arthur Prout Jennings, was assigned to Uiaku in 1917, and these first decades of the new century were in general characterised by increasing adherence to the norms imposed by the presence of the church and government.

Throughout the 1920’s and 30’s, many Maisin men were recruited by the government as labourers for plantations in neighbouring Milne Bay province. At the same time, educational and vocational training opportunities started to become available to them through the schools and teacher training college at Dogura. All of this had the effect of exposing many of the Maisin community to the wider world, increasing their access to European store goods, and generally broadening their world view.

That process was further accelerated by the involvement of the Maisin in World War II, which served as something of a watershed for many small communities in Papua New Guinea. Although the Maisin area was not itself a scene of battle, many Maisin men served as carriers and labourers for Australian and American troops, particularly along the Kokoda Trail. The post-war rebuilding period was marked by a rapid increase in educational and employment opportunities (Barker (1986, p. 77) which Maisin people have consistently taken advantage of in ensuing decades, with the result that to date they continue to have a considerable representation (relative to their numbers) in government, medical, teaching and business professions.
1.5 Linguistic Classification
Maisin has most recently been classified as a member of the Papuan Tip cluster of south eastern New Guinea, itself a subgroup of Western Oceanic. Specifically, it has been classed as originating from the Are-Taupota Chain within the Papuan Tip group (Dutton, 1995, p. 215). However, as its origins have been the subject of much discussion since its earliest documentation, and it has often been referred to simply as a ‘mixed’ language, even listed as ‘unclassified’, it is worth giving some space here to review the history of its classification.

Debate over its origins began as early as 1911 with the publication of two articles in the same issue of the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society, both recognising the presence of typically Austronesian\(^2\) and Papuan features of the language, but drawing opposite conclusions from the same evidence.

William Strong argued the case for Maisin being basically an Austronesian language, but one which had been heavily affected by contact with Papuan languages in the area. He expressed some uncertainty about the likely sources of this influence, given that he saw little obvious resemblance to neighbouring Binanderean languages, although recent studies have indicated considerable lexical and structural parallels with, in particular, Korafe and Baruga, two nearby members of the Binandere family.\(^3\) As evidence of a basic Austronesian pedigree for Maisin, he adduces such features as: inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person plural marking, object suffixation on the verb, suffixed possessive pronouns on inalienably possessed nouns (albeit a much more limited range of such nouns than in other Austronesian languages), subject marking by prefixation on the verb, and the formation of prepositions (actually postpositions) from the noun. As examples of non-Austronesian features he cited a system of case-marking suffixes to ‘decline’\(^4\) the noun, the numerals, and the practice of tense/aspect marking by suffixation on the verb (Strong, 1911).

Sidney Ray drew on the same data, but asserted the language’s Papuan heritage, on the rationale that while it is not uncommon for Papuan languages to borrow both lexical items and grammatical particles from Austronesian languages, there is no precedent for a Austronesian language adopting other than vocabulary items and idioms from a Papuan

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\(^2\) Both Strong and Ray actually used the term ‘Melanesian’ but in the interests of clarity Austronesian is used throughout this summary of their discussion.

\(^3\) Cindi Farr, personal communication

\(^4\) Strong’s terminology here is probably influenced partly by the allomorphy which as Ross (1996:200) points out, may have kept him from recognising the distinct postpositional forms, and perhaps also by the highly inflectional Latin paradigms in which he had likely been educated.
language. He further claimed that the phonology of the language appeared more Papuan than Austronesian, citing such features as the nasal consonant clusters [ŋg, mb, nj] and the absence of sequences such as [kw, gw]. Like Strong, he notes such typically Papuan syntactic features as the case-marking system, drawing comparisons with Mailu and Binandere, and the Noun-Adjective ordering, although he acknowledges that this last feature is equally typical of Austronesian languages. And he agreed with Strong to the extent of acknowledging the Austronesian origin of such features as the subject prefixes, object suffixes and the use of reduplication within the verb (Ray, 1911). Ray’s assessment was supported by Capell in a 1943 paper, which also accorded Papuan status to Maisin, while Lynch later sided with Strong and classed the language as basically Austronesian, but with much Papuan overlay (Lynch, 1977). Capell later put the rather controversial case for the classification of Maisin as a genuinely ‘mixed’ language, not intending thereby to assign it equal membership of two different families, but rather to claim that the contributions of both the true genetic ancestor and the ‘invading’ language are sufficiently evenly weighted in terms of both lexical items and syntax, that a true mixture has occurred (Capell, 1976).

Even more recently Malcolm Ross, whose sketch of Maisin remains the primary published account of the language to date, has summarised the arguments on both sides and presented his own case, favouring the conclusions drawn by Strong and Lynch, and claiming that Maisin is indeed an Austronesian language, but one that has undergone extensive adaptation as a result of contact with Papuan languages. He has coined the term ‘metatypy’ for this process, defining it as the restructuring of a community’s language through ongoing contact with an intergroup language, in a situation where there is bilingualism in both languages (1996, p. 192f).

Ross locates the reason for the different conclusions arrived at by earlier linguists as residing in their use of different methodologies. He claims that Strong correctly identified Maisin’s correspondences in both meaning and form with other Papuan Tip languages, while the two most notable Papuan features he recognised (postpositional enclitics on the noun phrase, and tense/aspect enclitics) were similarities of structure only, not of form. According to Ross, Ray and Capell by contrast, focused only on structural parallels and failed to see formal correspondences, perhaps because these resemblances are often masked by the complex morphophonemic processes that Maisin has undergone, and because of the high proportion of non-Oceanic vocabulary in the Maisin lexicon.
Ross went on to attribute both this morphophonemic complexity, and the preponderance of non-Austronesian lexical material to the results of esoterogeny, a process designed to make a particular language more inaccessible to outsiders and preserve its exclusiveness, and one which may occur in conjunction with the metatypy resulting from bilingualism. He claims that while there is evidence of some general metatypy that has affected most of the Papuan Tip languages, with resulting consistent changes throughout the grouping in e.g. constituent order, Maisin appears to have been the subject of an additional process, distinguishing it even further from its Papuan Tip neighbour (M. D. Ross, 1996, p. 192). Assuming that Ross, and Strong and Lynch before him, are right in their conclusions that Maisin can properly be classed as an Austronesian language, (albeit one whose speakers all affirm their ancestral origins from a Trans New Guinea enclave in the Musa basin!) there is still much to be discovered about the circumstances under which it acquired its many non-Austronesian lexical items, and its more typically Papuan structures, as well as identifying languages which served as the sources of those features.

1.6 Data collection and fieldwork
As members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, I and a fellow-researcher began fieldwork in the Maisin language in April 1997. Our research has involved extended periods (with a cumulative total of around three and a half years) living in Uiaku village, the largest Maisin settlement, and gaining familiarity with both the language and cultural environment. Much of the data used in preparation of this paper was gathered in and around Uiaku between 1997 and 2009. It comprises oral texts, both narrative material and informal conversations, which have been recorded and later transcribed, as well as a body of written materials. There are a range of sources for the written texts. These include a few personal letters, some stories written and edited at writer’s workshops held in Uiaku and Ganjiga villages, reading books produced for use in vernacular pre-schools and portions of the New Testament translated into Maisin, and revised and edited by teams of Maisin speakers.

This dissertation also draws on a collection of 24 narrative texts transcribed from recordings made in 1981/82 in Uiaku village by John Barker and later compiled into book form (Barker & Seri, 1995). We are very grateful to John Barker for making available to us a collection of tapes containing further recorded stories collected during his time in Uiaku conducting anthropological fieldwork. Some of these stories have now been transcribed and translated, while others are still in process. The text collection as a whole includes a large number of traditional stories, some personal narratives and some procedural texts. It
amounts to around 80 texts in Maisin, totalling approximately 250 pages. A Maisin-English dictionary is in the process of compilation and the lexical database currently has around 3000 entries.

1.7 Typological Characteristics

1.7.1 Word Order
Unmarked word order in Maisin is SOV. Other ordering patterns include: Noun-modifier, Genitive-Noun and Noun-Relative Clause. The language is primarily postpositional with much cliticisation of postpositions to preceding NP's.

Other typological features are set out below. Listed first are those features most typical of other members of the Papuan Tip cluster to which Maisin has been assigned, and then those more generally associated with Papuan languages. Of course the boundaries between the two are not clear-cut, and there is a degree of overlap, but in general the features have been grouped according to their more Austronesian- or Papuan-like resemblances.

More typically Austronesian features include: possessor pronominal suffixation on inalienably possessed nouns, exclusive/inclusive distinction within 1st person plural, reduplication, and subject-marking by prefixation on the verb.

1.7.2 Possessor pronominal suffixation on inalienably possessed nouns
In Maisin, this comprises a rather narrower range of nouns than in its Oceanic neighbours, being limited to body parts and a small number of location nouns. Kin terms are not marked for possession in this way.

\[
\begin{align*}
(1.1) & & \text{matau} & & (1.2) & & \text{faken} & & (1.3) & & \text{kei} \\
&matau -u & & fake -n & & ke -i \\
&\text{eye -1SG.PSR} & & \text{hand -2.PSR} & & \text{foot -3PL.PSR} \\
&\text{my eye} & & your hand(s) & & their feet
\end{align*}
\]

1.7.3 Subject-marking by prefixation on the verb
The forms of the subject prefixes are all clear reflexes of the normal paradigm for Oceanic languages. The paradigm below shows the basic forms, but there is considerable morphophonemic variation according to the type of verb stems they attach to.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1EXC</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>ka-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1INC</td>
<td>ta-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>i-</td>
<td>ti-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.7.4 Exclusive/inclusive distinction within 1st person plural
This distinction is encoded in personal and possessive pronouns, possessor suffixes, and subject and object affixation on the verb.

(1.4) anso (1.5) aitika (1.6) an yabi
an=so aiti=ka an yabi
1EXC.PRO=REF 1INC.PRO=TP 1EXC.PSR father
for us(exc) we(inc) our(exc) father

(1.7) ati wakki
1INC.PSR village
our(inc) village'

### 1.7.5 Reduplication
This occurs within the verb to indicate continuous, repeated or habitual action.

(1.8) i- maa- matu
3SG.S- CONT- sleep
She's sleeping

(1.9) kara =TP isa a- ya- yan =ka
betelnut=TP NEG 1SG.S-CONT- chew=TP
I don't chew betelnut

It is also used with some human nominals to denote plurality.

(1.10) morobi morobi (1.11) toma toma
girl girls (male) friend (male) friends

More typically Papuan features include: subject-marking by suffixation (applying to a closed class of verbs), tense/aspect marking by suffixation, postpositional phrases
with case-marking by cliticisation, the marking of topic and focus, and serial constructions with medial and final verbs.

1.7.6 Subject marking by suffixation
This applies to a closed class of intransitive verbs. To date, all the verbs that have been identified in this class appear to be cognate with items in the neighbouring non-Austronesian languages, Korafe and Baruga. The suffixed subject markers show some formal resemblance to their prefixed counterparts.

(1.12) man=e sirorari-kon
      what=LOC be.born -2S
      Where were you born?

(1.13) nen=e arore toru-kan
      there=TP together collide -1EXC.S
      We came up against each other there.

1.7.7 Tense/aspect marking by suffixation

(1.14) yun a-kun =anan
      water 1SG.S drink =FUT
      I’ll drink some water.

(1.15) i- ma- matu =me  (1.16) ku- fe =aka
      3SG.S CONT sleep =PAST 2S fall =POT
      He was sleeping.
      You might fall!

1.7.8 Post-postional phrases with case-marking by cliticisation
As Ross notes, (1996, p. 194) the postpositions show parallels with Proto-Austronesian forms where they co-occur, but the categories encoded are typically Papuan and comprise a larger number than those normally found among Maisin’s Papuan Tip neighbours. They include the locative/allative =e, referential/benefactive =so, ablative =efe, accompaniment =ton, and instrumental/agentive =en. These enclitics always attach to the final element in the NP.

1.7.9 Topic marking
The topic-marking enclitic =ka operates at both a syntactic level, marking the subject in topic-comment clauses, and at a pragmatic level where it is used to track participants and establish temporal and spatial settings in discourse. The irrealis topic marker =a performs the same role in questions, prohibitions and reported speech.

5 Cynthia Farr, personal communication
(1.17) kato =ka ka-wawe (1.18) ai =ka tamati ratti thatch =TP 1EXC.S -get 3SG.PRO =TP man old
As for roof thatch, we got some. He's an old man.

(1.19) a. ari asan=a sera=e?
3SG.GEN name=IR.TP who= POSSPRED
What's his name?

b. ari asan=ka Reuben
3SG.GEN name=TP Reuben.
His name is Reuben.

(1.20) an nan =a ku- nane
NEGIMP thus =IR.TP 2S- do
Don't do that!

1.7.10 Focus marking
The focus-marking enclitic /=na/ is of much more limited distribution than the topic marker, and primarily attaches to object and patient subject NPs, where it serves to highlight new information being supplied. It is never used with agent subject NPs, where focus is instead signalled by the use of the instrument/agentive case-marking postposition /=en/. This may be indicative of a partial ergative/absolutive tendency in the language.

(1.21) Duncan wanno Salius ei=na ti- mati
Duncan and Salius 3PL.PRO=FOC 3PL.S- die
Duncan and Salius, they're the ones who died.

1.7.11 Serial constructions marking medial and final verbs
Maisin exhibits a number of serial verb constructions whereby final tense/aspect marking is carried only on the last verb in the series, but medial tense/aspect-marking enclitics are used to indicate the relationship between the two clauses.

1.7.11.1 Medial enclitics
Medial enclitic /=ate/ (realis sequential) locates the action of the first clause as sequentially prior to that of the final clause, in the case of actions that are definitely asserted to have taken place.

(1.22) morobi =ka i-wawe =ate ti- ra =me begati =e
girl =TP 3SG.S- get =RLSEQ 3PL.S- go =PAST garden =LOC
She took the girl and then they went into the garden.

/=fe/ (irrealis sequential) again indicates sequentially prior action in the case of verbs with future time orientation or with no specific time frame in view.

(1.23)  
\[ e\text{-}kute\text{-}ri =fe \quad ti\text{-}taramosari \quad ti\text{-}ra \]  
3SG.S- greet -3PL.O =IR.SEQ 3PL.S- leave 3PL.S- go

\[ ti\text{-}too =anan \]  
3PL.S sleep =FUT

He'll farewell them, then they'll go (home) and sleep.

The following two medial suffixes suggest that Maisin verb morphology includes an element of switch reference, another element atypical of Austronesian languages.

/=n/ (same subject simultaneous) attaches to the verb stem and indicates simultaneous action and identity of subject (or at least some referential overlap) with the verb immediately following it.

(1.24)  
\[ ti\text{-}kayawa \text{-}n \quad te\text{-}e \]  
3PL.S- fear -SS.SIM 3PL.S- go

They went away frightened.

(1.25)  
\[ ku\text{-}eise\text{-}n \quad ta\text{-}ra \]  
2S-stand-SS.SIM 1INC.S- go

Get up and we'll be off!

/=n/a (different subject simultaneous) indicates a change of subject in the immediately following clause, where the actions of both clauses are concurrent or overlapping. It is also used in contexts where the subject of the following clause remains the same, but a different argument is in focus, as in (1.27) below. This analysis differs from Ross's description of –na as indicating durative aspect in relation to the punctiliar action of the following clause (1984, p. 70) but accords better with our data.
The old man went down to the water (and) while he was bathing a wallaby came out.

In the bush, a pig gave birth (to a litter) and in their midst she gave birth to a human boy.

The ensuing chapters of this dissertation will explore different aspects of the Maisin language as follows: Chapter Two will list the phonemes and those phonological rules that have been identified. Chapter Three will list the closed word classes in the language and give examples of usage within each class. Of the open word classes, nouns and noun phrases will be dealt with in Chapter Four, while verbs and verb phrases will be the subject of Chapter Five. Chapter Six will describe various kinds of clauses and simple sentences and Chapter Seven will go on to deal with complex sentences, including serial verb constructions, clause coordination strategies, relative clauses and complements. Finally, Chapter Eight will explore the system of topic and focus marking in Maisin, and illustrate this by means of a couple of extended interlinearised texts.
Map 1: Overall Map of Maisin language area, showing its location within Papua New Guinea
Map 2: Language Map of Collingwood Bay and Cape Nelson area, Oro Province
Map 3: Map showing Maisin settlements
2 Phonology
To date, the only published analysis of Maisin phonology is contained in Malcolm Ross’s 1984 *Maisin: a preliminary sketch*, which includes a valuable description of the main phonological rules and morphophonemic processes as well as a coherent account of its mora-timed syllable structure. Since the amassing of a larger corpus of data has led to the modification of certain of those rules, most of the explicit references to Ross’s work in the following pages will focus on areas of divergence from his conclusions. This should not, however, obscure the extent to which the present writer is indebted at every point to the careful analysis and clear description provided by Ross and upon which this chapter seeks to build.

2.1 Phonemes

2.1.1 Consonants

Table 1 Consonant phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plosive</th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labio-dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Post-alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t, d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>g, k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flap</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/ʤ/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td></td>
<td>f, v</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j, w</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.2 Vowels

Table 2 Vowel phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td></td>
<td>/u/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e/</td>
<td></td>
<td>/o/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td></td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.3 Phonemic and orthographic inventory

List of phonemes: / a b d e f g i ʤ k m n o r s t u v w j /

Orthographic inventory: < a b d e f g i j k m n o r s t u v w y >

3 Ross’s claim that [o] and [u] never occur word-initially (1984, p. 4) is not consistent with our data and may again be attributable to his more limited range of available
material. Since [a], [e] and [i] all function as inflectional prefixes on the verb, their
distribution at word-initial position is much wider within the text corpus as a whole
than that of [o] and [u]. However based on a current lexical database of around 3000
items, there is no significant difference in the frequency of any of the vowels'
ocurrences word-initially. In fact, of all attested vowel-initial lexical items, [o] has the
second-highest frequency after [a]. Examples such as /unguba/ elbow, /ube/ fjord
/umo/ pigeon, /obun/ heart, /ore/ tuna and/oote/ elder attest to the regular presence
of these vowel phonemes word-initially in everyday speech.

2.2 Phonotactics

2.2.1 Syllable patterns
The basic structure of a Maisin syllable consists of a nucleus V, with optional onset C.

Possible syllable patterns include: V, VV, VC, CV, CVV, CVC and CVVN. Ross also notes the
possibility of CVVC, where the final consonant is other than a nasal (1984, p. 7) but no such
instances occur in our data, and the one example he supplies [i.kii.kias.si] he is digging it is
more accurately analysed as a disyllabic sequence [i.kii.ki.ya.si] on the grounds that there
are no other examples of the 'ia' sequence as a single syllable, and if that were the case, then
one would expect the reduplication here to be [i.kia.kias.si] rather than [i.kii.kias.si].

Consonant-final syllables may only occur word-finally or immediately preceding a
consonant-initial syllable.

While all consonants may occur word initially and word medially, the nasal stops are the
only consonants to occur word-finally, where they are phonetically realised as [ŋ].

2.2.2 Consonant sequences.
Maisin does not exhibit any true consonant clusters. Two consonants will only co-occur
across syllable boundaries. In such instances, they will either be identical or the first will be
a nasal stop homorganic with the immediately following consonant. All stops, voiceless
fricatives and the affricate [ʤ] may occur as a lengthened (i.e. geminate) consonant word-
medially.

[yab.be.ɾi] /yabberi/ uproot
Ross apparently excludes the nasal stops from this process (1984, p. 3) but this would disallow such widely attested forms as /wenna/ strength, /imommon/ he is thinking, /wanno/ also.

Ross rightly analyses the surface form [kw] as deriving from a /k/ + rounded vowel sequence and so does not posit the labialised form as an independent phoneme (1984, p. 4). By far the majority of the attested occurrences of this sequence arise from the inflectional subject prefixes /ku-/ and /ko-/ attaching to a vowel-initial verb stem, although a small number of lexical items with initial [kw] have also been identified. For reasons of orthographic convenience, Maisin speakers have elected to represent the inflectionally derived forms using the approximant /w/, but to use /kV/ for discrete lexical items. In at least one instance this gives rise to different spellings for the homophones /kwéefi/ 'you said' [ko-ifi] and /koifi/ 'tapa loincloth'.

It seems reasonable to apply the same principle to [fw], which Ross has however listed as a separate phoneme (1984, p. 4). Our own lexical data to date includes only a single instance of [fw], /fwee/ white. In locally authored texts, it is regularly spelt /foe(e)/, suggesting that speaker intuitions support the extension of Ross's analysis of [kw] to this instance of labialisation as well.

Two occurrences of [bw] have also been attested. One of these, [bwere] pot (from 'boiler') is a result of borrowing and the other, [bwar] /shellfish variety/, could similarly be analysed as a sequence of /b/ + rounded vowel. In the interests of consistency and economy, all three surface forms [kw, fw, bw] are treated here as such sequences.

Ross goes on to remark the non-occurrence of [v] immediately before [o] or [u] (1984, p. 4) but this apparent gap may simply be due to paucity of available data at the time, since instances of both [vo] and [vu] are well attested in the present text corpus e.g. /ivo/ turtle,
/vuvudi/ body hair, /evovi/ custom. However there appears to be considerable free variation of [v] and [w] before a following [u]. They include [tawu-tavu] triton shell [wuwu-vuvu] cyclone and [wuwusi-vuvusi] paper mulberry tree. This might offer evidence, albeit unsubstantiable, of the existence of a voiced bilabial fricative [β] in the language at some earlier stage, later neutralised to [v-w] perhaps under the influence of an English-oriented orthography which couldn't accommodate the unfamiliar segment.

2.2.3 Vowel sequences
All five vowels can occur in lengthened forms, which are sequences of two like vowels.

/faafi/ husband, /beedo/ sore, /kooti/ message, /fii/ bird, /buuti/ island

Sequences of like vowels also occur across morpheme boundaries. In the case of [a] and [u], a reassignment of syllable boundaries takes place:

[i.ta.ma.na]
/i- tama =ana/
3S.S-wash=FUT
He will wash them.

[tuu]
/tu -u/
knee-1S.PSR
My knee

However, with [e], [i] and [o], syllable boundaries are maintained:

[ve.ti.mo.we.en]
/vetimowe =en/
fait=INSTR
with faith

[ku.va.si.in]
/ku- vasi =in/
2S—come.up=PQ
Did you come up?
You sleep (leave-taking formula towards end of day)

In these cases, the transitional approximant [y] or [w] which intervenes between the vowels is usually represented in the orthography to disambiguate the sequence from a normal lengthened vowel, giving rise to written forms like ‘kutowo’, ‘vetimoweyen’ and ‘kuvasiyin’.

The following sequences of unlike vowels also occur and form glides within syllable boundaries:

- [au] /sauki/ woman, /gau/ hole
- [oi] /soini/ fly, /roise/ siblings
- [ei] /weisi/ yesterday, /beisiga/ argument
- [ou] /tou/ sugarcane, /wouki/ cooking pot
- [ae] /gaevo/ seaweed, /songae/ bush rope
- [ao] /kaoo/ rafter
- [ai] /baimara/ famine

All of these sequences also occur across stem-affix boundaries, resulting in the resyllabification of the resulting strings.

You're standing

You came down.
Ross suggests (1984, p. 19) that there is a discernible contrast between phonetic glides occurring within a single morpheme, and constituting a single syllable, and the sequence of the same vowels across a morpheme boundary in which case they are disyllabic, but this does not accord with our own data above. All of the examples he cites, like those above, involve stem/affix boundaries, so it is unclear whether this indicates a shift in Maisin usage in the interim, or a difference in the formality of usage of the speakers who provided the data.

His broader claim that syllable boundaries persist at word/enclitic boundaries is, however, consistent with the data in the present corpus, as the following examples demonstrate.

The sequences [ea], [ia], [eu], [oa], and [ua] also occur frequently across morpheme boundaries, and within morphemes, separated by a transitional approximant /y/ or /w/
Within a single morpheme this transitional approximant has the quality of a full phonetic segment and is represented in the orthography e.g. [te.ya] /teya/ leech, [be.yun] /beyun/ heron, [si.ya] /siya/ string, [ru.wa] /ruwa/ hear, [du.ro.wa] /durowa/ beauty

At morpheme boundaries, however, it functions with reduced value as a transitional sound and is not usually written.

[ku.fe.a.nan]/ku- fe =anan/You’ll fall!
[te.u.ku] /te-uku/ They came dow.
[i.ba.gi.a.te] /i-bagi =ate/ He stole and then...
[a.ma.tu.a.ka] /a- matu =aka/ I want to sleep.
[ti.ro.a.te] /ti- rau =ate/ They went in and then...

2.3 Phonological processes

2.3.1 Rules affecting nasal consonants

2.3.1.1 Word-final nasal neutralisation
This rule provides that all nasal consonants neutralise to velar position word finally.

[rasiranŋ] /rasiram/ morning
[sanŋ] /san/ beach
[taranŋ] /taram/ call

In each of these cases, evidence for the underlying final phoneme is supplied by instances of its occurrence immediately before a vowel-initial enclitic:

[rasiramane] /rasiram=e/ in the morning
[san] /san=e/ at the beach
[itaramananŋ] /i-taram=anan/ He will call.

Occasionally in casual speech the word boundary constraint may not apply:

[rasiramari suriya] /rasiram ari suriya/ breakfast (morning’s meal)
This last example seems also to offer counter-evidence to Ross’s categorisation of the possessive personal pronouns, like /ari/ above, as proclitics (1984, p. 18). Other, frequently attested instances of utterances such as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[rotari fura]} & \quad \text{[teretari fura]} \\
/\text{ro-ti ari fura} / & \quad /\text{tereti ari fura} / \\
\text{face-1INC.PSR} & \quad \text{3SG.GEN week} \\
\text{next week (lit. ‘our(inc) face/front’s week’)} & \quad \text{last week (lit. ‘our(inc) back’s week’)}
\end{align*}
\]

suggest that, if anything, the possessive pronoun functions like an enclitic since, at least in casual speech, it results in application of the i-deletion rule outlined below (2.3.3.1). However, its regular occurrence in clause-initial position assures its status as an independent word.

### 2.3.1.2 Pre-consonantal nasal assimilation

According to this rule, all nasal consonants assimilate to the place of articulation of the immediately following consonant.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[imommon]} & \quad /\text{i- mon- mon}/ \\
\text{He’s thinking} \\
\text{[foiŋka]} & \quad /\text{foim=ka}/ \\
\text{night}
\end{align*}
\]

Ross has supplemented this with two further rules, to be applied before the voiceless fricatives [f] and [s], where free variation apparently allows for the nasal to be realised as either [n] or [ŋ](1984, p. 16). Our data suggests that this modification could also be extended to include the alveolar consonants [t] and [r]. Further examination, however, indicates that in the case of each of these consonants, the alveolar nasal [n] consistently occurs where the word at issue, even if morphologically analysable, has become sufficiently ‘set’ in common usage as to be regarded as monomorphemic at a psychological level.

Thus, no such variation occurs with the following words:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[afunfe]} & \quad /\text{afun=fe}/ \\
\text{now=IRSEQ} \\
\text{later}
\end{align*}
\]
[rorovanteŋ]
/ro=anten/
yesterday=??
recently

[itatansı]
/i-tatam-și/
3S.S-be.sick-SG
He is sick.

However, each of the following instances, where there is a 'looser' association between the stem and enclitics, the nasal may be realised in casual speech either by the alveolar or velar form:

[keŋseŋ~kenseŋ]
/ke-m=sen/
foot-2.PSR=INSTR
with your feet

[aŋtonŋ~antonŋ]
/am=ton/
1EX.PRO=ACMP
us too

[neŋcro~nenro]
/nen=ro/
DEM=ETP
that one

[rasiranfe~rasiranfe]
/rasiram=fe/
morning=IR.SEQ
morning and then..
Given the acceptibility of the /Nf/ sequence the following form appears to be an anomaly to the nasal assimilation rule, since there is no phonological constraint against such a form as *[ifunfun]:

[ifuffuŋ]

/fun/ burn /i-fun/ it burned /i-fun-fun/ it’s burning

### 2.3.1.3 Post-nasal stopping

According to this rule, the palatal consonant /j/ becomes the affricate [ʤ] immediately after a palatal nasal.

[ijoŋ̃oŋki] /iyonjonki/ /i- yon- yonki/ it’s lost

In rightly noting that this process affects only [y] of the potentially available consonants, (/r/, /v/ and /w/), Ross provides a counter-example for /r/, [kanɾuwan] showing that /r/ does not undergo the same stopping process, and cites the lack of evidence in the case of both /v/ and /w/ (1984, p. 15). An instance of the /Nv/ sequence has since been identified, but does not contradict his original conclusion, since the /v/ retains its fricative quality after the nasal in the following example:

[jaŋveri] /yanveri/ rest

### 2.3.2 Rules affecting non-nasal consonants

#### 2.3.2.1 Non-nasal assimilation

This rule requires that all non-nasal consonants assimilate to the following consonant across syllable boundaries. Across morpheme boundaries, its primary application is to the reduplication process and to object affixation within the verb, since verb stems are the only morphemes that may end with a non-nasal consonant.

[irossi]

/i-ror –si/

3SG.S- pack -3SG.O

*He packed it.*
Ross posits a further rule of /s/ assimilation (1984, p. 41) to account for the apparent anomalies in the following examples where the above rule would have predicted a geminate /s/ in the surface form:

[ikefotti]
/i- kefot -si/  
3SG.S- shut -3SG.O  
He closed it.

[arotti]
/a- rot -si/  
1SG.S- tie -3SG.O  
I tied it  

2.3.2.2 Non-nasal stopping
This rule, which applies to the output of the non-nasal assimilation rule, causes two consecutive voiced fricatives or approximants to become stops at the identical point of articulation. Ross provides a very helpful rationale for this process in terms of its articulatory motivation, through the loss of the feature of rate, and the subsequent closure to form stops (1984, p. 14f).

[iwawugguren]
/i-wawur- wur -ren/  
3SG.S- CONT- defeat -1/2.O  
It’s getting the better of you.
It's growling at me.

He's opening it.

Are you resting?

The following example is included as supplementary data to support Ross's claim that the modification of the /vv/ sequence immediately above does not apply to the voiceless fricative sequences /ff/ and /ss/ which do not involve the same effort of articulation.

It's floating.

### 2.3.3 Rule affecting vowels

#### 2.3.3.1 i-deletion

As stated by Ross, this rule results in the deletion of /i- i/ immediately before a vowel across morpheme and word boundaries (1984, p. 17). Our data suggest that the rule should be restricted to allow for the loss of /i- i/ only in certain environments, since there is clear evidence of its retention in many contexts.

It is deleted after the following consonants:

/ɪ/  [aafanan]  /a- i fi =anan/  I'll say

/k/  [wakke]  /wakki =e/  to the village

[koukate]  /ko- uki =ate/  You went down and then...

30
However it is retained after the following consonants, even in casual speech:

/g/ [ibagiaka] /i-bagi=aka/ \( \text{He would steal.} \)

/m/ [isomiate] /i- som-i=ate/ \( \text{He wrapped them and then...} \)

/n/ [tibuniate] /ti- buni=ate/ \( \text{They gathered it up and then...} \)

/r/ [titerianan] /ti-ter-i=anan/ \( \text{They will put them.} \)

/v/ [ekesevianan] /e-kesev-i=anan/ \( \text{He will split them.} \)

/w/ [tinawianan] /ti-nawi=anan/ \( \text{They will kill them} \)

An apparent anomaly is that although /i/ is usually deleted after /s/, there are two verbs, /kusi/ \( \text{leave} \) and /vasi/ \( \text{come up} \), in which it is consistently retained, at least in careful speech, as the following examples illustrate:

/s/ [tikusiate] /ti-kusi=ate/ \( \text{They left them and then...} \)

/vasiananŋ /a-va-si=anan/ \( \text{I will come up here} \)

The rule could be reformulated to allow for the loss of /i/across word/enclitic and stem/suffix boundaries and immediately preceding a vowel when it occurs after a stop or a voiceless fricative. This appears to be the most economical way to handle the data, but it does not account for the anomalous position of /s/, nor for the regular retention of /i/ after /g/, (as in [ibagiaka] above) which would present an exception to the postulated rule.
2.4 Stress
Syllables with vowel sequence CVV always receive word stress, no matter where they occur in the word:

/ˈbai.mə.rə/ famine  /ɡa.ˈnai.so/ white palm

A CC sequence in a Masin word always crosses a syllable boundary. In such words, the initial consonant in the lengthened sequence functions as the coda in the syllable in which it occurs, making that a ‘heavy’ syllable and attracting word stress:

/ˈkəd.də/ thigh,  /ˈtas.sa.re/ in the sea,  /ˈat.ti/ I saw it.

In disyllabic and trisyllabic uninflected words, stress usually falls on the first syllable or the first VV syllable, if present:

/ˈfa.nə/ table  /ma.ˈnə/ fish
/ˈmo.ro.bi/ girl  /wa.ˈkə.i/ in vain

In words of more than three syllables, the third syllable generally carries primary stress, unless there is a VV or VC syllable in another position, which will automatically attract stress:

/ko.du.ˈrə.re/ papaya  /ve.gu.ˈrə.re.vi/ key
/ve.no.noˌwat.ti/ preparation  /i.ˈməa.ma.ti/ he is dying

2.5 Orthographic conventions
Reference has already been made at various points to certain features of Maisin orthography, but the main conventions are summarised here:

2.5.1 Long vowels
All vowels may be lengthened. Long vowels are represented orthographically by the repetition of the vowel in question.

[aːfanan] ⇒ <aafanan> I will say,  [wiːv] ⇒ <wiivi> sister-in-law
2.5.2 Nasals
The velar nasal [ŋ] is written as <n> since it is not a phoneme and its occurrence is entirely predictable from its position and environment (word-finally or preceding a velar consonant.)

2.5.3 Labialised /k/
The sequence /ku+V/ is written as <kwV>:

[kuiti] /k- kite- si/ <kwitti> you saw (it)

The sequence /koV/ is written as /koV/ in all contexts except when it occurs as an inflectional subject marker with the verb /ifi/:

[koise] /ko- ise/ <koise> you stood

[koi] /koi/ <koi> (female) friend

[koifi] /ko-ifi/ <kweefi> you said

2.5.4 Approximants
<w> and <y> are written intervocally

1. where they occur as full phonetic segments at morpheme internal syllable boundaries:

[vija] <viya> game, [nuwa] <nuwa> tooth

2. where they occur epenthetically before following high vowels at morpheme boundaries

[baimarajə]/baimara+en/ <baimarayen> with the famine

[faafowe] /faafo+e/ <faafowe> at the harbour

3. where their presence may be required to disambiguate a sequence from a long vowel or diphthong

eg [te.re.en] /tere=en/ <tereyen> the younger one (AGENT)

[ku.tau.ke.in] /ku-tauke=in/ <kutaukeyin> are you staying?
They are not normally written at morpheme boundaries preceding non-high vowels. In practice this applies primarily to the affixation of tense and aspect markers within the verb, as the following examples show:

[avasianan]  /a-vasi=anan/  <avasianan>  *I will come up*

[imatuaka]  /i-matu=aka/  <imatuaka>  *he wants to sleep*
3 Word Classes and Morphology

3.1 Open Word Classes
Maisin verbs and nouns are open word classes in that they comprise sets to which new items can be added, e.g. through derivation, borrowing or coinage of new forms, and in that a comprehensive list of all forms cannot be made. Each of these classes will be treated in a separate chapter, and the remainder of this chapter will be confined to a presentation of those word classes considered to be closed sets.

3.2 Closed Word Classes

3.2.1 Pronouns
Maisin pronouns distinguish between first, second and third person, with no marking for gender or animacy. First person plural forms make a further distinction depending on whether the hearer is included or not. There are only two categories of grammatical number, singular and plural, with the exception of the uninflected dual personal pronoun /yaisen/ which may reference either first (inclusive and exclusive), second or third person (see 3.2.1.1.3 below.)

3.2.1.1 Personal pronouns
Personal pronouns may appear as free forms, but most commonly occur as bound stems with topic, focus or case-marking enclitics attached. The forms are as follows:

Table 3: Personal Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EXC</td>
<td>aa/a-</td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>an/an-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INC</td>
<td></td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>aiti/aiti-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ee/e-</td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>en/en-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ai/ai-</td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>ei/ei-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free forms occur predominantly in the following contexts:

a. before the corresponding genitive pronoun:
b. with a postpositional particle:

(3.2) ai kora
3SG.PRO only
He alone

(3.3) e=ka an aro ta-tauke=ana
2SG.PRO 1EXC.PRO with 1INC.S-stay=FUT
You’ll stay with us(exc).

c. with nouns in apposition:

(3.4) an Maisin
1EXC.PRO Maisin
We Maisin

d. as the object of a nominalised verb:

(3.5) aa karafe-∅=so
1SG.PRO bite-3PL.O=REF
...to bite me

e. Less commonly, the free form may occur as the subject NP of an active clause:

(3.6) ei ti-ra=ana ai i-ra=ana
3PL.PLRO 3PLS-go=FUT 3SG.PRO 3SGS-go=FUT
They will go (their way), he will go (his way).

The bound form occurs with much greater frequency, with case, topic or focus marking enclitics attached to form a pronominally-headed noun phrase (see Chapter 5.2.5 pronominally headed NP).

It also occurs as a bound stem with the following two forms:
3.2.1.1  Predicate marker /-e/

The predicate marker /-e/ is used only with personal pronouns and proper nouns. The following are the only pronominal forms so far attested:

(3.7)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>1SG.PRO=PRED</th>
<th>2SG.PRO=PRED</th>
<th>3SG.PRO=PRED</th>
<th>3PL.PRO=PRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aae-e</td>
<td>Awe!</td>
<td>eye</td>
<td>aire</td>
<td>eiye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee-e</td>
<td>It's me!</td>
<td>It's you!</td>
<td>It's him!</td>
<td>It's them!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1.1.2  Rotative marker /-misin/

The postposition /-misin/, when suffixed to the appropriate personal pronoun in subject position, indicates the subject’s right or obligation, by rotation, to perform the action of the verb:

(3.8)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a-misin</td>
<td>a-vav-si</td>
<td>ka-kan=anan</td>
<td>It’s my turn to cook something for us to eat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3.9)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nen=so</td>
<td>e-misin</td>
<td>wanno</td>
<td>ku-me-n i-rai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1.1.3  Dual pronoun /yaisen/

One personal pronoun which behaves differently from the above set is the free form /yaisen/, which may be used in reference to any two individuals, regardless of person. No case-marking or other post-positions are attached to it, and it always fills the subject actor role in the clause. The /-sen/ ending, with its resemblance to the case-marking enclitic /=en/, used to denote agent/instrument, may reflect agentive marking that has now become a ‘frozen’ form.

(3.10)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vaa-e</td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>ti-ra-raro</td>
<td>The two of them are fighting in the house.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3.11)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inate</td>
<td>yaisen</td>
<td>ka-uki..</td>
<td>Then the two of us went down...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.2.1.2 Genitive Pronouns

The genitive pronouns are free forms which occupy the slot between the possessor noun or pronoun and the possessed noun.

**Table 4: Genitive pronouns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EXC</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INC</td>
<td>ati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ai</td>
<td>en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ari</td>
<td>ei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These forms may follow the possessor noun phrase, or occur NP-initially:

(3.12) **au** yabi **ari** begati

1SG GEN father 3SG GEN garden

*M My father's garden*

(3.13) mo-morobi sandei **ei** babbasi

PL girl two 3PL GEN verandah

*T The two girls' verandah*

Ross (1984, p. 29) classifies these forms as proclitics which attach to the possessed noun in possessive noun phrases but the existence of such forms as /an marawawawe/ *our(exc) love* and /en mon/ *your(pl) thinking* suggests otherwise, since the nasal assimilation one might expect as a result of cliticisation has not taken place. Moreover, our data indicates that if they were to be regarded as clitics at all, they function more like enclitics to the preceding noun, as the following examples show:

(3.14) a. raddamari suriya
      b. airari taukiramara

raddam **ari** suriya ai **ari** taukiramara
evening 3SG GEN meal 3SG PRO 3SG GEN lifestyle

*T The evening meal*  

*His behaviour*
In an example like (3.14) a, if /ari/ were not an enclitic to the preceding noun, we would expect the final nasal of /raddam/ to neutralise to /n/ in accordance with the phonological rule regarding word final nasals. In (3.14) b, the epenthetic /r/ linking /ai/ and /ari/ again suggests cliticisation. However, since the genitive pronouns can occur noun phrase initially, without a preceding noun phrase they are best treated as independent forms.

3.2.1.2.1 Isolating suffix /-fi/
The bound suffix /-fi/ is used with the genitive pronouns to create a pronominal form which denotes isolation or aloneness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EXC</td>
<td>aufi</td>
<td>anfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INC</td>
<td>aitifi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>aifi</td>
<td>enfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>aifi</td>
<td>elfi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is unclear whether these forms are derived from the personal pronouns or the genitive pronouns since the plural first exclusive, second and third person forms are identical for both sets. In the above table, the first inclusive and third singular forms are the same as the personal pronouns, while the first singular and second person forms resemble the genitive pronouns.

These forms may modify a preceding personal pronoun or they may stand alone as the head of a pronominal noun phrase. They are frequently used in conjunction with the personal pronoun and the emphatic topic marker /=ro/:

(3.15)  ei-fi vaa=e ti-too
        3PL.GEN-ISOL house=LOC 3PL.S-lie (for sleep)

*They slept by themselves in the house.*
The reciprocal pronoun /toto/ is not inflected for person or number. It occupies the slot in the verb phrase that would normally be filled by the object of a transitive verb:

(3.17)  
\[
toto \quad ka-kowa-ren  
\]
RECIP 1EXC.S-miss-1/2.0

_We missed each other._

(3.18)  
\[
yaisen \quad toto \quad ti-gi=ate  
\]
DUAL.PRO  RECIP 3PLS-hold=RLSEQ

_The two of them held on to each other and then._

3.2.2 Demonstratives

3.2.2.1 /nen/ ‘that’

Of the two Maisin demonstrative enclitics, /nen/ that is the more frequently occurring and performs a range of functions within the language.

As a deictic, it attaches to noun phrases:

(3.19)  
\[
va\text{a} \quad bejji=\text{nen}  
\]
house big=DEM

_That big house_

It may combine with the locative case-marking postposition /=e/ to give the locative pronoun /nenke/ there, with the ablative marker /=efe/ to give /nenkefe/ from there, and with the referential marker /=so/ to give /neneso/ therefore. It is most frequently found in conjunction with the topic marker /=ka/, or focus marker /=na/, in which cases it is used as a clause nominaliser in relative clause constructions, temporal contingencies and conditional expressions (see section 7.1.4). With the locative marker /=e/, it gives the form /nenke/ here. As Ross points out (1984:28) its deictic force in these contexts is largely lost.
3.2.2.2 /in/ ‘this’
The proximal demonstrative /in/ is not used to nominalise clauses, but otherwise has the same range of distribution as /nen/, and occurs with topic, focus and case-marking enclitics. As a deictic, it is used with greater specificity than /nen/, and indicates closer relative distance to the speaker.

(3.20) mee ando=in se i-kayo-vi
banana skin=DEM who 3SG.S-peel-3PL.O
Who peeled these banana skins?

3.2.2.3 Demonstrative pronouns

3.2.2.3.1 /nenin/ ‘that (one)’, /inin/ ‘this (one)’
The pronominal forms of /nen/ and /in/, /nenin/ and /inin/ respectively, may function as the heads of noun phrases, and host the full range of topic, focus and case-marking enclitics.

(3.21) saukitamati roma inin ti-kite-si
people whole DEM.PRO 3PL.S-see-3SG.O
nen=ka
DEM=TP
When all the people saw this...

(3.22) nenin=ka isa tauban=ka
DEM.PRO=TP NEG good=NEG
That's not good.

3.2.2.3.2 Semblative /nenanan/ ‘like this’, /inaninan/ ‘like that’
The forms /nenanan/ and /inaninan/ appear to derive originally from the demonstrative enclitics attached to /nan/ thus and are best glossed along the lines of like this/that, in this/that way. They may host all the focus, topic and case-marking enclitics, and may fill the predicate slot in the clause, but they do not function as the head of a noun phrase. Like other predicates, they may occur with the future enclitic /=anan/ although the only attested examples of this are restricted to nenanan.

(3.23) tatoddi yove ari kin-kind=ka nenanan=ana
marriage side 3SG.GEN PL-time=TP like.that=FUT
In the area of marriage, that's what the customs will be like.
I’ll dress the way deacons dress then...

We’ll hold our hands like this and move along in this way.

With quantifying expressions, /nenanan/ often has the sense of approximately:

Leah and Doreen arrived around 3:00 p.m.

3.2.3 Interrogative/indefinite
Interrogative pronouns usually occur in the same position in the clause as the noun they replace. Their usage will be discussed further below (6.5 Interrogative sentences). There are five basic interrogative pronouns, from which other interrogatives are derived. All may be used in the formation of both interrogative and indefinite constructions.

3.2.3.1 Quantifier /viisi/ ‘how much, how many’
/viisi/ is used to indicate quantity or amount. It may host topic or focus markers, but no examples of case-marking have been attested.

How much taro did you eat?

3.2.3.2 Temporal /isaa/ ‘when’
/isaa/ when does not occur with topic, focus or case-marking enclitics. When used with future reference, however, it often hosts the irrealis sequential marker /=fe/:

I don’t know when we’ll see each other.
3.2.3.3 Relative /man/ ‘which’
The deictic pronoun /man/ which occurs with focus and case-marking enclitics, but not with topic markers. It is frequently used with the locative and ablative markers to give the forms /manke/ where (to) and /mankefe/ where from. Ross (1984, p. 51) suggests that it cannot occur without one of these markers, but our data indicates otherwise. When occurring alone it often retains the locative force (see (3.31) below).

\[(3.29)\]
\[
e=ka \quad \text{man}=kefe \quad \text{ku-rai}
\]
\[
2\text{SG.PRO}=\text{TP} \quad \text{which}=\text{ABL} \quad 2\text{S}-\text{come}
\]
\[
Where \ did \ you \ come \ from?
\]

\[(3.30)\]
\[
\text{man}=\text{na} \quad \text{boregi}=\text{anan}=\text{ka} \quad \text{ti-wawe}=\text{ana}
\]
\[
\text{which}=\text{FOC} \quad \text{good.PL}=\text{FUT}=\text{TP} \quad 3\text{PLS}-\text{get.PL}=\text{FUT}
\]
\[
They’ll \ take \ the \ ones \ that \ are \ good....
\]

\[(3.31)\]
\[
yei \quad a=\text{kam}=a \quad \text{man}
\]
\[
\text{older.sibling} \quad 1\text{SG.PRO}=\text{POSS.PRED}=\text{IT} \quad \text{which}
\]
\[
\text{Sister, where’s mine?}
\]

3.2.3.4 Non-human /avan/ ‘what’
As with /man/, a range of content question words are derived when /avan/ what combines with topic, focus and case-marking postpositions. These include /avanso/ why, what for, /avanken/ with what/what(agent), /avanna/ what(foc) and /avankefe/ from what. /avasu/ how appears to have a similar derivation, although the original morphology is now opaque. Like /man/, and contrary to Ross’s data, /avan/ may occur without enclitics.

\[(3.32)\]
\[
\text{avan} \quad \text{buuro} \quad \text{ka-nane}=\text{ana} \quad \text{nen}
\]
\[
\text{what} \quad \text{work} \quad 1\text{EXCS-do.CONT}=\text{FUT} \quad \text{DEM}
\]
\[
\text{Whatever work we’ll be doing...}
\]

\[(3.33)\]
\[
\text{avan}=\text{en} \quad \text{ti-kakko-ren}
\]
\[
\text{what}=\text{AGT} \quad 3\text{PLS-stab}-1/2.0
\]
\[
\text{What is it that’s stabbing me?}
\]

\[(3.34)\]
\[
\text{avan}=\text{so} \quad \text{ku-te-tesi}
\]
\[
\text{what}=\text{REF} \quad 2\text{S-CONT-cry}
\]
\[
Why \ are \ you \ crying?
\]
### 3.2.3.5 Human /se(ra)-/ ‘who’

/"se(ra)/ combines with various noun phrase enclitics to give the following forms: with predicate /"e//serae/ who is, with focus marker /="na//serana/ whom(foc), with possessive predicate /="kam//sekan/ whose, with referential /="so//seraso/ to, for whom, with agent/instrument /="en//seren/ with whom. In subject position it is prefixed to the verb, taking the place of the otherwise obligatory subject marker.

(3.35)  
ate mee ando=in  se-kayo-vi  
but banana skin=DEM who-peel-3P.O  
But who peeled off these banana skins?

(3.36)  
sera=so ti-buwandi=ana nen=ka ei=kan  
who=REF 3PLS-share=FUT DEM=TP 3PL.PRO=POSS.PRED  
(The ones) to whom they distribute them, they belong to them.

(3.37)  
saukitamati moturam=a sera=e  
person true=IT who=PRED  
Who is the true human being?

The indefinite interrogative form /"sewakki/ expresses the idea of whoever and most commonly occurs in agent role with instrumental case marking /"sewakkesen/ although it may host other postpositions as well.

(3.38)  
"sewakki=en wenna=ri ti-nane ti-bibiti=anan  
whoever=AGT strong=PL 3PLS-do 3PLS-speed=FUT  
Whichever ones are strong, will move quickly.

(3.39)  
"sewakki=na a-rature a-wawe wanno a-mei=anan  
whoever=FOC 1SG.S-cheat 1SG.S-took.3PL.O and/again 1SG.S-give=FUT  
Whoever I cheated and stole from, I’ll give back (to them)

### 3.2.4 Adverbs

Maisin adverbs form a varied class, in terms of their semantics, syntax and morphology. They generally encode such ideas as temporal relations, manner and modality. Common features are that they modify some constituent other than the noun, they cannot function as an argument of the predicate and they are not normally inflected, or marked for topic, focus or case. Typically they precede the constituent that they modify.
3.2.4.1 Temporal adverbs
Temporal adverbs may be distinguished from other adverbial forms by the fact that some of them may host the topic marker /=ka/. This raises the question as to whether they should be analysed as nouns. However, unlike temporal nouns, they cannot occur with case-marking enclitics, nor function as arguments of the predicate. Temporal adverbs include the following forms:

/afunanten/ right now
/ororovanten/ recently
/weisinukaran/ three days ago
/ran nenna kakan/ always
/wanfaya/ already
/wannani/ again
/wauwan/ at first

3.2.4.2 Manner adverbs: adverbialiser /-an/
Most manner adverbs so far identified appear to be derived from corresponding nouns or verbs by means of the adverbialising suffix /-an/. Although this was clearly once a productive process it is no longer used in the formation of new adverbs. Several of the temporal adverbs in the previous section show evidence of having been derived by a similar process. In some cases (and contrary to the general rule of adverbs being uninflected) a plural form /-arin/ has been found, when a plural subject of the modified predicate is in view.

(3.40) afun=ka to-rafin en tooyabu=so isoro
now=TP self-ADV.PL 2PL.GEN country=REF war

ku-nane=aka
2S-do=POT
...now you yourselves should fight for your own country.
Slowly I climbed my way up on the back side of it.

Manner adverbs which have been attested are listed below with (where known) the forms from which they are derived.

/anoran/ powerfully /ano/ power, might
/babasan/ with pleasure /babasi / pleasure, goodwill
/birin/ quickly /biri/ lightning
/dadadan/ hurriedly /dadadi/ haste
/dedeyan/ slowly /dede/ slowness
/dekiyan/ lamely /dekii/ lameness
/eregagan/ lazily
/fefesan/ quickly, easily /fefe/ light, easy
/fufuttan/ often /vefufutte/ put close together
/gangan/ twistedly /gangi/ twistedness
/inanan/ like this /in/ this
/jajajan/ stutteringly
/jarajarayan/ quickly
/kavenayan/ forcefully /kavena/ force, strength
/kivan,kivarin/ quietly, slowly /kivii/ secret
/motten/ straight, directly /kemotte/ straighten
/nenan/ thus, like that /nen/ that
/nombowan/ loudly /nombo/ largeness
/sososan/ quickly
3.2.4.3 Modal adverbs
The following modal adverbs have been identified. They immediately precede the clause they modify.

/aworeta/ (often abbreviated to /awe/)  perhaps/I'm thinking this is so...

(3.42)  aworeta wakki=so=ka isa=viya ku-mon-mon=ka
perhaps village=REF=TP NEG=little 2S-COUNT-think=NEG
I think you're missing the village a lot.

(3.43)  awe tambun October 1999 nenanan nen=e a-me-n
maybe month October 1999 like that DEM=LOC 1SG.S-give-3SG.O

i-rai
3SG.S-come
I think I sent it around October 1999.

/amai/  just/only

(3.44)  kayan ti-nane nen=na amai a-kite-n a-tauke
school 3PLS-COUNT.do DEM=FOC just 1SG.S-see-SS.SIM 1SG.S-sit
I just sat and watched while they had their course.
...maybe someone else will come amongst you, someone important, so don’t sit in the good place.

/towan/ ‘trying’ This adverb gives conative force to the clause it modifies:

(3.46)  towon  ai.ari  tauki.ramara  ta-kite-si
        try  3SG.PRO.3SG.GEN  behaviour  1INC.S-see-3SG.O

        ta-regeti=anan
        1INC.S-do.properly=FUT
        We’ll try to take a good look at his way of life.

(3.47)  toddi=e  ko-kira  i-va  towon  damana  nen  ku-yavi
        sky=LOC  2S-see  3SG.S-go.up  try  stars  DEM  2S-count

        Look up at the sky, try to count the stars.

3.2.5 Numerals and quantifiers

3.2.5.1 Numerals
The traditional Maisin numbering system is based on the digits of the hands and feet. Because this schema becomes increasingly cumbersome as it proceeds, most counting beyond the first five digits is now done in English. The Maisin forms are as follows:

sesei  one

sandei  two

sinati  three

fusese  four

faketi tarosi  your (inc) hand on one side (= five)
faketi tarosi ikawe taure sesei  
our(inc) hand on one side, one across on the other (= six)

faketi tautau  
both our(inc) hands (= ten)

faketi tautau euki keti sesei  
both our(inc) hands, one down on our(inc) foot (=eleven)

faketi tautau euki keti tarosi  
both our(inc) hands, our(inc) foot on one side (=fifteen)

tamati sesei  
one man (= twenty)

tamati sesei faketi tautau  
one man, both our(inc) hands (=thirty)

tamati sandei  
two men (= forty)

tamati sinati  
three men (= sixty)

These forms are used for counting, as quantifiers in the noun phrase (where they follow any adjectival nouns but precede the demonstrative), and as ordinals, with the single exception that, in the case of ordinals, /mataa/ first(lit. eye) is used to indicate the first in a series. The last in a series is indicated by the noun /tugata/:

(3.48) ve-yavimataa=ka... ve-yavi sandei=ka  
NOM-read first=TP NOM-read two=TP  
The first reading is..., the second reading is...

(3.49) au kooti tugata=ka  
1SG.GEN message last=TP  
My last notice is...

As well as modifying nouns, numerals may function as the head of a noun phrase, or as the predicate in a clause. They may host topic, focus and case-marking enclitics, as well as tense/aspect enclitics:

(3.50) sirari sinati=e=ate kaa nombo=i=ka a-tar-i  
day three=LOC=RL.SEQ tree large=PL=TP 1SG.S-chop-3PL.O  
Three days later, I chopped down the large trees.
(3.51) ari morobi=ka sese kora  
3SG.GEN girl=TP one only  
*He has only one daughter.*

Distributive numerals are formed by the reduplication of the numeral or of its first two syllables:

(3.52) ei yaa=ka sina-sinati kora=ana  
3PL.GEN year=TP three-three only=FUT  
*They'll each be three years old.*

(3.53) ei jobi=a viisi? sande-sandei  
3PL.GEN price=IT how.much? two-two  
*How much are they? Twenty toea [two coins] each.*

3.2.5.2 Quantifiers

The following non-numeral quantifiers have been identified:

- tauri *some, others*
- wataa *many*
- wataa sirara keisi *very many (lit. 'many no light')*
- seseka *all, every*
- roma *whole, entire*
- saviyaka *plenty*
- sajooka *not many*
- ye *somewhat, a bit*
- ye raati *a little*
- amu/amura *none*

Like numerals, these quantifiers may modify nouns, or may serve as the head of a noun phrase:
(3.54)  ari  fana=ro  tauri=en  ti-wi-n-anan
3SG.GEN  platform=ETP  others=AGT  3PLS-build-3SG.O=FUT

*Others will construct his stretcher.*

(3.55)  a=kam=e  vekute  o  kooti  tauri=ka
1SG.PRO=POSS.PRED  question  or  message  others=TP
amura
none

*I don’t have any other questions or messages.*

### 3.2.6 Enclitics

All Maisin enclitics attach to the preceding noun phrase.

#### 3.2.6.1 Semantic case-marking enclitics

There are five semantic case-marking enclitics which will be discussed in more detail below (5.2.7 Case marking on noun phrases.) Their forms and range of meaning are presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locative (LOC)</th>
<th>Ablative (ABL)</th>
<th>Referential (REF)</th>
<th>Accompaniment (ACMP)</th>
<th>Instrument (AGT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>=e</td>
<td>=efe</td>
<td>=so</td>
<td>=ton</td>
<td>=en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location, goal</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Goal, recipient, beneficiary</td>
<td>Accompaniment, possession</td>
<td>Agent, instrument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ross (1984, p. 30ff) includes /=fe/ and /=kam/ in his list of case-marking enclitics, however in the present analysis, /=fe/ is treated as the medial irrealis sequential marker even when it attaches to temporal nouns. Since there are instances of it occurring with the locative marker /=e/ in contexts where the usage is distinct from the ablative marker /=efe/, and no other case markers co-occur in this way, it seems preferable to conclude that it is functioning as a tense aspect marker in all occurrences.

Similarly, /=kam/ is here classed as a possessive predicate marker rather than marking possessive case. Unlike other case-marking enclitics, /=kam/ may be followed the case-markers /=e/, /=efe/, and /=ton/, none of which may co-occur with each other. Also, its
application is limited to animate noun phrases, a restriction which does not apply to other case-marking enclitics.

3.2.6.2 **Topic markers**

3.2.6.2.1 Topic marker /=ka/
The topic marker /=ka/ may attach to noun phrases, case-marked phrases and to demonstratives functioning as clause nominalisers. The item to which it attaches may be the subject or object of the clause, or may be part of the clause periphery as in the case of temporal and locative postpositional phrases. As part of its syntactic function, it obligatorily attaches to the subject of a non-verbal equative or descriptive clause. When attached to a clause-nominalising demonstrative, it marks the dependent clause in a temporal or conditional construction, or a relative clause construction.

At a pragmatic level, /=ka/ has several uses. Its primary function as Ross, following Comrie, notes (1984, p. 62ff) is to establish the topic to be discussed and, as necessary, to bring a topic previously introduced back into prominence. It may, therefore, be dealing with information that is totally new to the hearer, or with information supplied earlier but requiring reactivation. At a discourse level it also “…sets a spatial, temporal or individual framework within which the main predication holds.” (W.L Chafe, 1976, p. 50) And it is used in identifying and tracking participants in narrative discourse. Its range of use appears very similar to that recorded in some non-Austronesian languages e.g Ama (Årsjö, 1994)

(3.56) ai=ka tamati ratti
3SG.PRO=TP man old
*He’s an old man.*

(3.57) mana=in wawe=so=ka iva nen kora ti-ter-ter-si
fish=DEM get=REF=TP net DEM only 3PL.S-CONT-put-3SG.O
*As for getting this kind of fish, they just put nets out.*

(3.58) afun rasiram=e=ka a-rauku vabbasi=e
now morning=LOC=TP 1SG.S-come.out verandah=LOC
*This morning I came out onto the verandah.*

3.2.6.2.2 Irrealis topic marker /=a/
The irrealis topic marker /=a/ occurs in three main environments:
1. Questions, where it occupies the slot that would normally be filled by the topic marker in the corresponding declarative sentence:

(3.59) ari asa=a sera=e
3SG.GEN name=IT who=PRED?

ari asan=ka Reuben
3SG.GEN name=TP Reuben

*What's his name? His name's Reuben.*

2. Prohibitions, where it may attach to a nominal within the predicate:

(3.60) an nen=e=a ku-tau-toki
NEGIMP DEM=LOC=IT 2S-CNT-stay
*Don't settle there.*

(3.61) an nen=ton=a ku-mon-mon
NEGIMP DEM=ACMP=IT 2S-CNT-think
*Don't worry about that as well.*

3. Relative clauses or reported questions:

(3.62) a-marun kefe=a man=e begati=a a-nane=ana
1SG.S-set.off place=IT which=LOC garden=IT 1SG.S-do=FUT

nen=e a-a
DEM=LOC 1SG.S-go
*I set off for the place where I will make my garden.*

(3.63) ku-ra ku-kute avan=so ari mara-a vita=a
2S-go 2S-ask what=REF 3SG.GEN heart-3SG.PSR pain=IT
*Go ask him what he is sad about.*

Ross (1984, p. 63) terms this an interrogative topic marker, but its wider distribution than purely questions seems to justify it being classified as marking topic in irrealis contexts.
3.2.6.2.3  Emphatic topic marker /=ro/
Ross (1984, pp. 34, 65) seems right in classifying the enclitic /=ro/ as a more emphatic version of the topic marker /=ka/, given that its distribution is almost identical with that of /=ka/. Both can attach to noun phrases, temporal nouns and to case-marked phrases. Unlike /=ka/ however, /=ro/ cannot follow the demonstrative /nen/ when it is used as a clause nominaliser. Sometimes it carries the sense of ‘even, also’:

(3.64)  funa enjigi enjigi wannu tatamir=ro  e-ketatam-i
body weariness weariness and sickness=ETP  3SG.S-feel-3PL.O

She was very tired and was even experiencing sickness.

It may also carry a contrastive sense:

(3.65)  an wakki=e ka-ra=ana en=ro
1EXC.GEN village=LOC 1EXC.S-go=FUT  2PL.PRO=ETP

en wakki=e ko-ra=ana
2PL.GEN village=LOC  2S-go=FUT.

We’ll go to our village, and as for you, you will go back to your village too.

Following a nasal consonant, /=ro/ sometimes assimilates to the preceding nasal to give the surface form /=no/.

(3.66)  siko nen=ro ti-fas-si-n te-uku
pig DEM=ETP  3PLS-carry-3SG.O-SS.SIM  3PLS.descend

ti-sam-si ti-fune-si ti-buwandi ti-kan
3PLS-roast-3SG.O 3PLS-butcher-3SG.O 3PLS-share 3PLS-eat

As for that pig, they brought it down, roasted it, butchered it, shared it out and ate it.

3.2.6.3  Focus marker /=na/
The focus marker /=na/ has a much more limited distribution that the topic marker. It attaches only to noun phrases, most frequently to object noun phrases although also to undergoer subjects and to the subject noun phrases of stative verbs. Unlike the topic marker /=ka/ it never follows a case-marked phrase and is never used with an agent subject noun phrase, lending weight to Ross’s suggestion (1984, p. 67) that the agent/instrument case-marking postposition /=en/ is used to mark focus for agent subjects, while /=na/ performs
the same function for object and patient subject, lending support to arguments for the existence of a partial ergative system in Maisin. (see 4.2.9.5) The principal function of the focus marker is to highlight the important new information that is being given concerning the topic. “The focus marker marks an essential piece of new information, in contrast to information which is given. The topic marker marks ‘what I am talking about’ in contrast to the comment i.e. ‘what I am telling you about it.’” (M. D. Ross, 1984, p. 62) Hence it often attaches to the interrogative morphemes /se/ who, /man/ which, /avan/ what and /visii/ how much, which are used for ascertaining new information.

(3.67) ei kayan tuufa=na i-tu-katuwatte-ri
3PL.GEN school short=FOC 3SG.S-CONT-teach-3PL.O
She’s teaching them a short workshop.

(3.68) ai=ton wanno Magdalen ei=na ti-mati
3SG.PRO=ACMP and Magdalen 3PL.PRO=FOC 3PL.S-die
She and Magdalen, they’re the ones who died.

(3.69) e=ka ai buro=a avan=na ku-nan
2SG.PRO=TP 2SG.GEN work=IT what=FOC 2S-CONT.do
As for you (and) your work, what do you do?

3.2.6.4 Delimiter /kora/
The particle /kora/ follows noun phrases, including case-marked phrases, to restrict the scope of the argument to the noun phrase so marked. Its distribution appears to be parallel to that of the topic marker /=ka/ with which it never co-occurs. There are, however, also no instances of its co-occurrence with the focus marker /=na/ and semantically, it appears to have an inherently focal role, in that it regularly references information which is essentially new, and not predictable or recoverable from the context.

(3.70) ei=ro kumuti kora ti-kai-kan ti-tauke
3PL.PRO=ETP taro LMT 3PL.S-CONT-eat 3PL.S-stay
They lived on taro alone.

(3.71) Maume wakki=e kora mati sandei ti-nane
Maume village=LOC LMT death two 3PL.S-do
Only in Maume village there were two deaths.
3.2.6.5 Polar question marker /=in/
The polar question enclitic /=in/ always attaches to the sentence terminus, and coincides with sentence-final rising intonation. Word order in polar questions follows the order found in declarative clauses.

(3.72) raddan suriya arore ta-ve=anan=in
evening meal together 1INC-get.3SG.O=FUT=PQ
Shall we have our evening meal together?

(3.73) ai=so=a ku-ka-kayawa=in
3SG.PRO=REF=IT 2S-CONT-fear=PQ
Are you afraid of him?

3.2.6.6 Possessive predicate marker /=kam/
The possessive predicate marker /=kam/ attaches to a possessor noun or pronoun in a possessive noun phrase. It is used only with animate possessor nouns and often attaches to proper nouns.

(3.74) moofi nen=ka tamati ratti nen=kam
Malay apple DEM=TP man old DEM=POSS.PRED
Those fruit belong to that old man.

When an enclitic marking location/goal (/=e/) or source (/=efe/) is used with a noun referencing a human being, the possessive predicate /=kam/ must always be inserted before the case-marking enclitic.

(3.75) isa birin en=kam=efe pepa a-ve=ka
NEG quickly 2PL.PRO=POSS.PRED=ABL paper 1SG.S-get.3SG.O=NEG
I haven’t received a letter from you very quickly.

(3.76) ti-ramara-n ei yau=kam=e ti-ra
3PLS-get.up-SS.SIM 3PL.GEN mother=POSS.PRED=LOC 3PLS-go
They got up and went to their mother.

3.2.6.7 Comitative /=aro/ ‘with’
Like /=kam/, /=aro/ occurs only with animate nouns, and is used to indicate shared participation in the action of the verb.
He went with his brothers-in-law.

Who do you live with?

So I am like your parents.

A bird like a dove came down to him.

They'll be like us.

The postposition /naniti/ serves to reference similarity to the preceding noun phrase. When following a plural noun phrase it occurs with plural enclitics /=a=ri/ to give the surface form /nanitari/. It may host topic, focus and case-marking enclitics as well as tense/aspect enclitics.

So I am like your parents.

A bird like a dove came down to him.

They'll be like us.

The following conjunctions have been identified. Their usage will be discussed further in Chapter 7, Complex Sentence Structure, but the main forms, with brief definitions and illustrations are listed below.

The form /wanno/ appears to derive from a combination of /waun/ new and the emphatic topic marker /=ro/ and is occasionally realised by the surface forms /waunno/ and /waunro/. Its basic function is to add a new constituent or idea to the discourse. It is used to conjoin both noun phrases and clauses. It may also occur as the first or second element in
a clause, where it is perhaps best glossed along the lines of *and another thing... or furthermore...*

(3.82) saukifaafi **wanno** ei morobi ratti
girl 3PLGEN 3PL.SMALL
wife:husband and

*The couple and their young daughter*

(3.83) nen=efe **wanno** ti-ramara ti-ra Tafoti kava=e ti-tauki
mouth=LOC 3PL.S-go Tafoti mouth=LOC 3PL.S-stay
DEM=ABL and 3PL.S-get.up

*From there and [=another thing happened], they went and settled at the Tafoti mouth.*

### 3.2.7.2 Disjunction

Two forms encoding alternation or disjunction have been identified, with some overlap of usage.

#### 3.2.7.2.1 /=ai/ ‘or’

The enclitic /=ai/ attaches to one or more alternatives in a series, where the alternatives in view are regarded as mutually exclusive.

(3.84) i-toddi=ai i-mati
3SG.S-marry=or 3SG.S-die

*Did she get married or is she dead?*

(3.85) yau a-if=anan=ai yaya a-if=anan=ai abu
mother 1SG.S-say=FUT=or auntie 1SG.S-say=FUT=or granny

a-if=in?
1SG.S-say=PQ

*Will I call her ‘mother’ or ‘auntie’ or do I say ‘granny’?*

#### 3.2.7.2.2 /o/ ‘or’

The free morpheme /o/ occurs much more frequently than /=ai/ and may be a borrowing from English. It is often used interchangeably with /=ai/ but is not limited to contexts where mutually exclusive alternatives are at issue, and may also encode more inclusive lists as well as contexts where the same idea is being rephrased.
I don’t have any other questions or news.

They’ll unfold them and spread them on the sand, or in the open space between the houses.

3.2.7.3 Adversative/contrastive

3.2.7.3.1 /ate/ ‘now, but’
The conjunction /ate/ (not to be confused with the realis sequential marker /=ate/) is used to introduce a new thought or episode, signal a change in time, action, attitude etc, or to serve as a mild adversative.

They shared them out as they went. But one man didn’t give any to his family.

Their mother was grieving [for him]. And/Now/but his wife became a widow.

3.2.7.3.2 /ataika/ ‘but’
The form/ataika/ which appears to derive from the sequence /ate=ai=ka/ has a stronger adversative force than /ate/ and signals a sharper contrast between the conjoined clauses.
She ate [and] was drinking her broth, but she was losing weight.

The shorter form /aika/ performs the same function. Because it is homophonous with the topic-marked 3rd singular personal pronoun, unambiguous examples are harder to identify, but they do occur:

Your house is just fine, but the cats have soiled it and the mats are spoiled.

...I got everything, but I didn’t get the parcel you and Joanna sent me from New Zealand.

He looked down and [to his surprise] there was a girl sitting there.
3.2.7.4  **Sequential**

3.2.7.4.1  /ineate/ 'then' (realis)

The sequential conjunction /ineate/, variously realised by surface forms /inate/ /neate/ and /nate/ derives from the following sequence, now bleached of any verbal force:

i-nane=ate
3SGS-do=RLSEQ
*He did and then...*

It is always used in the context of past actual events, and serves to locate one action as following another in a sequence.

(3.94) i-taisukki i-vasi i-kko-si **inate** a-kaffari
3SGS-run 3GS-go.up 3GSS-shoot-3SGO then 1SGS-jump

a-uki yabu=e a-ise=ate
1SGS-go.down ground=LOC 1SGS-stand=RLSEQ
*...he ran up and shot it. Then I jumped down to the ground and...*

3.2.7.4.2  /inefe/ 'then' (irrealis)

Like /ineate/, /inefe/ and its alternate surface form /nefe/ derives from a construction involving the verb /nane/:

i-nane=fe
3SGS-do=IRSEQ
*he will do and then...*

It is used to locate one action sequentially after another, with reference to future events and in the context of actions where there is no specific time frame in view.

(3.95) begati=fe ta-ra=a na **inefe** rasi=ka
garden=IRSEQ 1INC-S-go=FUT then tomorrow=TP

**ta-ra** buuti=e ta-siye
1INC-S-go island=LOC 1INCS-bake.3PLO
*We’ll go to the garden then tomorrow let’s go and picnic on the island.*
He'll blow three blasts [on the conch] then they'll start wailing.

3.2.7.5  Causal

3.2.7.5.1  /nenso/ 'therefore'
/nenso/ derives from the demonstrative /nen/ with the referential case-marking enclitic /=so/ and is used to encode result in a reason-result clause sequence. Although it may usually be accurately glossed with the meaning therefore and is treated here as a conjunction coordinating two clauses, its derivation from the demonstrative indicates that is more properly to be regarded as nominalising the clause it attaches to and forming a subordinate clause with referential case-marking.

I waited to no avail so I'm writing again.

It may encode both realised and unrealised results:

3.2.7.5.2  /watika/ 'because'
The conjunction /watika/ because derives from the noun /wati/ base, source with the topic marker /=ka/. As reason-result is the unmarked clausal order for expressing logical relations, /watika/ occurs with much less frequency, and usually when the reason is receiving particular focus.
They forbid that [sleeping around] to her, because they've already chosen her husband.

3.2.7.6 Negation markers

The following morphemes are all used in various contexts to express negation. Usage of the discontinuous morpheme /isa...=ka/ and the negative imperative /an/ will be discussed at greater length below in the sections dealing with clause negation (6.3) and commands and prohibitions (6.6) respectively.

3.2.7.6.1 Negative predicate /keisi/

The negative interjection /keisi/ no occurs both as a negative response to polar questions and operates at phrase level to negate noun phrases. It may host topic and focus markers, a full range of case-marking enclitics and tense/aspect markers. When negating a noun phrase with plural sense, it may host the plural enclitic(s) /=a=ri/. With the exception of its use in polar questions therefore, it behaves syntactically and morphologically very similarly to an adjectival noun.

One old woman was a widow and she had no children.

If that isn't done, later he'll take you away...

3.2.7.6.2 Clause negator /isa =ka/

The discontinuous morpheme /isa...=ka/, often realised in spoken form as /sa...ka/ is used to negate propositions at clause level.

It's not bad
They didn’t cut it.

3.2.7.6.3 Negative imperative /an/
The negative imperative /an/ don’t is used at clause level to negate prohibitions.

Don’t sit near them.

3.2.7.7 Interjectives
A number of interjections have been identified which encode surprise, grief, empathy or some other emotional response.

The following encode surprise at hearing new or unexpected information, often along with some disbelief and consternation:

Ojoove! My goodness!
Atai! No kidding!
Aga! Surely not!

Oh no, it’s a man I’ve speared!

Yikes!

Yikes, a frog jumped up out of the water!

These next two express empathy and may be juxtaposed to form single expression:

Eri! Ooooh!

Poor thing/s! (makase is used when a plural object of sympathy is in view)
The next expression is often used as an attention getting device, and/or a greeting:

**Are!**  
**Hey!**
4 Nouns and noun phrases

4.1 Nouns
These comprise a large class of general nouns, as well as the smaller, closed classes of temporal nouns, human nouns, directly possessed nouns and adjectival nouns which are further described below.

4.1.1 General nouns
The majority of nouns fall into this category. They occur as free forms and are uninflected, though they may undergo morphophonemic processes when clitics are attached. There is generally no marking of plural forms although the occasional exception to this rule has been noted, as in the case of the two following examples, where plural is marked by reduplication on the first syllable:

/gaiti/ dirt /gaigaiti/ dirty things
/dewo/ piece of material/clothing /dedewo/ pieces of clothing, rags

4.1.2 Temporal nouns
These include nouns referencing both relative and absolute times. They are morphologically distinguished from general nouns only in that they are able to host the medial sequential enclitics /=fe/ (irrealis sequential) and /=ate/ (realis sequential), effectively forming a verbless temporal clause. This class includes the relative time markers /weisi/ the day before yesterday, /roro/ yesterday, /afun/ now, today /rasi/ tomorrow /meeta/ the day after tomorrow. It also includes the temporal nouns /rasiran/ morning /raruti/ afternoon, /raddan/ evening, /foin/ night and /kindi/ time. Like general nouns, they are not generally marked for plural, although the exception to this is /kindi/ time, which has a plural form /kinkindi/ times, sometimes.

Depending on whether the relative time expression is of past or future orientation, it will host the realis or irrealis sequential endotic respectively:

(4.1) rasi=fe wakki=e=ka ta-ra=ana
tomorrow=IR.SEQ village=LOC=TP 1INC.S-go=FUT
Tomorrow we’ll go to the village

However, the absolute temporal nouns may host either enclitic:
(4.2) raddam=e=ate nene ti-kan
evening=LOC=RLSEQ OK 3PLS-eat
(It became) evening and then OK they ate.

(4.3) ku-vav-i ku-kan=fe raddan=fe totoruga
2S-cook-3PL.O 2S-eat=IRSEQ evening=IRSEQ meeting

ku- nane
2S-do
Cook and eat and then in the evening have a meeting.

4.1.3 Human nouns
Nouns denoting human beings occur with both singular and plural forms. The two main strategies for plural-formation are:

(a) /-e/ suffixation, with or without an epenthetic /s/:  

/sauki/ woman /sauke/ women 
/fiŋ/ younger sibling /fiŋse/ younger siblings 
/ro/ opposite sex sibling /roise/ opposite sex siblings 
/fũ/ grandparent /fuse/ grandparents 
/faafĩ/ husband /faafe/ husbands 
/yabĩ/ father /yabe/, /yabise/ fathers 
/yau/ mother /yowe/ mothers 
/oote/ elder /oote/ elders 
/susukki/ young woman /susukke/ young women 
/nombi/ namesake /nombe/ namesakes

The following example involves an epenthetic /r/ instead:

/koi/ female friend /koire/ female friends
(b) reduplication of the initial syllable, or, in one case, the second syllable:

/morobi/  girl  /momorobi/  girls
/toma/  male friend  /totoma/  male friends
/kena/  widow  /kekena/  widows
/katu/  widower  /kakatu/  widowers
/benon/  orphan  /bebenon/  orphans
/gamun/  single mother  /gagun/  single mothers
/jiwo/  young man  /jijio/  young men
/rukan/  cousin  /rukakan/  cousins

In a few cases any initial long vowel is reduced and all but the initial syllable replaced with /-kiki/:

/wiivi/  sister-in-law  /wiki/  sisters-in-law
/kawara/  brother-in-law  /kakiki/  brothers-in-law
/fuwaresi/  grandchild  /fukiki/  grandchildren.

In one case, the initial CV reduplicates and receives a /-ki/ suffix:

/ma/  brother-in-law  /mamaki/  brothers-in-law

The plural for /teiti/ boy is a suppletive form /jamen/.

Human nouns that are inherently plural include /janka/ males, /sasingi/ children, /saukitamati/ people and /waunkaru/ young people.

Human nouns, personal names and anthropomorphised general nouns (usually denoting animate creatures) may host the honorific suffix /-be/:

(4.4)  kekeyo-be  i-wawe-n  i-uku
       cockatoo-HON  3SG.S- bring-3SG.O  3SG.S-come.down

The white cockatoo brought it down
As for the young man, she saw him standing there.

In a few cases, this suffix appears to have become fused with the host noun to give a separate meaning, no longer retrievable from the individual morphemes: /katube/ husband, /kenabe/ wife, /koibe/ great-grandmother, /tomabe/ great-grandfather.

The possessive suffix /-a/, which Ross (1984, p. 26) notes as affixing to a noun denoting a possessor is restricted to human nouns and personal names:

\[
\begin{align*}
(4.6) & & \text{ari} & \text{yabi-a} & \text{nombi} \\
& & 3\text{SG.GEN} & \text{father-3SG.PSR} & \text{namesake} \\
& & \text{His father’s namesake}
\end{align*}
\]

Like other nouns, human nouns may host the full range of case-marking suffixes. However, when the locative marker /=e/ or ablative marker /=efe/ attaches to a human referent, the possessive predicate marker /=kam/ always precedes the case marker:

\[
(4.7) & & \text{i-uki} & \text{ari} & \text{sauki-} \text{\textbf{ka}m=e} \\
& & 3\text{SG.S-go.down} & 3\text{SG.GEN} & \text{wife-POSSPRED=LOC} \\
& & \text{He went down to his wife.}
\]

### 4.1.4 Directly possessed nouns

This class comprises inalienable nouns which are obligatorily marked for possession by a series of suffixes indicating the person and number of the possessor.

Table 6: Possessor suffixes on directly possessed nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1EXC</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1INC</td>
<td>-ti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-VV</td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The normal surface representation for the 3rd singular suffix is a lengthened vowel. In the case of four nouns: /jira/ head, /kariya/ ear, /katera/ liver and /marawa/ feeling, the final syllable is apocapated in the 3rd singular to give surface forms /jii/, /katee/ /karii/ and /maraa/.
Inalienable nouns primarily encode body parts, including such non-human body parts as /foyan/ tail and /fefe/ wing, for which the 2nd possessor forms /foyanan/ and /feferan/ have been recorded, but a small number of other nouns have also been identified as belonging to this class: /asa/ name, /fona/ speech, /marawa/ feeling, desire and /wowo/ grave.

When vowel-initial case-marking enclitics are attached, an epenthetic /s/ is inserted immediately after the possessor-marking suffix for 1st singular, 1st plural exclusive, and 2nd and 3rd plural forms, as illustrated in the following paradigm for /tere/ back:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1EXC</td>
<td>tereuse</td>
<td>terense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/tere-u=e/ back-1SG.PSR=LOC behind me</td>
<td>/tere-m=e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1INC</td>
<td></td>
<td>terete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/tere-ti=e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>tereme</td>
<td>terense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/tere-m=e/</td>
<td>/tere-m=e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>terere</td>
<td>tereise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/tere-e=e/</td>
<td>/tere-i=e/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-body part locations which also form part of this class include /nuka/ middle /kakko/ underneath /tafa/ top and /wowo/ topside:

(4.8) nuka-i=e tamatan teiti=na i-vasus-en  
middle-3PL.PSR=LOC human boy=FOC 3SG.S-give.birth-3SG.O  
In their (i.e. the litter of pigs) midst, it gave birth to a human boy.

(4.9) kaa tafa-m=e gugugi-en=anan  
canoe top-2PSR=LOC sink-3SG.S=FUT  
...the canoe will capsize on top of you.
4.1.5 Adjectival nouns

Adjectival nouns do not have a constellation of features associated with them semantically, but rather express a single basic feature that is an abstract quality. They are treated here as a subclass of noun on the basis of their conformity with the definition offered by Ross of an adjectival noun as ‘a subclass of noun whose members (i) serve as modifier of a noun and (ii) have the predicate syntax of a noun.’ (1998, p. 97).

Syntactically Maisin adjectival nouns resemble general nouns in that they can serve as predicates and function as the head of a noun phrase, can fill the slots both of possessor and of the possessed noun in a possessive noun phrase, and can be modified by other adjectival nouns and by quantifiers. Unlike general nouns, however, they follow, rather than precede the noun that they modify.

Morphologically they differ from general nouns in that they may host plural enclitics, which resemble in form the plural object markers on many transitive verbs.

Adjectival nouns may function:

a. attributively as modifiers of nouns in modified NP’s:

(4.10) 
| morobi | ratti |
| girl   | small |

*a small girl*

(4.11)  
| vaa | waun | ti-wi-wi-n |
| house | new | 3PLS-CONT-build-3SG.O |

*They’re building a new house.*

b. as the predicates of topics:

(4.12)  
| vaa=ka | nombo |
| house=TP | large |

*The house is large.*

c. as heads of noun phrases:

(4.13)  
| nombo=ka | a=kam, raati=ka e=kam |
| large=TP | 1SG.PRO=POSSPRED small=TP2SG.PRO=POSSPRED |

*The big one’s mine, the small one’s yours.*
As the head of a noun phrase, an adjectival noun may modify and replace a noun lost through ellipsis, as in the above example or it may function as a substantive in its own right:

(4.14)  
ari  sii=ka 
3SG.GEN  bad=TP  
*The bad thing about it is... (lit. its badness is...)*

(4.15)  
mati  ari  vavatta=ka  timosa 
dead  3SG.GEN  heavy/heaviness=TP  finished  
*The hard/heavy part of the death is finished.*

Like human nouns, adjectival nouns have plural forms, and the primary strategy for plural formation is the attaching of plural enclitic /=(Ca)ri/ to the noun. (An exception is /nombowi/ where the rounded final vowel of /nombo/ gives rise to/=wi/ instead. If the word has a lengthened segment, it is shortened when the suffix is added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/sii/</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>/sisari/</td>
<td>/ratti/ small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/tuufa/</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>/tufari/</td>
<td>/mosse/ long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/muu/</td>
<td>red, ripe</td>
<td>/murari/</td>
<td>/wenna/ strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following two adjectival nouns form the plural by suffixation of /-e/ and /-eri/ respectively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/raati/</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bejji/</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjectival nouns /tauban/ *good* and /boresi/ *good/beautiful* share a suppletive plural form /boregi/. In most of the attested instances of /boresi/, it precedes the noun it modifies and has the surface form /boresa/, and may be analysed as the adjectival noun with the possessive suffix /-a/, which is otherwise restricted to human nouns.

(4.16)  
ai=ro  boresi-a  sauki 
3SG.PRO=ETP  loveliness-3SG.PSR  woman  
*She is a lovely woman.*
/airon/ old frequently occurs in a similar construction, but using the genitive pronoun, rather than the possessive suffix:

(4.17) airom ari kindi
      old 3SG.GEN time
      olden times/long ago

Plural marking may optionally be omitted from the adjectival noun if plurality is indicated elsewhere in the noun phrase, for example by the presence of a quantifier:

(4.18) tamati ratti sandei nen ei=ka ti-raro
      man old two DEM 3PL.PRO=TP 3PL.S-fight
      Those two old men, they fought.

(4.19) kayan vaa waun sinati
      school house new three
      Three new classrooms

(4.20) jamen ratti=ri seseka
      boys small=PL all
      All the small boys

Adjectival nouns so far recorded are listed below, with their plural forms, and according to the semantic types associated with adjectival forms (Dixon 2004:3)

1. Dimension

   bejji      bejjeri       large (one)
   mosse      moseri        length, long (one)
   nombo      nombowi      size, big (one)
   ratti      raate         small (one)
   ratti      ratiri        small (one)
   tuufa      tufari        shortness/short (one)
2. Age

airom airoma old (one)
rora rorari elder
waun wauna newness, new (one)
ratti ratiri old (person)

3. Value

boresi boregi loveliness/lovely
tauban boregi goodness/good (one)
sii sisari badness, bad (one)
faya fayari produce, meaning, reality
moturam moturami truth, true

4. Colour

foe foeya white (one)
gambubi gambuba/gambubari black (one)
muu murari red/ripe (one)
gabo gaborari yellow (one)

5. Physical property/human propensity

radu radua wetness, wet (one)
mamasasa mamasari dryness, dry (one)
vavatta vavattari weight, heavy (one)
ffe feferi lightness/easiness
wenna       wenari       hardness, hard (one)
ano          anori         power, powerful (one)
kaveve      kaveveri       softness/kindness

4.1.5.1 Adjectivaliser /fafusi/
The adjectival morpheme /fafusi/ , best glossed as ‘characterised by’ may follow any noun or nominalised verb stem to form an adjectival phrase. When modifying a plural referent, it hosts the plural enclitic /=ari/ to give the surface form /fafusari/:

(4.21) ei=ka     buro     fafusi=ari
3PL.PRO=TP work     ADJ=PL
They are hard-working.

This is a fully productive process with no apparent restriction on stems which may precede the adjectival morpheme. The following list demonstrates a few of the many attested instances:

/rature fafusi/       deceive ADJ l    ying, deceptive
/burama fafusi/       goods ADJ        wealthy
/kasan fafusi/         knowledge ADJ     clever
/fona fafusi/          voice    ADJ    talkative
/kan fafusi/           eat ADJ         greedy

Like adjectival nouns, nouns to which this adjectival morpheme is attached may function as predicates and as the heads of noun phrases:

(4.22) afun     karu    waun=kadagari    fafusi=ari
now  grow.up  new=TP lazy     ADJ=PL
Today the young people are lazy.

(4.23) burama    fafusi=ka     buran   ari    sissi   naniti
wealth     ADJ=TP    bush    3SG.GEN flower like
e-kisiran=fe
3SG.S- shine=IRSEQ
The rich (man) will be beautiful like a bush flower and then....

When in attributive function, there appears to be some flexibility in terms of whether they precede or follow the nouns they modify:

(4.24) tamati saraman \textbf{fafusi}=ari nen=e ti=ra
man good.thinking ADJ=PL DEM=LOC 3PL.S-go
The clever men went there.

(4.25) burama \textbf{fafusi} tamati nen=ro i-mati
wealth ADJ man DEM=ETP 3SG.S-die
The rich man himself died.

4.2 Noun phrase

The noun phrase consists minimally, of a head, which slot is usually filled by a noun or a verb stem.

Optional pre-head constituents include a genitive NP and a specifier consisting of another noun or of a nominalised verb stem.

Optional post-head constituents include: a modifier phrase of one or two adjectival nouns, a quantifier or numeral and a demonstrative clitic. A relative clause may also fill the modifier slot in the NP (See 7.4.3 Relative clauses).

(Genitive NP) (Specifier) Head (Modifier) (Modifier NP) (Quantifier) (Demonstrative)

(4.26) teiti raat i ite nenka
boy small one DEM=TP
That other small boy

(4.27) kayan vaa waun sandei
school house new two
Two new classrooms

4.2.2 Compound nouns

The head of a noun phrase may be a compound noun formed by a sequence of two root morphemes. This sequence may be distinguished from a phrase by the fact that it attracts a
single primary stress, and that the two roots may not normally be interrupted by any other item. Compound nouns include the following kinds of sequences:

4.2.2.1 Noun + Noun
These comprise a sequence of two noun roots, whereby the first noun in some way modifies the second, (in contrast to the modifier phrase, where the head noun precedes the adjectival noun which modifies it.) Where directly possessed nouns are involved, as in (4.28) b. and c. below, the first noun may be inflected to indicate possessor.

(4.28) a. gere wuwuji b. ke-e munju c. marawa vitta
crab centipede leg-3SG.PSR egg heart/feeling pain

This category also includes compounds referencing particular groups or sets, especially those comprising human members:

(4.29) a. jamen momorobi b. sauki tamati c. roise siname
boys girls woman man siblings friends
children people friends & relations

4.2.2.2 Verb + Noun
In these instances, a nominalised verb stem precedes and modifies the head noun which follows it. This is a highly productive process, where the meaning is usually transparent from the components being combined and new items can easily be added to the lexicon.

(4.30) a. kuma vaa b. bagi tamati c. kafolo kooti
buy house steal man prohibit talk
store thief law

4.2.2.3 Noun + Verb
This category involves sequences of a noun followed by a nominalised verb stem, with third plural object marking in the case of transitive verbs. The noun generally functions as an incorporated object of the following verb. These compounds frequently, but not exclusively, reference the object or instrument used for the action of the verb.
(4.31)  
a. gameti feri  
paint  throw  
index finger (used for applying face paint)  
b. fake  
hand  hold  
handrail  
c. kesa  teri  
hair  put  
hat  
d. yaa  kite  
hour  see  
clock/watch  
e. kooti  gugubi  
message  speak  
speech  

4.2.2.4  

4.2.2.5 Verb + Verb  
A small number of compound nouns comprise two verb stems.  

(4.32)  a. kanyan  
eat.chew  
feasting  
b. vekkiwa  
dig.plant  
gardening  

4.2.3  Possessive noun phrase  
The possessive NP normally comprises the structure: (NP) Genitive pronoun  possessed N  

(4.33)  
au  ifa  bejji  
1SG GEN  knife  large  
My large knife  

(4.34)  
Tamati  ite  ari  begati  
man  one  3SG GEN  garden  
Another man's garden  

With human possessors only, the possessive NP may take the form of a possessor noun with the possessive suffix /-a/, followed by the possessum:  

(4.35)  
ari  sauki-a  jobi=ka  
3SG GEN  wife-POS  price=TP  
His wife's bride price  

As in the above example, it is not uncommon for one possessive noun phrase to be embedded within another noun phrase:
(4.36) [[en] rai ari] kindi=ka
2PL.GEN coming 3SG.GEN time=TP

As for your return date...

4.2.4 Appositional noun phrase
An appositional noun phrase consists of a noun phrase juxtaposed with another noun phrase which has an identical referent or referents.

NP NP (where NP=NP)

(4.37) Ei ruwan=ka yaisen ei=ro kumuti
3P.GEN food=TP DUAL.PRO 3P.PRO-ETP charcoal

kora ti-kai-kai-n ti-tauke
LIMIT 3P.S-CONT-eat-SS.SIM 3P.S-stay

The two of them, they just stayed eating charcoal for their food.

(4.38) an Maisin
1EXC.PRO Maisin

We Maisin people

4.2.5 ‘Headless’ noun phrase
Quantifiers and modifiers may take the place of a head noun in a noun phrase. In such cases the missing head noun is usually recoverable from context:

(4.39) tauri=ka te-e
others=TP 3PL.S-go

Others went.

(4.40) an nombow-i=en te-ef=ate
1EXC.GEN big-PL=AGT 3PL.S-say=RL.SEQ

Our big ones (leaders) told us then...
4.2.6 Modifier noun phrase

ADJN (ADJN)

A modifier noun phrase typically consists of an adjectival noun, optionally followed by another adjectival noun which carries intensifying force. It may also comprise a nominal followed by the adjectival morpheme /fafusi/ described above (4.1.5.1).

(4.41) a.  sìi moturan
       bad true
       really bad

   b.  nombo bejji
       large big
       enormous

   c.  ratti ratti
       small little
       tiny

   d.  foe vavatta
       white heavy
       really white

Sequences of more than one modifier phrase within a noun phrase occur only rarely. Insofar as any generalisations can be made about their ordering, modifiers denoting colour appear to precede dimensional properties. There are no instances of more than two modifiers modifying the head within a single noun phrase.

(4.42) kamora gambubaraate sandei
       stone/money black-PL small-PL two
       Two small copper coins

(4.43) umo foe ratti
       pigeon white small
       A small white pigeon

4.2.7 Pronominally headed noun phrase

A pronominally headed noun phrase consists of a head, in the form of a personal pronoun, usually followed by a topic or focus marker, or by the delimiter /kora/. Occasionally a noun
phrase may comprise the pronoun alone with no other marking as in example (3.6) above, but this is rare.

(4.44) ei=ka       afun     rasiram=e     ti-ra  
3PL.PRO=TP   now       morning=LOC   3PL.S-go  
They left this morning.

(4.45) ai         kora     i-ra  
3SG.PRO   only     3SG.S-go  
She alone went.

4.2.8 Co-ordinate and serial noun phrases
Two or more noun phrases may be coordinated in one of the following ways:

4.2.8.1 Juxtaposition
One strategy comprises simple juxtaposition of the noun phrases in question. This is particularly common in the case of pairs of noun phrases which are regularly associated with each other to the point of being regarded as a single semantic unit.

(4.46) saul fi a fam jamen momor bi kee fakee  
husband wife boys girls leg arm  
marr ied couple children limbs

It may also be used to conjoin noun phrases in a serial construction:

(4.47) wakki tamata seseka ganan, goji, bere, ifa ti-wawe-n  
village people all spear club axe knife 3PL.S-get-SS.SIM  
All the village men got their spears, clubs, axes and knives.

The co-ordinating conjunction /wanno/ may optionally occur between conjoined noun phrases, most commonly before the last item in a serial list.

(4.48) iva imangi wanno damun nen=en mana=ka  
net derris.root and torch DEM=AGT fish=TP  

ti-wawe=me  
3PL.S-get=PAST

Nets, derris root and lighted coconut leaf torches, that’s how they used to fish.
My wife, my son and my daughter send their greetings to you.

4.2.8.2 Accompaniment marker /=ton/
The case-marking enclitic /=ton/ may be affixed to one or more of the conjoined items. Again, the conjunction /wanno/ may optionally occur as well.

(4.50)  a-kute-ren   a-re-regeti,     e=ton   ai
1SG.S-greet-1/2.0  1SG.S-CONT-do.properly  2SG.PRO=ACMP 2SG.GEN
yo      ai      yabi  wanno  ai  ro=e
mother  2SG.GEN  father  and  2SG.GEN sibling=PL

sinan=e=ton
friend=PL=ACMP

I send my warmest greetings to you, your father, your mother and your family and friends.

A pronominally headed NP, when conjoined with another NP, always hosts the accompaniment marker:

(4.51)  ai=ton   wanno  Magdalen  ei=na  ti-mati
3SG.PRO=ACMP  Magdalen  3PL.PRO=FOC  3PL.S-die
She and Magdalen, they’re the ones who died.

4.2.8.3 Instrumental marker /=en/
The agent/instrument case-marking enclitic /=en/ may be used to coordinate two animate (usually human) noun phrases when functioning as the subject of the clause:

(4.52)  tamati  nen=ka  ari  sauki=en  begati=e  ti-ra
man  DEM=TP  3SG.GEN wife=AGT  garden=LOC  3PL.S-go
The man and his wife went to the garden.

(4.53)  au  rawa  sauki  au  rawa  tamati=en
1SG.GEN  in-law  woman  1SG.GEN in-law  man

te-kute-ren
3PL.S-greet-1/2.0
My parents-in-law send you their greetings.
### 4.2.9 Case-marking on noun phrases

All of the case-marking enclitics listed in section 3.2.6.1 may be attached to noun phrases to form case-marked phrases. The case marker always attaches to the last item of the noun phrase but precedes any topic or focus marking. Case markers are mutually exclusive, such that a single noun phrase cannot host more than one case-marking enclitic. The range of uses of the various case-markers is illustrated in the examples below.

#### 4.2.9.1 Locative

The locative marker /e/ includes adessive, inessive and allative functions. It is used to indicate location in space, a point in past time, or a goal towards which movement is directed.

(4.54) tamati nen=ka ari sauki=en begati=e ti-ra
       man DEM=TP 3SG.GEN wife=AGT garden=LOC 3PL.S-go

*That man went with his wife to the garden.*

(4.55) Maume wakki=e kora mati sandei ti-nane.
       Maume village=LOC only death two 3PLS-do

*Only in Maume village there were two deaths.*

(4.56) ei=ka afun rasiram=e ti-ra
       3PL.PRO=TP now morning=LOC 3PLS-go

*They left this morning.*

#### 4.2.9.2 Ablative

The ablative marker /e/ marks source or origin. Historically, it may originate from a combination of the locative marker /e/ and irrealis sequential marker /e/, as noted by Ross (1996, p. 195). Most commonly it marks the point from which an action originates, usually a person or place:

(4.57) isa birin en=kam=e fpe=ka
       NEG fast 2PL.PRO=POSSPRED=ABL paper=TP

       a-wawe=ka
       1SG.S-get.3SG.O=NEG

*I haven’t quickly received a letter from you.*
However, it may also reference more abstract states:

(4.58) \[ \text{ei tatami}=\text{efe} \text{ i-nane jebuga-ten} \]
3PL.GEN sickness=ABL 3SG.S-do heal-3PL.S

*He made them recover from their sicknesses.*

Like the locative marker, it may mark origin in time as well as space:

(4.59) \[ \text{yaa nuka yove}=\text{efe} \text{ gumema}=\text{ka} \text{ ti-rauku}=\text{ana} \]
sun middle side=ABL wake=TP 3PL.S-come.out=FUT

*From around midday, they'll gather for the wake.*

### 4.2.9.3 Referential

The referential\(^6\) marker */=so/* *to, for, about,* has a wide range of usage. It includes the concepts of beneficiary/recipient.

(4.60) \[ \text{ati morobi in}=\text{ka} \text{ ai}=\text{so} \]
1INC.GEN daughter DEM=TP 3PL.PRO=REF

ta-me-me-n
1INC.S-CONT-give-3SG.O

*We’re giving him our daughter.*

(4.61) \[ \text{a}=\text{so} \text{ nen}=\text{e} \text{ ko-rakke-ri ti-kite} \]
1SG.PRO=REF DEM=LOC 2S-show-3PL.O 3PL.S-see.3PL.O

ti-kuma
3PL.S-buy

*Show them there for me, so people will see them and buy them.*

It is routinely used with most verbs of speaking, thinking, fearing, etc to indicate the goal:

(4.62) \[ \text{ari yei-e}=\text{ka} \text{ ai}=\text{so} \text{ ti-bewusi-n ti-ra} \]
3SG.GEN sibling-PL=TP3SG.PRO=REF 3PL.S-be.cross-SS.SIM 3PL.S-go

*His brothers were cross with him as they went (home) together.*

---

\(^6\) Ross’s terminology (1984:30f) has been retained here for convenience and ease of comparison.
(4.63) wakki=so isa viya ku-mon-mon=ka
village=REF NEG little 2S-CONT-think=NEG
You’re thinking of the village a lot.

With a noun, or with a verb stem in a nominalised clause, it frequently indicates purpose:

(4.64) kaa fifi=so tauri=ka begati=e ti-ra=anan
tree chop=REF others=TP garden=LOC 3PL.S-go=FUT
Others will go to the garden to chop wood.

(4.65) seseka baya=so iko=e ti-rau
all sago=REF sago.swamp=LOC 3PL.S-go.out
They all went off to the sago swamps to make sago.

With the demonstrative marker /nen/ that and the interrogative /avan/ what, it gives the forms /nenso/ therefore and /avanso/ why, and is used to express cause or reason.

4.2.9.4 Accompaniment
The accompaniment marker /=ton/ is regularly used to used to co-ordinate noun phrases (see section 4.2.8.2 above).

It also serves to indicate possession

(4.66) tamati mata=ton nen=en i-if
man eye=ACMP DEM=AGT 3SG.S-say
The man who had eyes (i.e. the sighted man) said, “…

As its name suggests, it is often used to reference an item or attitude that accompanies an action:

(4.67) dombon=ton a-kiru-n i-moya ta-kan
cococonut=ACMP 1SG.S-squeeze-3SG.O 3SG.S-cooked 1INC.S-eat
I’ll squeeze it together with the coconut and when it’s cooked we’ll eat.

(4.68) Kefi=ka riri=ton i-toki=me
Kefi=TP rejoicing=ACMP 3SG.S-sit=PAST
Kefi sat there happily.
In the case of negative existential clauses, /=ton/ appears to be obligatorily attached to the noun phrase being negated, although it would not normally be present in the positive counterpart of the same clause:

\[(4.69)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{ai=kam=e=ka} \\
3\text{SG.PRO=POSS.PRED=LOC=TP} \\
\text{N} \\
\text{famine=ACMP=NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

There won’t be any shortage of food for him.

\[(4.70)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{isa} \\
\text{NEG} \\
\text{kefe=ton=ka} \\
\text{place=ACMP=NEG} \\
\end{array}
\]

There’s no room.

**4.2.9.5 Instrument**

The use of the instrument marker /=en/ to co-ordinate two animate noun phrases in subject role has already been referred to in Section 42.8.3 of this chapter. Its more prototypical uses are to mark agent subject in a clause,

\[(4.71)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{buram=e} \\
\text{bush=LOC} \\
\text{siko=en} \\
\text{pig=AGT} \\
\text{i-vasus-i} \\
\text{3SG.S-give.birth-3PL.O} \\
\end{array}
\]

In the bush, a pig gave birth to a litter.

\[(4.72)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{yei} \\
\text{older.sibling} \\
\text{e=en} \\
\text{2SG.PRO=AGT} \\
\text{ko-uki} \\
\text{2S-go.down} \\
\text{ku-wawe=ate} \\
\text{2S-get.3PL.O=RL.SEQ} \\
\end{array}
\]

Sister, you go down and get it.

and to mark the instrument used for an action:

\[(4.73)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{ari} \\
\text{3SG.GEN} \\
\text{embobi=en} \\
\text{tapa.skirt=AGT} \\
\text{funai-kayami} \\
\text{skin 3SG.S-wipe} \\
\end{array}
\]

She wiped his skin with her skirt.

\[(4.74)\]
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{ketu=e} \\
\text{neck=LOC} \\
\text{ifa=en} \\
\text{knife=AGT} \\
\text{a-ta=aka} \\
\text{1SG.S-hit=POT} \\
\text{a-nane} \\
\text{1SG.S-do} \\
\end{array}
\]

I was about to hit it on the neck with my knife.

It also marks nouns denoting a natural force such as ‘wind’, ‘rain’, ‘clouds’ etc, when they are functioning as subjects of their sentences. In these cases the word order is usually OSV: Object Subject=en Verb:
The use of /en/ to mark agent subject is not obligatory and Ross has suggested (1984, p. 67) that at discourse level it serves to mark focus for subjects, much as /=na/ does for objects. He concedes that the evidence for this is largely an ‘argument from silence’ i.e. the lack of attested examples of instrument-marked subjects also functioning as topics. While our own data do include instances of noun phrases which exhibit both instrument and topic-marking, all those so far identified reference the noun in the semantic role of instrument rather than as agent, so Ross’s suggestion remains feasible and persuasive. If true, it would also be evidence of a partial ergative system within the Maisin structure, at least where assignment of focus is concerned, since the focus-marking enclitic /=na/ is used solely with patient objects and undergoer subjects, while /=en/ is reserved for indicating focus on agent subjects, as in the following two examples:

(4.76)

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
\text{a=ro} & \text{en} & \text{yabi} & \text{a=en} & \text{en} \\
1\text{SG.PRO=ETP} & 2\text{PL GEN} & \text{father} & 1\text{SG.PRO=AGT} & 2\text{PL GEN} \\
\text{pepa} & \text{a-yam-i} \\
\text{paper} & \text{1SG.S-write-3PLO} \\
\end{array}
\]

It’s me your father, writing this letter to you.

(4.77)

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{kee} & \text{fakee=ka} & \text{ka-rot-i=ate} & \text{a=en} & \text{mataa=ka} \\
\text{leg} & \text{arm=TP} & 1\text{EXC.S-tie-3PL.O=RLSEQ} & 1\text{SG.PRO=AGT} & \text{first=TP} \\
\text{a-faf-si-n} & \text{ka-rai} \\
\text{1SG.S-carry-3SG.O-SS.SIM} & 1\text{EXC.S-come} \\
\end{array}
\]

We tied (the pig’s) legs up and I was the one who took the first turn carrying it back.
5 Verbs and verb phrases

5.1 Verbs
Most Maisin verbs consist of a verb stem with a prefix marking subject person and number and suffixes marking object person and number. A small, closed class of intransitive verbs mark subject by suffixation. Progressive/continuous aspect is marked by reduplication within the verb stem, while other tense/aspect markers occupy the slot immediately following the object suffixes in the verb word. These fall into two categories, medial and final tense/aspect markers. Medial verb forms relate the verb in question to a following verb, while final verbs carry tense/aspect marking clitics which express the tense/aspect of the whole predicate and which are usually clause final.

5.1.1 Subject prefixes
The basic subject marking prefixes attaching to Maisin verb stems are set out in the following table:

Table 7 Subject Prefixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st exc</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>ka-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st inc</td>
<td>ta-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>ku-</td>
<td>ku-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>i-</td>
<td>ti-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The manner in which these prefixes combine with verb stems, however, gives rise to three different surface forms, and it is convenient to categorise Maisin verb stems which mark subject by prefixation into three separate classes, according to these different morphophonemic processes:

5.1.1.1 Class 1: Consonant-initial stems
Since all the verb stems which host these prefixes are consonant-initial, and there is no apparent other common feature that characterises them, we have adopted Ross’s terminology for this class (1984, p. 36), labelling it as consonant-initial. It should be noted,
however, that this is potentially misleading since the converse does not apply, i.e. not all
consonant-initial stems necessarily belong to this class.

\begin{align*}
(5.1) & \quad \text{aramara} & \text{a-ramara} & \text{I got up} \\
& \quad \text{kuramara} & \text{ku-ramara} & \text{you got up} \\
& \quad \text{iramara} & \text{i-ramara} & \text{s/he got up} \\
& \quad \text{karamara} & \text{ka-ramara} & \text{we(exc) got up} \\
& \quad \text{taramara} & \text{ta-ramara} & \text{we(inc) got up} \\
& \quad \text{tiramara} & \text{ti-ramara} & \text{they got up}
\end{align*}

\textbf{5.1.1.2 Class 2: Vowel-initial stems}

Again, the nomenclature for this class carries some limitations, and is adopted here for
c Convenience rather than strict accuracy. While all vowel-initial verb stems belong to this
class, it is not restricted to them, and includes a wide variety of consonant-initial stems as
well, as demonstrated below.

This class of stems hosts the following subject prefixes:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \textbf{Singular} & \textbf{Plural} \\
\hline
1 Exc & a- & ka- \\
1 Inc & & ta- \\
2 & ko- & ko- \\
3 & e- & te- \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Subject prefixes with vowel lowering}
\end{table}

The subject prefixes in this class have undergone a process of vowel-lowering such that \textit{ku-},
\textit{i-} and \textit{ti-} become \textit{ko-}, \textit{e-} and \textit{te-} respectively. The first person forms, which do not involve
high vowels, remain unchanged. According to Ross (1984, p. 38), this process applies to
vowel-initial stems, and to certain /k/-initial stems, and many verbs in this class do fall into
one or other of those categories:
(5.2) /uki/ /kute/ /kira/ /ise/
/e-uki/ /ko-kute/ /te-kira/ /ko-ise/
3SG.S-go.down 2S-ask 3SG.S-search 2S-stand

He went down. You asked. They searched. You stood.

However, examples can be found of verb-stems participating in this process which begin with almost every consonant in the Maisin inventory. (/d/ and /w/ alone are not represented):

(5.3) /sinasi/ /timowe/ /yavi/ /rakkeri/
/e-sinasi/ /ko-timowe-n/ /te-yavi/ /e-rakke-ri/
3SG.S-joke 2S-believe-3SG.O 3PL.S-read 3SG.S-show-3PL.O

He joked. You believed him. They read. He showed them.

5.1.1.3 Class 3: k-initial stems
All of the stems in this class are k-initial, but, as with the consonant-initial stem class, not all k-initial stems belong to this class. These stems undergo a more complex set of changes, according to the following sequence, which has been helpfully described in greater detail by Ross (Ross, 1984:36f) and is summarised below:

1. deletion of the initial /k/ of the verb stem after /a/ and /u/, followed by

2. loss of the initial vowel of the verb stem where it is identical with that of the subject prefix

3. labialisation of the resulting /kuV/ sequence to give /kwV/

Since the /k/-deletion occurs only after prefix vowels /a/ and /u/, not /i/, these processes affect 1st and 2nd person forms of the verb only and give rise to paradigms such as the following:
Once again, Ross’s application of the process solely to certain /ka- and /ki- initial stems needs to be widened to include a fuller range of /k- initial stems. All /ke- initial stems so far identified belong to this class, as well as some /ku- initial stems in common use, and a number of /ko- initial stems.

This last is of particular interest in that, although Ross notes the dearth of /V+o/ sequences in Maisin because there are no /o/- initial verb stems (Ross, 1984:19), the /k/-deletion process gives rise to such an otherwise rare sequence, when /ko/-initial verb stems combine with first person subject markers. Although several /ko/- initial stems have been identified, however, the only attested example of such a sequence in the current data is

(5.4)  
isa ta-(k)ovi=anan=ka  
NEG 1INC.S-deny=FUT=NEG  
We won’t deny it.

Some examples of /ke- and /ku/- initial stems which undergo this process include the following:

(5.5) /kefotti/ shut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/kefotti</th>
<th>/kwefotti</th>
<th>/ikefotti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/a-kefot-si/</td>
<td>/ku-kefot-si/</td>
<td>/i-kefot-si/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG.S-shut-3SG.O</td>
<td>2.S-shut-3SG.O</td>
<td>3SG.S-shut-3SG.O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I shut it. You shut it. He shut it
(5.6) /kwemotte/ straighten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[amotteri]</th>
<th>[kwemotteri]</th>
<th>[ikemotteri]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/a-motte-ri/</td>
<td>/ku-kemotte-ri/</td>
<td>/i-kemotte-ri/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG.S-straighten-3PL.O</td>
<td>2.S-straighten-3PL.O</td>
<td>3SG.S-straighten-3PL.O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I straightened them. You straightened them. He straightened them.

In the case of /ku/-initial verb stems, the /k/-deletion results in a /ku-u/ sequence in 2nd person forms, which then becomes /ku/ through the vowel reduction rule, so the final process of labialisation does not take place:

(5.7) /kusi/ leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[ausiŋ]</th>
<th>[kusiŋ]</th>
<th>[ikusiŋ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/a-kusi-n/</td>
<td>/ku-kusi-n/</td>
<td>/i-kusi-n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG.S-leave-3SG.O</td>
<td>2.S-leave-3SG.O</td>
<td>3SG.S-leave-3SG.O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I left him. You left him. She left him.

(5.8) /kuma/ buy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[kaumasi]</th>
<th>[kumasi]</th>
<th>[tikumasi]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ka-kuma-si/</td>
<td>/ku-kuma-si/</td>
<td>/ti-kuma-si/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1EXC.S-buy-3SG.O</td>
<td>2.S-buy-3SG.O</td>
<td>3PL.O-buy-3SG.O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We bought it. You bought it. They bought it.

5.1.2 Verbs with subject-marking by suffixation

A closed class of intransitive verbs exists in Maisin which behave differently from other verbs in terms of their subject marking. In the case of these verbs, subject person and number is marked by suffixation on the verb stem, rather than the normal prefixation. The suffixes show some formal resemblance to the subject prefixes, as the following table indicates:

Table 9 Subject-marking suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 exc</td>
<td>-an</td>
<td>-kan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 inc</td>
<td>-tan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-kon</td>
<td>-kon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-en</td>
<td>-ten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

93
(5.9)  kaa  sekara=e  jeri-en
    canoe  reef=LOC  get.stuck-3SG.S
    The canoe got stuck on the reef.

(5.10)  Japan=ka  ti-va  nen=e  arore  toru-kan
    Japan=TP  3PLS-go.up  DEM=LOC  together  collide-1EXC.S
    The Japanese went up and we came up against each other there.

Tense and aspect marking enclitics follow the subject marking on the verb:

(5.11)  kaa  tafa-m=e  gugugi-en-anan
    canoe  top-2.PSR=LOC  sink-3SG.S=FUT
    (Your) canoe will sink on top of you.

(5.12)  te-ifi  mui-en-aka
    3PLS-say  be.quiet-3SG.S=POT
    They told him to be quiet.

No examples have yet been attested of continuous aspect reduplication occurring with this class of verb.

Some of the verb stems in this class may also occur in nominalised form with the verb /nane/ do to form a verb phrase that is semantically equivalent to the suffixed verb form:

(5.13)  sirorari  ti-nane  sirorari-ten
    happening  3PLS-do  happen-3PLS
    They came into being.

(5.14)  jebuga  ti-nane  jebuga-ten
    healing  3PLS-do  heal-3PLS
    They became well/recovered.

To date, nearly 50 verbs have been identified as belonging to this class, and many of those appear to be cognate with items in the neighbouring non-Austronesian languages, Korafe
and Baruga. Verbs so far recorded are listed below, with 3rd singular subject markers attached. Where known, Korafe cognates are also listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maisin verb</th>
<th>Korafe cognate form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buruwen</td>
<td>flare up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buwen</td>
<td>jump up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dayen</td>
<td>drip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>didiyen</td>
<td>become taut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diyen</td>
<td>be full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doliyen</td>
<td>be adjacent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dururen</td>
<td>come to a stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fasiyen</td>
<td>pop up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fauwen</td>
<td>rebound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fesiyen</td>
<td>rain lightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feyen</td>
<td>become light(in weight )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fufufi</td>
<td>become hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fufunowen</td>
<td>shatter, smash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gasayen</td>
<td>pour out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gegegen</td>
<td>crack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gisiyen</td>
<td>move, inch one’s way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gogogen</td>
<td>roll down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gososen</td>
<td>slide together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gossaya</td>
<td>go down (swelling, tide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gugugen</td>
<td>sink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>burughari flare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fasifasighari move up and down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fesighari drip steadily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feghako light weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fufuno crumbs, crumbled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gisighari move along bit by bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gogogoghari plunge down a slope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gosaghari go down, subside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jakiyen</td>
<td>dive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jebugayen</td>
<td>recover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeretayen</td>
<td>be filled in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeriyan</td>
<td>be beached, run aground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jofuwen</td>
<td>bounce off, fall out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joruwen</td>
<td>sprout, come up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jouwen</td>
<td>jump up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kiriyan</td>
<td>bubble up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kokkayen</td>
<td>come into view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kouwen</td>
<td>come up for air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muiyen</td>
<td>be quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarayen</td>
<td>capsize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sariyen</td>
<td>tug, pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sauwen</td>
<td>spring up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sereren</td>
<td>glide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siyen</td>
<td>become bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sikiyen</td>
<td>tighten, fasten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siriren</td>
<td>get straightened out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siorari</td>
<td>come into being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sisisen</td>
<td>be swollen, inflated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumbeiyen</td>
<td>squat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taiyen</td>
<td>become tight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tataten</td>
<td>become rough (of sea)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.1.3 Object suffixes

The underlying forms of the object suffixes are as follows:

Table 10 Object-marking Suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 EXC</td>
<td>-eren/ren</td>
<td>-eren/ren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INC</td>
<td>-ereti/reti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-eren/ren</td>
<td>-eren/ren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-n/-en</td>
<td>-ri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-si</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-wi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-ki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3.1 Third person object marking

Ross (1984, p. 40f) gives a detailed account of the way these suffixes combine with verb stems and the surface forms that result. Two of the 3rd plural object forms listed above, /-ki/ and /-wi/, do not occur in his data. As he notes, there is no clear correlation between third person singular and plural forms, but the following generalisations can be made:

1. Where the verb stem ends in a consonant, the 3rd singular object suffix will be /-si/, and the 3rd plural form will be /-i/.

(5.15) ter tes-si ter-i put

kayam kayan-si kayam-i write

2. Where the 3rd plural object is /-ri/, the 3rd singular will be /-n/.

(Ross 1984:40)

(5.16) rafara rafara-n rafara-ri find

kafoko kafoko-n kafoko-ri forbid
Some counter-evidence has been found to Ross’s suggestion (1984, p. 40) that if a vowel-final stem takes singular /-si/, the plural suffix will be a zero form; /-wi/ is also attested in certain cases:

(5.17)  wata  wata-si  wata-wi  bury
        wamo  wamo-si  wamo-wi  demolish

A small number of verb stems which host the 3rd singular object suffix /-si/ appear to take a plural suffix /-ari/:

(5.18)  watav  watav-si  watav-ari  change
        sasav  sasav-si  sasav-ari  hollow out
        ketav  ketav-si  ketav-ari  sort, sift
        kasinau  kasinau-si/nosi  kasinau-ari  pass over
        kemasa  kemasa-si  kemasa-ari  push aside

Three verb stems have been identified which mark 3rd singular object with the suffix /-en/:

(5.19)  vasusi  vasus-en  vasus-i  give birth
        yogi  yog-en  yog-i  drain
        yomi  yoms-en  yom-i  hide

One instance has been found of a 3rd plural suffix /-ki/:

(5.20)  yau  yausi/yosi  yauki/yoki  pull out

No distinction for number is normally made in the second person subject marking, as the 2nd subject marker /ku-/ may reference singular or plural subject. An exception to this occurs however, in the case of transitive verbs where a plural second person subject, and third singular object are in view. In these situations the plurality of the subject is indicated by plural object marking on the verb, as the following examples illustrate:

(5.21)  ku-ramara  kasimon  ku-yasi-ri  a-vasi
        2S-get.up  door  2S-open-3PL.O  1SG.S-come.up

You(pl) get up and open the door, I’m coming up.
5.1.3.2 First and second person object marking

The first and second person object markers /-eren/, /-ereti/ attach to consonant-final and vowel-final verb stems respectively, with the exception that where a verb stem ends in /r/, the initial /-er/ of the object suffixes is lost:

(5.23) ku-ter-en a-uki
2S-put-1/2.0 1SG.S-go.down
Put me down!

5.1.3.3 Object marking on ditransitive verbs

In the case of semantically ditransitive verbs, Maisin appears to exhibit some flexibility in terms of which argument is referenced by the object-suffix on the verb stem.

/verakke/ show most commonly marks recipient by suffixation and theme by a separate noun phrase:

(5.24) kukun=ka a-rakke-ren
taro=TP 1SG.S-show-1/2.0
I showed you the taro.

(5.25) yeta sinati in=enwowawa sese=na ti-rakke-reti
road three DEM=AGT thing one=FOC 3PL.S-show-1INC.O
These three roads show us one thing.

However, in the following example, the theme receives the object suffix marking as well as pronominal reference within the verb phrase:

(5.26) to=arin en=nu ku-rakke-eren ti-kite-eren
self=PL 2PL.PRO=FOC 2S-show-1/2.0 3PL.S-see-1/2.0
Show yourselves to them, they'll see you

/mei/ give normally references the theme with the object suffix and recipient is either left implicit or indicated by a noun phrase with referential case-marking:
I scraped a coconut (and) gave it to the girls.

We gave him our papers to look at.

He gave us(inc) his skin and then the small boy ate (the man's skin).

Whatever we(inc) ask for, he will give us(inc).

Mother, cut off your breast and give it/me?

It is not yet conclusive what factors govern the choice of argument for object affixation with both /verakke/ and /mei/. However, in all the above examples where the recipient is marked with the object suffix, the recipient is in 1st or 2nd person, i.e. a speech participant. It is possible that this is the motivating factor for according such marking to the recipient rather than to the theme in these instances.
following example, both object suffixes reference the recipients of the teaching, not the material taught. All attested examples of this verb follow this pattern.

(5.32)  

taukiramara... i-katuwatte-ri=ate ti-katuwatte-reti  

behaviour  3SG.S-teach-3PLO=RL.SEQ  3PL.S-teach-1INC.O  

The behaviour he taught them and they taught us(inc).

5.1.4 Continuous aspect reduplication

Continuous or habitual aspect is usually marked by the reduplication of one of the syllables of the verb stem, most commonly the initial syllable, but sometimes the second or third. Some lengthening of the reduplicated syllable often takes place as well.

5.1.4.1 Reduplication of first syllable

5.1.4.1.1 CV-reduplication

The most common form of reduplication in Maisin involves the repetition of the first syllable of the verb stem. Where this is a CV syllable, the vowel is lengthened in the reduplicated syllable:

(5.33)  

/i-bagi/ he stole  /i-baa-bagi/ he’s stealing  

/i-a-kayan-si/ I wrote it  /i-a-kaa-kayan-si/ I’m writing it  

/i-ti-maru/ they set out  /i-ti-maa-maru/ they’re setting out  

In a number of cases where the first syllable of the verb stem is a glide, the contrast in length between the reduplicated syllable and the stem is achieved by a vowel reduction in the stem:

(5.34)  

/tauki/ sit  /i-tau-toki/ he is sitting  

/rau/ go in  /i-rau-ro/ he is going in  

/yauki/ pull out  /i-yau-yoki/ she is pulling out  

/nauwi/ kill  /i-nau-no-si/ he is killing him  

/weisi/ weave  /i-wei-wosi/ she’s weaving  

/mei/ give  /i-mei-me-n/ he’s giving it
Not all verb stems with glides in the first syllable follow this pattern however:

(5.35) /rauku/ come out /a-rauku/ I came out /a-ra-ruku/ I'm coming out.
/baire/ replace /i-baire-si/ he replaced him /-bai-bairesi/ he's replacing him

5.1.4.1.2 CVC-reduplication
Where the first syllable of a verb stem is a CVC sequence, the entire syllable may be reduplicated, resulting in CVCCVC sequence, which is then subject to the nasal assimilation, non-nasal assimilation and non-nasal stopping rules outlined in the previous chapter. There is no lengthening of the vowel in the reduplicated syllable.

(5.36) [imoŋ] /i-mon/ He thought. [imommoŋ] /i-moŋmoŋ/ He's thinking.

In the following three examples, the doubling of the consonant in the reduplicated syllable entails the loss of the geminate consonant in the following syllable, in keeping with the rule that prevents two consecutive syllables with geminate consonants (1984, p. 22).

(5.37) [itessi] /i-ter-si/ He put it. [itettesi] /i-ter-ter-si/ He's putting it.
(5.38) [tikitti] /ti-kit-si/ They saw it. [tikikkiti]/ti-kit-kit-si/ They're seeing it.
(5.39) [aroti] /a-rot-i/ I tied them. [aroddoti]/a-rot-rot-i/ I'm tying them.

Not all verb stems with a CVC sequence are necessarily CVC-reduplicating as the following example illustrates:

(5.40) /yan/ chew /a-yan/ I chewed. /a-yaa-yan/ I'm chewing.

Verb stems containing geminate consonant sequences might be expected to undergo CVC-reduplication but three different reduplication strategies have been identified in these cases and there is no clear motivation for the choice of each. Some undergo partial (CV) reduplication of the first syllable, with vowel lengthening:

(5.41) /radde/pick up /i-radde/ He picked them up. /i-raa-radde/ He's picking them up.

Others undergo CVC-reduplication:


Still others appear to undergo reduplication of the second syllable, but with the transferral of the final consonant of the first syllable to the reduplicated syllable, preserving its length:
(5.43) /kaffari/ jump /i-kaffari/ He jumped. /i-kaf-fari/ He is jumping.
/kibbari/ belt /i-kibban/ He fastened a belt. /i-kib-bab-bari/ He is fastening his belt.

The following example appears to be an anomaly:

(5.44) /toddi/ marry /i-toddi/ She married. /i-tod-doti/ She’s marrying.

5.1.4.1.3 Reduplication by vowel lengthening
With some verb stems, there is no consonantal reduplication, but vowel lengthening takes place in the initial syllable. Ross rightly observes that this occurs almost exclusively in verb stems where there are already two identical syllables in the verb stem. However his conclusion that this is grounded in a Maisin tendency to avoid a sequence of three consecutive identical consonants (1984, p. 22) does not seem to tally with such common and well-attested forms as /titettesi/ they put, /gugugen/ it sank, /kakakku/ we worshipped etc.

(5.45) /susi/ suckle /i-susi/ she sucked /i-suusi/ she is suckling
/gugubi/speak /ku-gugubi/ you spoke /ku-gu-gubi/ you’re speaking
/fafa/ beg /i-fafa/ he begged /i-faa-fa/ he’s begging

5.1.4.2 Reduplication of 2nd or 3rd syllable
A number of verbs reduplicate not on the first, but on the second or third syllable of the stem. Ross plausibly suggests that in these cases, the initial syllables may have originated as a prefix to the verb stem, which has since ceased to be productive and effectively become frozen as part of the stem (1984, p. 35). Prefixes of this kind so far identified include:

/ba-bisiri/ push
/fa-wuri/ wrap
/ka-mato/ swallow
/kai-to/ cut
/kara-fe/bite
Our data indicates that, contra Ross (1984, p. 43) the reduplicated syllable in these instances does not undergo the vowel lengthening that occurs in the case of reduplication of the first vowel:

\[
(5.46) \quad /i\text{-}\text{ramara/} \quad \text{he got up}\quad /i\text{-}\text{ra ma-mara/} \quad \text{he's getting up}\]

\[
/i\text{-}\text{katuwatte-ren/} \quad \text{he taught me}\quad /i\text{-}\text{ka tu-tuwatte-ren/} \quad \text{he's teaching me}\]

Where the first, non-reduplicating syllable, involves a VV sequence, vowel reduction takes place in that syllable:

\[
(5.47) \quad /kaito/ \quad \text{cut}\quad /i\text{-}\text{kaito-n/} \quad \text{he cut it}\quad /i\text{-}\text{ka to-to-n/} \quad \text{he is cutting it}\]

\[
/\text{taisukki/}\text{run}\quad /i\text{-}\text{taisukki/} \quad \text{they ran}\quad /i\text{-}\text{ta su-sukki/they are running}\]

\[
/\text{kaikosi/gather}\quad /i\text{-}\text{kaikosi/he gathered}\quad /i\text{-}\text{ka ko-kosi/he is gathering up}\]

5.1.4.3 Irregular reduplication

5.1.4.3.1 Verbs of motion
Some irregular variations on the normal reduplication process for progressive and habitual aspect include the following verbs of motion. In each of these instances, the common element seems to be that length, where applicable, is maintained on the verb stem rather than the reduplicated syllable:
1. /ra/ go

The irregular non-future paradigm of this verb involves loss of the underlying /r/ to give the surface forms /a-a/ /ko-o/ /e-e/ /ka-a/ /ta-a/ and /te-e/. Progressive aspect is expressed by the lengthening of the vowel in the verb stem, to give the following forms:

\[(5.48) \quad /a-raa/, /ku-raa/ /i-raa/ /ka-raa/ /ta-raa/ and /ti-raa/.
\]

2. /rai/ come

There is vowel reduction in the verb stem, which is reduplicated, but without the normal lengthening of the reduplicated syllable:

\[(5.49) \quad /a-rai/ I came /a-ra-ra/ I am coming
\]

3. /vaa/go up and /vasi/ come up

Again, the reduplicated syllable remains unlengthened:

\[(5.50) \quad /a-vaa/ I went up /a-va-vaa/ I'm going up
/ku-vasi/ you came up /ku-va-vasi/ you're coming up
\]

4. /uki/ go down and /uku/ come up

In both cases the final syllable of the verb stem is lengthened. In the case of /uki/, the vowel changes from /i/ to /a/.

\[(5.51) \quad /a-uki/ I went down /a-ukaa/ I'm going down
/e-uku/ he came down /e-ukuu/ he's coming down
\]

5.1.4.3.2 Other verbs

Other common verbs which depart from the regular rules of reduplication, and are noted by Ross (1984, p. 44) include:

/ise/ walk, stand, which allows two forms of reduplication depending on which semantic sense of the verb is in focus:

\[(5.52) \quad /a-ise/ I stood/walked /a-isee/I'm standing /a-se-se/I'm walking
\]

/ifi/ say, tell Again, alternative reduplication strategies are used according to the relevant sense of the verb:
do Ross cites the verb stem as /nei/ (1984, p. 44) but since /nane/ is also regularly used as the nominalised form of this verb, it seems preferable to treat this form as the stem, realised in non-future by the reduced form /nei/:

(5.54) /i-nei/ he did /i-nan(e)/ he is doing (them)

5.1.5 Verb nominalisation
Nominal forms can be derived from Maisin verb stems. A nominalised verb is not indexed for subject. It may function as the head of a noun phrase and host case-marking and topic and focus-marking enclitics.

(5.55) to-arin asa gi ramara=ka isa tauban=ka
self-PL name hold get.up=TP NEG good=NEG
Lifting up their own names isn't good.

It may also serve as an attributive modifier within the noun phrase, in which case, unlike an adjectival noun, it precedes the noun it modifies.

bagi tamati kuma vaa katuwatte sauki
steal man buy house teach woman
thief store (female) teacher

Often, as in the following examples, these nominalised stems are used to form embedded clauses. These will be discussed further below in the context of complementation (section 7.1.5)

(5.56) mana wawe ari yetaka wataa
fish get.3PL.O 3SG.GEN path=TP many
There are many ways of catching fish.

(5.57) ...vasi tamatari ei ruwan vaaviso
visit person-PL 3PL.GEN food cook.3PL.O=REF
...for cooking the visitors' food.
5.1.5.1 Intransitive verbs
Most intransitive verb stems, minus the subject-marking prefixes, may function as nominals, without the need for further affixation to signal a derivational change of word class. In effect these forms become deverbal nouns. Examples include: /mon/ to think/thinking, /kasi/ to paddle/canoe paddle, /matuku/ to dream/dream

5.1.5.2 Transitive verbs
A nominal form derived from a transitive verb normally consists of the verb stem with the 3rd plural object suffixation. As the following two examples demonstrate, this marking does not change even if the object of the nominalised verb is of a different person and number:

(5.58) isa kindi=ton i-watavi-si=ka, aa
NEG time=ACMP 3SG.S-change-3SG.O=NEG 1SG.PRO

karafe-∅=so
bite-3PL.O=REF
In no time, it turned around to bite me.

(5.59) vaa bejji wi-ri=so i-mon-mon=anan
house big build-3PL.O=REF 3SG.S-CONT-think=FUT
He’ll be thinking about building a big house.

However, in some instances where the nominalised form is being used with attributive function and the object is unspecific or not in focus, the 3rd plural suffix is not attached, and the stem is used without any affixation. Compare (5.60) with (5.56) and (5.61):

(5.60) ei verakke katuwatte-ri=na ku-gi ku-regeti
3PL.GEN show teach-3PL.O=FOC 2S-hold 2S-do.properly
You hold fast to their example and teaching.

(5.61) katuwatte=ka i-wafikko-n
teach=TP 3SG.S-begin-3SG.O
He started teaching.
Similarly, the verb kafofo forbid normally takes the 3rd plural suffix /-ri/ 

(5.62) saukitamati tauri=ka i-kafo-ro ri ti-ise 
people other=TP 3SG.S-forbid-3PLO 3PL.S-stand 
He forbade the other people (and) they stood still.

but occurs without affixation in the following construction where it fulfils an attributive function:

(5.63) kafofo kooti=ka kasan ku-nane 
prohibit talk=TP knowledge 2S-do 
You know the law.

5.1.5.3 Nominalising prefix /ve-/ 
Verb stems belonging to Class 2, whose subject prefixes undergo the vowel-lowering processes outlined above (1.1.2.1.2) derive their nominal forms differently from other verb classes. Both transitive and intransitive verbs in this class require the nominalising prefix /ve-/ in order to function as a nominal. Like the other verb stems, however, they lose subject-prefix marking, and in the case of transitive verbs, they retain the 3rd plural object suffix.

(5.64) ai=kam=e=ka isa ve-imosi-∅=ton=ka 
3SG.PRO=POSS.PRED=LOC=TP NEG NOM-help-3PLO=ACMP=NEG 
She didn’t get any help (lit. ‘with her there wasn’t help’)

(5.65) nene ari ve-nonowatti=ka in=FOC 
OK 3SG.GEN NOM-prepare=TP DEM=FOC 
OK, the preparation for it is like this...

5.1.5.4 Function of nominalisation 
Semantically the nominal forms may reference, among other things:

(a) the instrument used for the activity of the verb 

kasi canoe paddle/to paddle 

taran radio, telephone/to call 

vevirari coconut scraper/to scrape (coconuts)
vegurerevi  *door key/to pick* *(e.g. ear, nose, any hole)*

(b) the state or condition resulting from the verb

*tatami*  *sickness/be sick*

*mati*  *death/die*

(c) the reification of the action as an entity which can be observed and described *(Bugenhagen, 1995).*

(5.66)  
\[
\text{cut=TP} \quad \text{3SG.S-begin-3SG.O=FUT}
\]

*He’ll start cutting.*

(5.67)  
\[
\text{house build-3PL.O side=LOC}
\]

*In the matter of building houses...*

### 5.1.6 Final tense/aspect markers

All the final tense/aspect markers below are enclitics which may attach to non-verb predicates as well as to verb stems.

#### 5.1.6.1 Non-future

Non-future tense is marked by a zero morpheme, i.e. the verb stem with subject marking only, or, in the case of transitive verbs, with object marking also. It is most commonly used to denote simple past tense:

(5.68)  
\[
\text{Ganjiga man=PL=AGT1EXC.GEN house=FOC} \quad \text{3PL.S-build-3SG.O}
\]

*Ganjiga men built our house.*

(5.69)  
\[
\text{yesterday night=TP sweet.potato=FOC} \quad \text{1EXC.S-cook-3SG.O}
\]

*Last night we cooked and ate sweet potato.*
With second person subject marking, it may encode imperative mood:

(5.70)  
ku-ra maa  ku-tama-∅  
 2S-go  plate(s)  2S-wash-3PLO  
  Go wash the dishes!

With first person inclusive subject marking, the hortatory mood is often indicated:

(5.71)  
san=e  ta-uki  
  beach=LOC  1INC.S-go.down  
  Let’s go down to the beach!

5.1.6.2 Past /=me/  
The past tense marker /=me/ may be attached to either the simple or continuous (reduplicated) form of the verb stem. /=me/ most commonly occurs with the continuous aspect, since the non-future is the default unmarked past form. In conjunction with the continuous aspect, it may express an incomplete action in the past:

(5.72)  
kakayu=na  ti-si-siye=me  
  snail=FOC  3PLS-CONT-roast.3PLO=PAST  
  They were roasting snails.

It may also encode a past habitual action:

(5.73)  
ka-va  kumuti  kora  ka-kan=fe  
  1EXCS-go.up  charcoal  only  1EXCS-eat=IRSEQ  

ka-too-to=me  
  1EXCS-CONT-lie=PAST  
  We would go up and eat nothing but charcoal and then lie down (to sleep).

It may occur with the non-future simple verb stem to express a completed past action:

(5.74)  
tamati  ratti  ari  begi  nen=ka  i-rauku  
  man  old  3SG.GEN  first  DEM=TP  3SG.S-come.out
ti-rafaraddi=me
3PLS-meet=PAST

*Her first old man came out and they met each other.*

It also attaches to the predicate in the protasis of a counterfactual conditional sentence:

(5.75) nene=me afun=ka yabu=en ti-wi-wi-ri=akafen
OK=PAST now=TP ground=AGT 3PLS-CONT-build=3PL.O=CFAC

*If it had been OK, they’d be building their houses with mud today.*

### 5.1.6.3 Future /=anan/

The future-marking final suffix /=anan/ attaches to both verbs and other predicates. In spoken Maisin, the final nasal is often omitted word-finally, giving the surface form /=ana/. It is primarily used to denote future events.

(5.76) ivo=in ta-sam-si ta-fune-si=anan
turtle=DEM 1INC.S-roast-3SG.O 1INC.S-butcher-3SG.O=FUT

*We’ll roast this turtle and butcher it.*

When it is used sentence-medially in a nominalised clause, it may indicate a temporal contingent relationship with the following clause, or may express a future conditional state:

(5.77) borun i-nane=anan=ka yabu=ka i-kaveve=anan
rain 3SG.S-do=FUT=TP ground=TP 3SG.S-get.soft=FUT

*When it rains, the ground will become soft.*

(5.78) susi-a a-kaito-n a-me-n=anan=ka
breast-1SG.PSR 1SG.S-cut-3SG.O 1SG.S-give-3SG.O=FUT=TP

a-mati=anan
1SG.S-die=FUT

*If I cut my breasts off and give them (to you) I will die.*

With the second person subject marking, the future tense marker is sometimes used to express a polite imperative:
Put your things here in the house.

The following sentences are examples of */=anan/* attached to predicates other than the verb:

(5.80) afun=ka a=ka ai vaa=e=anan
today=TP 1SG.PRO=TP 2SG.GEN house=LOC=FUT

*Today I’ll be at your house*

(5.81) man=na boregi=anan=ka ti-wawe=anan
which=FOC good.ones=FUT=TP 3PL.S-get.3PL.O=FUT

*Whichever ones are good, they’ll take them.*

### 5.1.6.4 Potential */=aka/*

The potential-marking clitic */=aka/* attaches to the verb stem, with or without object suffixation. Its primary function is to express purpose, intention or desire. It generally occurs in conjunction with another final verb which may precede or, more commonly, follow it:

(5.82) yun a-ye=aka a-uku
water 1SG.S-bathe=POT 1SG.S-come down

*I came down here to bathe.*

(5.83) au marawa=ka en aro ta-viya=aka
1SG.GEN desire=TP 2PL.PRO together 1INC.S-play=POT

*I want to play with you.*

Occasionally it is used with a verb stem which is reduplicated to mark continuous aspect:

(5.84) avasu ta-naan=aka i-ifi
how 1INC.S-CONT.do=POT 3SG.S-say

*What did he say we should be doing?*

It is often used with the verb */ifi/* and related verbs, to encode reported speech and commands:
He told me to put him on the island.

He said he would come across.

In the following construction, with the verb /nane/ do functioning as an auxiliary verb, /=aka/ expresses the idea of immediate future, being on the point of performing an action:

I slipped (and) was about to fall.

Get down! You might fall!

Where are you wanting to go?

He wanted to be clever.

I would get your children to come together in one place.
5.1.6.5 Counterfactual

5.1.6.5.1 /akafen/
The counterfactual enclitic /akafen/ is used to denote an action that would occur (or would have occurred) if a certain condition applied.

(5.92) mayedi isa i-tauke=me=ka watika
luck NEG 3SG.S-stay=PAST=NEG because

i-mati=akafen
3SG.S-die=CFAC
It’s lucky she wasn’t at home because she would have died.

Like other tense/aspect marking enclitics, it may attach to non-verbal predicates:

(5.93) tamati nen sirorari keisi=me aika tauban=akafen
man DEM birth no=PAST 3SG.PRO good=CFAC
If that man hadn’t been born, it would have been good.

It may also reference a hypothetical scenario:

(5.94) a manaa nombo=me a=ka isa i-mayat-eren=akafen
1SG.PRO fish big=PAST 1SG.PRO=TP NEG 3SG.S-pull-1INC.O=CFAC
If I were a big fish, they wouldn’t pull me in.

5.1.6.5.2 /ateene/
The application of /akafen/ to past conditions, demonstrated above in (5.92) and (5.93) seems at odds with Ross’s designation of /ateene/ as the counterfactual past morpheme (1984, p. 48), although the example he cites clearly supports that analysis. As he rightly notes, instances of this morpheme are rare, but the few occurrences in our own data, while demonstrating the desiderative force he also attributes to it, do not have past reference:

(5.95) siko bejji buram=e i-sese nene a-kan=ateene
pig large bush=LOC 3SG.S-walk OK 1SG.S-eat=CFAC
I’d like to eat a large pig that roams in the bush.

More data is needed before the status of this morpheme can be clearly determined.
5.1.7 **Medial tense/aspect markers**

Ross (1984:48) identifies three medial tense/aspect markers: /-n/, /-na/ and /-fe/. For reasons that will be detailed further below, a fourth such enclitic /-ate/ is here added to that list, two of them are considered to be suffixes rather than enclitics and there is some modification of the functions he ascribes to them. These four markers seem to subdivide naturally into two groups:

1. /-n/ and /-na/ which are suffixed to the medial verb stem and denote same subject or different subject respectively where the action of the medial verb is simultaneous with that of the final verb.
2. /=fe/ and /=ate/, which locate the action of the medial verb in sequential relation to the final verb. Unlike /-n/ and /-na/, these sequential markers are enclitics which may attach to a non-verbal predicate.

5.1.7.1 **Same subject simultaneous /-n/**

The same subject simultaneous marker /-n/ attaches to the verb stem and is followed by another verb marked for same subject person and number. Its usage is discussed in more detail in Section 7.1.1.1 on verb serialisation. No other constituent normally intervenes between the medial and final verb.

(5.96)   ku-ve-n     ku-rai
         2S-get.3SG.O-SS.SIM  2S-come
*Bring it here!*

(5.97)   amai   a-kite-n   a-tauke
         just  1SG.S-see.3PL.O-SS.SIM  1SG.S-sit.
*I just sat and watched.*

Although Ross suggests (1984, p. 48) that it attaches only to a verb with no other tense or aspect marking, our data include many instances of it attached to the reduplicated verb stem, marking continous aspect:
(5.98) baya gombun=e i-ki-kira-n e-e  
sago end=LOC 3SG.S-CONT-search=SS.SIM 3SG.S-go  
*At the end of the sago, he went looking for it.*

(5.99) karata=na i-ka-kakki-n i-ra-ra=me  
lizard 3SG.S-CONT-spear=SS.SIM 3SG.S-CONT-go=PAST  
*He was going along, spearing lizards.*

Usually the subject of both verbs is identical, but in many instances referential overlap occurs, where the subject of the marked verb is included in the subject of the following verb:

(5.100) ko-ise-n ta-a  
2S-stand=SS.SIM 1INC.S-go  
*Get up and we’ll go!*

### 5.1.7.2 Different subject simultaneous */-na/*

The different subject simultaneous marker */-na/* attaches to both simple and reduplicated forms of the verb and signals a change of subject with the final verb. The action of the verb so marked is concurrent with that of the following verb. Ross (1984, p. 48) sees this marker as denoting a durative verb in relation to a following punctiliar but some of our data does not support this distinction:

(5.101) nan i-ifafi-na waa tamati nen=ka i-ese=me  
thus 3SG.S-say=DS.SIM ghost man DEM=TP 3SG.S-stand=PAST  
i-ruwa 3SG.S- hear  
*While she was saying that, the spirit man was standing listening.*

(5.102) i-ma-matu-na e-so leta tufa  
3SG.S- CONT-sleep=DS.SIM 2SG.PRO-REF letter short  
a-ka-kayam-si 1SG.S-CONT-write=3SG.O  
*While she’s sleeping, I’m writing (this) short letter to you.*

Often however, the second verb of the sequence does reference a more punctiliar action:
While I was asleep, she ate it all herself, so I got cross (and came).

5.1.7.3 Irrealis sequential /=fe/

The irrealis sequential marker /=fe/ attaches to the simple or reduplicated form of the verb. It locates the action of the verb so marked sequentially before that of the following verb(s). It does not imply co-referentiality or otherwise of subject between the marked clause and the subsequent clause. Noun phrases with or without case-marking, may intervene between the two clauses.

Give me my skin, I’ll put it on and go.

We(exc) will get you at Wanigela and then we(inc) will go to the village.

We would eat only charcoal and then lie down (to sleep.)

Reference has already been made to the use of /=fe/ with temporal nouns (4.1.2) and its use is attested with other non-verbal predicates as well.
(5.107)  san binon tauban=f fe fii asan ayako i-te-tesi
        beach calm good=IRSEQ bird name ayako 3SG.S-CONT-cry

        nen=ka
        DEM=TP

      When it’s a good, calm sea and the ayako bird will be crying....

5.1.7.4 Realis sequential /=ate/

Ross (1984, p. 49) classes this morpheme as a conjunction rather than a tense/aspect-marking enclitic, on the dual grounds of its formal resemblance to the clause-initial free morpheme /ate/ and the fact that it does not fill the slot occupied by other tense/aspect markers, but rather follows them. As evidence of this, he includes a text from Capell’s data where /=ate/ occurs immediately after the counterfactual marker. That example is reproduced here:

ifeemeakafemate keisi
i-fee-me-akafem-ate keisi
he-fall-PAST-CFAC-and no

He could have fallen but he didn’t  (M. D. Ross, 1984, p. 44)

No other examples of /=ate/ following a tense/aspect marker are cited by Ross, and none appear in our own data. The free translation supplied to accompany Capell’s example further suggests that in this instance /ate/ might be better analysed as an occurrence of the free morpheme conjunction, which has an adversative force not found in the meaning of the sequential enclitic /=ate/. Admittedly, the fact that the nasal consonant in /=akafem/ has not here neutralised to the expected word-final /n/ points to the enclitic being in view here, but it is not uncommon in rapid speech for otherwise free forms to undergo the morphophonemic processes that normally only apply to affixes and clitics.

Our own reasons for treating /=ate/ as a separate form from its unbound homophone are as follows:

1. There is, as alluded to above, a definite semantic difference between the two forms. The conjunction /ate/, as Ross rightly notes (1984, p. 49) signals a change in topic, or, as in the above example, carries an adversative sense. The enclitic serves only to indicate sequence of action in relation to events that have actually occurred.
2. The enclitic /-ate/ appears to occur in precisely parallel environments to its irrealis counterpart /-fe/ and to perform the same function in relation to actual realis events that /-fe/ does for unrealised actions. Neither morpheme co-occurs with other tense aspect markers.

3. The existence of the conjunctions /ineate/ then, next and /inefe/ then (with future reference), so that, along with their various surface representations /inate, nate, neate/ and /inefe/. These forms are clearly derived from the sequences /i-ne=ate/ and /i-ne=fe/ and are discussed later in this chapter in the section on conjunctions. Their relevance to the present discussion is to underline the parallel functions of /-fe/ and /-ate/ and to distinguish /ineate/ in both form and function from the separate conjunction /ate/.

While /-fe/ marks futurity or non-specific time and locates the action in relation to the following verb, /-ate/ marks an actual event or point in time and relates it sequentially to the action of the verb it precedes. Like /-fe/, it does not entail identity of subject between the two clauses, and other constituents may intervene:

(5.108) funa=na i-me-ti=ate teiti raati nen funa=na
       skin=FOC 3SG.S-give-1INC.O=RLSEQ boy small DEM skin=FOC
       i-kan
       3SG.S-eat

*He gave us (inc) his skin and the small boy ate the skin.*

It may attach to the reduplicated verb stem:

(5.109) ari vaa=na ti-rau-ro=ate i-ifí
       3SG.GEN house=FOC 3PL.S-CONT-go.in=RLSEQ 3SG.S-say
       i-kagere
       3SG.S-clear.throat

*They were going into his house then he spoke, he cleared his throat.*

It may attach not only to temporal expressions (4.1.2) but to other non-verbal predicates:

(5.110) a-va vaa=e=ate in=e=ka a-wasi
       1SG.S-go.up house=LOC=RLSEQ DEM=LOC=TP 1SG.S-come.across

*I went up into the house and then came across here.*
This last usage, with the locative case-marking, appears to be the single environment in which /=ate/ and /=fe/ do not both occur, since there are no attested instances of /=fe/ attaching to locative case-marked phrases. However this apparent gap may prove less of a counter-example to their parallel distribution if Ross is correct in positing (1996, p. 195) that the ablative marker /=efe/ is in fact derived originally from a sequence of the locative enclitic /=e/ and the sequential marker /=fe/.

5.1.8 Verbs of motion and direction
A small number of verbs of motion are marked, usually by suffixation, to indicate direction towards or away from, the hearer/speaker. As several of these verbs demonstrate some irregularities in terms of their tense/aspect marking, the complete paradigms are set out below.

Table 11: Verbs of motion and direction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Movement towards speaker</th>
<th>Movement away from speaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tense/aspect</td>
<td>Root</td>
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<td>come/go</td>
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### 5.2 Verb phrases

The head, and only obligatory element, of the verb phrase is the verb, which must be marked for subject person and number and, if transitive, for object person and number. It may also host various tense, aspect and mood marking suffixes and clitics, as described in section 5.1.6 above.

#### 5.2.1 Aspectual verb phrases

The following verbs, when used in serial construction following another verb, modify in some way the action of the preceding verb. Both verbs are marked for subject, but any tense/aspect marking occurs only on the second verb in the series and continuative aspect reduplication applies only to this second, ‘aspectual’ verb. Nothing can intervene between the two verbs and the combination functions as a single predicate.
5.2.1.1 /regeti/ ‘do properly’
The verb /regeti/ when used in isolation has the lexical meaning of *put in order, straighten* but in serial construction with another verb, has the effect of intensifying or modifying the action of that verb to give the sense of *do properly, do thoroughly*.

(5.111)  
akute-ren  a-re-regeti  
1SG.S-greet-1/2.0  1SG.S-CONT-do.properly  
*I send my warmest greetings (lit. greet you properly).*

(5.112)  
ai=na ta-kit-si ta-regeti=anan  
3SG.PRO=FOC  1INC.S-see-3SG.O  1INC.S-do.properly=FUT  
*We’ll take a good look at him.*

5.2.1.2 /wakasi/ ‘do to no avail’
Like /regeti/, /wakasi/ has an independent lexical meaning, *(be lacking)*, in its non-aspectual usage. However, when used in conjunction with a preceding lexical verb, it modifies the action of that verb to give the sense of performing that action unsuccessfully or fruitlessly.

(5.113)  
kaifi a-nane a-wakasi nenso wanno  
waiting  1SG.S-do  1SG.S-do.in.vain DEM=REF anew  

a-kayam-si  
1SG.S-write-3SG.O  
*I waited [for your letter] to no avail, so I’m writing again.*

(5.114)  
wakki=so ti-mon ti-ka-wakasi  
village=REF  3PL.S-think  3PL.S-CONT-do.in.vain  
*They are missing the village.*

5.2.1.3 /timosa/ completive
The word /timosa/ no longer functions as a verb root, is not inflected for subject person and number and might be alternatively analysed as an aspectual particle. It has nevertheless been included in this section on serial aspectual verb phrases because it still retains the vestiges of verb morphology, in that it undergoes continuative aspect reduplication and because, like the other serial verb auxiliaries, it carries tense and aspect marking for the entire verb phrase. It indicates completion of the action of the verb which immediately precedes it. The existence of a separate morpheme /mosa/ *end* lends weight to the
possibility that the initial syllable of /timosa/ may reflect original subject marking on what has now become a 'frozen' form.

(5.115) kayan vaa sandei=ka ti-wi-ri timosa.
       school house two=TP 3PLS-build-3PL.O finish.
       As for the two classrooms, they've finished building them.

(5.116) sombi ku-ta timosa=anan=ka
       (canoe) ends 2S-hit finish=FUT=TP
       When you finish carving the ends.

5.2.2 Nominal + ‘do’ verb phrases
A widely occurring type of verb phrase in Maisin involves the use of a noun or noun phrase in conjunction with the light verb /nane/ do

(5.117) si-en isa buuro=ka i-nane=ka
       go.bad-3SG.S NEG work=TP 3SG.S-do=NEG
       (The telephone) is broken, it's not working.

(5.118) foim=e borun=ka i-nane nen=so
       night=LOC rain=TP 3SG.S-do DEM=REF
       It rained at night so...

This appears to be a highly productive strategy for the formation of new verbs, in that borrowed words from neighbouring languages, and from English are often formed into verb phrases by being incorporated into a /nane/ + NOMINAL construction. The following two examples are taken from a text (describing a Maisin speaker's wartime experiences) notable for a high degree of borrowing and code-switching:

(5.119) whistle=ka i-nane=ate
       whistle=TP 3SG.S-do=RL.SEQ
       He blew the whistle and then...

(5.120) vasa=ka start ti-nane
       war=TP start3PLS-do
       They started the fighting.
6 Clauses and simple sentence types

6.1 Non-verbal clauses
Non-verbal clauses in Maisin include equative, locative and possessive clauses. The basic structure of all these clause types is a subject noun phrase obligatorily marked for topic followed by a general noun phrase, a modifier phrase or a case-marked noun phrase.

6.1.1 Equative clauses
An equative clause consists of two juxtaposed noun phrases, filling the roles of topic-comment, where the second noun phrase characterises or identifies the referent of the preceding subject noun phrase. The topic noun phrase obligatorily hosts the topic marker /=ka/ and may comprise a general noun phrase or a pronominally headed noun phrase. The comment slot may be filled by a noun phrase or modifier phrase.

(6.1) ai=ka sauuki ratti
3SG.PRO=TOP woman old
She's an old woman

(6.2) en vaa=ka nombo bejji
2PL.GEN house=TOP large big
Your(pl) house is very big.

6.1.2 Locative clause
A locative clause consists of a subject noun phrase obligatorily marked for topic, followed by a noun phrase with locative case-marking. Non-verbal locative clauses are relatively rare (since existential clauses are the more usual means of expressing location) and most often occur as the response to a ‘where’ question.

(6.3) ai=ka vaa=e
3SG.PRO house=LOC
He's in the house.

(6.4) au mo-morobi=ka in=LOC
1SG.GEN PL-daughter=TOP this=LOC
My daughters are here.
6.1.3 Possessive clauses

Two categories of non-verbal possessive clauses exist in Maisin, depending on whether the possessor and possessum are functioning as subject or predicate respectively.

6.1.3.1 Possessor as subject

Where the possessor is the subject and the possessum the predicate, the clause comprises the possessor noun with obligatory topic marking followed by the possessum, with the accompaniment case-marking enclitic /=ton/.

(6.5) \text{buro tamati=ka ai=ro ari vina=ton} \\
\text{work man=TOP 3SG.GEN=ETP 3SG.GEN reward=ACMP} \\
\text{The workman has his payment.}

(6.6) \text{e=ro mata-n=ton=in} \\
\text{2SG.PRO=ETP eye-2PSR=ACMP=PQ} \\
\text{Do you(s) have eyes?}

6.1.3.2 Possessum as subject

Where the possessum is the subject it is the initial constituent in the clause and hosts a topic-marking enclitic. It is followed by the possessor noun phrase with the possessive predicate enclitic /=kam/.

(6.7) \text{in=ka au yei=kam, in=ka a=kam} \\
\text{DEM=TP 1SG.GEN sibling=POSS this=TP 1SG.PRO=POSS} \\
\text{This one is my sister's, this one is mine.}

(6.8) \text{moofi nen=ka tamati ratti nen=kam} \\
\text{Malay apple DEM=TOP man old DEM=POSS} \\
\text{That fruit belongs to the old man.}

6.2 Verbal clauses

6.2.1 Existential clauses

Verbal existential clauses generally feature one of the following three verbs, among which there appears to be some overlap of both form and meaning:

/ toki/ \text{sit, stay, live} \text{ is used exclusively of human subjects.} \text{Depending on which lexical sense of the verb is in focus, there are two forms of the continuous/habitual aspect. Where the primary sense is that of being seated, the reduplicated form is } /tautoki/ \text{. However when the verb is used to express continued existence, or residence in a particular location, the}
present continuous form is /tauke/. In the following two examples, context will determine which of these two latter senses are indicated:

(6.9) ai yo ai yabi ti-tauke=in
2SG.GEN mother 2SG.GEN father 3PL.S-live.CONT=PQ
Are your parents still alive?

(6.10) ai yabi i-tauke=in
2SG.GEN father 3SG.S-stay.CONT=PQ
Is your father home?

/toke/ stay, be is used with both human and inanimate subjects to indicate continuing existence:

(6.11) yeta nuka=e=ka kaubi=na i-toke
path middle=LOC=TOP pond=FOC 3SG.S-exist
There was a pond in the middle of the pathway.

(6.12) marawa-nwawe roma boregi e=kam=e=ka i-toke
love-1/2.PSR all 2SG.PRO=POSS=LOC=TP 3SG.S-stay
All our(exc) love is with you(sg).

(6.13) morobi nen=ka i-toke=me i-ifi Wo jamen
girl DEM=TP 3SG.S-stay=PAST 3SG.S-say Hey boy.PL
The girl was there, she said, “Hey, boys!”

/tomi/ stay, exist is used primarily, but not exclusively, with inanimate nouns to indicate the presence or ongoing condition of an entity or, less commonly, a person.

(6.14) Sarad nan buran i-tomi isa ti-kaito=n=ka
Sarad thus bush 3SG.S-stay NEG 3PL.S-cut-3SG.O=NEG
Sarad (airstrip) is still overgrown, they didn’t cut it.

(6.15) baya viisi=na ti-tomi
bread how.many=FOC 3PL.S-exist
How many breads are there?
With a locative case-marked phrase it is often used to express possession:

\[(6.16)\]
\[e=kam=e \text{ mee } muu-a \text{ ti-tomi=in} \]
\[2\text{SG.PRO=POSS=LOC banana ripe-PL 3PL.S-be=PQ}\]
\[Do you have any ripe bananas?\]

### 6.2.2 Intransitive clauses

An intransitive clause is one in which has a subject and an intransitive verb, but no object. The subject may be expressed by an overt noun phrase or proper noun, or may be indicated simply by the subject marking on the verb. The subject may function semantically as either agent or patient.

\[(6.17)\]
\[siko nen=ka e-uku\]
\[pig DEM=TP 3\text{SG.S-come.down}\]
\[That pig came down\]

\[(6.18)\]
\[foim=e ti-rai\]
\[night=LOC 3\text{PL.S-come}\]
\[They came last night.\]

\[(6.19)\]
\[ei=na ti-mati\]
\[3\text{PL.PRO=FOC 3PL.S-die}\]
\[They’re the ones who died.\]

\[(6.20)\]
\[ku-fe=anan\]
\[2\text{S-fall=FUT}\]
\[You’ll fall!\]

\[(6.21)\]
\[amai a-si-sinasi\]
\[just 1\text{SG.S-CONT-joke}\]
\[I’m only joking.\]

### 6.2.3 Transitive Clauses

A transitive clause is one in which there is a subject and an object both of which are marked for person and number by prefixation and suffixation respectively on the verb, and which may also be expressed by noun phrases. One or both arguments may be overtly expressed by a noun phrase, or both may be marked only by the verb affixation. In the following three
examples both subject and object arguments are expressed by noun phrases, although such instances are comparatively infrequent:

(6.22)  mata=ton nen=en ikosi=na i-kite-si
eye=ACMP DEM=AGT coconut=FOC 3SG.S-see-3SG.O
*The man with eyes saw the coconut tree.*

(6.23)  teiti ratti ari fu tamati=ka kaa
boy small 3SG.GEN grandfather=TP canoe
farafa=e i-ter-si
platform=LOC 3SG.S-put-3SG.O
*The small boy put his grandfather on the canoe platform.*

(6.24)  ari yo-a susi=ka i-kaito-n
3SG.GEN mother-PSR breast=TP 3SG.S-cut-3SG.O
i-me-n
3SG.S-give-3SG.O
*His mother cut off her breast (and) gave it (to him).*

In the next two examples, subject and object arguments respectively are marked only by affixation on the verb.

(6.25)  baimara=na ti-rafa-na
famine=FOC 3PLS-find-3SG.O
*They met with famine.*

(6.26)  Leah i-kute-ren i-re-regeti
Leah 3SG.S-greet-1/2.O 3SG.S-CONT-do.properly
*Leah sends you her warmest greetings.*

In the following example, both subject and object are marked only by affixation on the final verb.

(6.27)  bari=na timosa=fe ti-wata-si=anan
prayer=FOC finish=IRSEQ 3PLS-bury-3SG.O=FUT
*After the prayers, they’ll bury him.*

In the case of some semantically transitive verbs, there is no object-marking suffixation on the verb, but an object noun phrase may fill the object slot of the clause. Kan ‘eat’ and ruwa ‘hear’ are two notable examples.
(6.28) ei=ka       kukun=na       ti-kai-kan  
3PL.PRO=TP  taro=FOC  3PL.S-CONT-eat 
They're eating taro.

(6.29) ratu  i-ruwa nen=ka  i-ifi sesei  
noise  3SG.S-hear DEM=TP  3SG.S-say  one  
When he heard the noise he said, "One!"

Conversely, certain verbs which would normally be classed as intransitive in that they take 
only a single argument, are morphologically transitive, with both subject and object marking 
by affixation. These are generally condition verbs where the marked object is coreferential 
to the undergoer subject. In these cases, the object marking distinguishes number only, not 
person:

(6.30) a. i-tatam-si  
3SG.S-be.ill-SG.O  
She's sick.  
b. ti-tatam-i  
3PLS-be.ill-PLO  
They are sick.

(6.31) a. a-taba-n  
1SG.S-lean-SG.O  
I'm leaning (in sitting position)  
a-tauke  
1SG.S-stay  
We're leaning as we stand here.  
b. ka-tabar-i  
1EXC-lean-PL.01EXC-stand  
ka-isae

6.2.4 Other constituents of the clause and clause ordering possibilities
Optional constituents of both transitive and intransitive clauses include adverbs and case-
marked noun phrases expressing temporality, location, instrumentality, source and 
beneficiary/reference. Case-marking for beneficiary/reference using the referential enclitic 
=so is used to mark the indirect object of verbs of giving, speaking etc although, as discussed 
in section 5.1.3.3 some semantically ditransitive verbs e.g /rakke/ show and /katuwatte/ 
teach use the object suffix to mark the recipient and a separate noun phrase for the theme. 
The constructions which do use referential case-marking are not being treated here as 
ditransitive clauses because they do not require that an indirect object be marked, such 
marking is normally by postpositions on the noun phrase rather than by verb morphology, 
and the resulting clause does not differ structurally from any other clause which includes 
case-marked noun phrases to express oblique arguments.

The 'default' order of core and peripheral constituents in a clause is as follows:

although the predicate is rarely preceded by more than three of these other constituents. This ordering is not firmly fixed and there is considerable fluidity, particularly in the ordering of non-core constituents. Temporal reference is always clause-initial and subject normally precedes object with no intervening elements, but adverbs and noun phrases marking location, purpose, instrument and source may occupy different slots in the clause, and the ordering of elements rests primarily on pragmatic considerations. Examples (6.32) –(6.34) below demonstrate this freedom of ordering in relation to locative and referential marked phrases especially:

TIME LOCATIVE REFERENCE PREDICATE

(6.32)  
kindi  
time  
Kokombi=e  
other  
kaivi=so  
Kokombi=LOC  
ka-va  
hunting=REF  
1EXC-go.up

One time we went up to Kokombi on a hunting expedition.

REFERENCE LOCATIVE OBJECT PREDICATE

(6.33)  
ari  
3SG.GEN  
kauna=so  
ring=REF  
kari-i=e  
ear-3SG=LOC  ake-e  
hand-3GS.PSR  
i-ter-si  
3SG.S-put-3SG.O

She put her hand up to her ear (to feel) for her ring.

SUBJECT OBJECT LOCATIVE PREDICATE

(6.34)  
ari  
3SG.GEN  
wiivi-ki  
sister-in-law-PL  
wusufake=e=e  
pot  
ti-ter-si=anan  
hand-3SG=LOC  
3PL.S-put-3SG.O=FUT

Her sisters-in-law will put a pot in her hands.

SUBJECT OBJECT ADVERB PREDICATE

(6.35)  
ari  
3SG.GEN  
yo  
mother  
kibubi=ka  
coconut.shell=TP  
toran  
herself  
i-wawe=ate  
3SG.get.O=RLSEQ

His mother took the coconut shell herself and ...

The default Subject-Object order may occasionally be reversed as in the following two examples:
6.3 **Clause negation**

The discontinuous marker *isa....=ka* is used to negate both non-verbal and verbal clauses. As Ross notes (1984, p. 50), this marker is comprised of an independent word (*isa*, or frequently, *sa*) and an enclitic *=ka*. This latter is homophonous with the topic marking enclitic, but it is best treated as a separate morpheme, since there are no other instances of
the topic marker attaching to a verb phrase, and since the topic marker often occurs separately within the negated clause (see examples (6.46) and (6.47) below).

6.3.1 Non-verbal clause negation
In the case of non-verbal clauses the negative marker *isa* is the initial constituent in the comment and the =*ka* is the final constituent in the comment.

(6.41)  
\[ \text{siko ne} = \text{ka} \quad \text{isa} \quad \text{raati} = \text{ro} = \text{ka} \]  
\[ \text{pig} \quad \text{DEM} = \text{TP} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{small} = \text{ETP} = \text{NEG} \]  
\[ \text{That pig is really huge. (lit. ‘not really small’) \} ]

(6.42)  
\[ \text{en} = \text{ka} \quad \text{isa} \quad \text{in} = \text{e} = \text{ka} \]  
\[ \text{2PL.PRO} = \text{TOP} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{DEM} = \text{LOC} = \text{TP} \]  
\[ \text{You weren’t here.} \frac{}{} \]

6.3.2 Existential clause negation
As referred to in section 4.2.9.4 above, on case-marked phrases, the negation of a non-verbal existential clauses requires the accompaniment enclitic /=ton/ to be attached to the predicate as well as the negative markers:

(6.43)  
\[ \text{isa} \quad \text{avan} \quad \text{sii} \quad \text{ite} = \text{ton} = \text{ka} \]  
\[ \text{NEG} \quad \text{what} \quad \text{bad} \quad \text{other} = \text{ACMP} = \text{TP} \]  
\[ \text{There’s no other problem.} \frac{}{} \]

(6.44)  
\[ \text{ai} = \text{kam} = \text{e} = \text{ka} \quad \text{isa} \quad \text{veimosi} = \text{ton} = \text{ka} \]  
\[ \text{3SG.PRO} = \text{POSS} = \text{LOC} = \text{TP} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{help} = \text{ACMP} = \text{TP} \]  
\[ \text{There’s no help for her.} \frac{}{} \]

6.3.3 Verbal clause negation
In the case of verbal clauses, the negation most frequently brackets the verb phrase alone, but may also include any other constituents of the clause, in which case these other constituents are included within the scope of negation. In (6.45), it brackets only the verb phrase.

(6.45)  
\[ \text{letters kora-wawe} \quad \text{o} \quad \text{fasoro} = \text{ka} \quad \text{isa} \]  
\[ \text{letters only} \text{1SG.S-get.3PL.O} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{parcel} = \text{TP} \quad \text{NEG} \]  
\[ \text{a-wawe} = \text{ka} \]  
\[ \text{1SG.S-get.3PL.O} = \text{NEG} \]  
\[ \text{I only got letters, I didn’t receive any parcels.} \]

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However, in (6.46), it brackets the entire predication:

(6.46)  
isa birin en=kan=efe pepa=ka a-wawe=ka  
NEG fast 2PL.PRO=POSS=ABL letter=TP 1SG.S-get.3PL.O=NEG  

*I haven’t received a letter from you very quickly.*

The following two examples, taken from two separate traditional stories with similar themes, illustrate the flexibility available in terms of setting the scope of negation:

(6.47)  
isa ari sauki fona-a=ka i-ru-ruwa=ka  
NEG 3S.GEN wife talk-3S.PSR=TP 3S.S-CONT-hear=NEG  

*He isn’t listening to his wife’s talk.*

(6.48)  
ari sauki fona-a=ka isa i-ru-ruwa=me=ka  
3SG.GEN wife talk-3S.PSR=TP NEG 3SG.S-CONT-hear=PAST=NEG  

*That talk of his wife’s, he wasn’t listening to it.*

Inclusion of an overt subject within the scope of negation is rare but permissible:

(6.49)  
isa a=en ai wakki=e a-rai=ka  
NEG 1SG.PRO=AGT 2SG.GEN village=LOC 1SG.S-come=NEG  

*It wasn’t me who came to your village.*

The negative enclitic /=ka/ is the final element of the clause, except where the polar interrogative enclitic /=in/ occurs, in which case the latter is always clause-final:

(6.50)  
fana=e bosa si=ari isa ti-toke=ka=in  
table=LOC leftover bad=PL NEG 3PL.S-stay=NEG=PQ  

*Is there any old leftover food on the table?*

### 6.4 Declarative sentences

The declarative sentence is the normal, unmarked sentence type in Maisin and involves no special inflections or particles. A falling final intonation followed by a breath pause distinguishes a simple sentence from a clause that forms part of a complex sentence.
structure. Otherwise a simple declarative sentence follows the form of the clause structure outlined in the preceding section.

(6.51) tamati nen=ka ari sauki=en begati=e ti-ra
man DEM=TP 3SG.GEN wife=AGT garden=LOC 3PL.S-go

The man went to the garden with his wife.

(6.52) wakki nen ei begati yeta nuka=e=ka
village DEM 3PL.L GEN garden path middle=LOC=TP

kaubi=na i-toke
ditch=FOC 3SG.S-stay.

In that village, there was a ditch in the middle of the path leading to the gardens.

6.5 Interrogative sentences
Interrogative sentences fall into two subcategories, polar questions which require a yes/no response, and content questions which expect a fuller informational response.

6.5.1 Content questions
Word order in content questions is the same as for declarative clauses, with the content question word occupying the slot in the clause that would normally be filled by the information being sought. A phrase which would normally carry the topic marker =ka in a corresponding declarative clause is marked with the irrealis topic marker =a in a content question (except in the case of personal pronouns where the topic marker =ka is retained.) There is also usually rising intonation at the sentence end. As the examples below demonstrate, many of the content question words comprise interrogative stems combined with case-marking postpositions or other enclitics.

(6.53) yau avan=en mana=a a-kakko=anan
mother what=AGT fish=IT 1SG.S-spear=FUT

Mother, what will I use to spear fish?

(6.54) afunfe avan=na buuro a-nane=anan
later what=FOC work 1SG.S-do=FUT

Later on what work will I do?
(6.55)  e=ka  man=e  ku-ra=aka  ku-nane?
        2SG.PRO=TP  which=LOC  2S-go=POT  2S=do
*Where are you about to go?*

(6.56)  kukun=na  viisi  ku-kan
taro=FOC  how.many  2S-eat
*How much taro did you eat?*

(6.57)  en=ka  sera=so  ku-if-ifi
        2PL.PRO=TP  who=REF  2S-CONT-speak
*Who are you speaking to/about?*

### 6.5.2 Polar questions
Polar questions are formed by the use of the polar question marker =in at the sentence terminus, and by final rising intonation. Word order in polar questions follows the order found in declarative clauses. As with content questions, the irrealis topic marker =a attaches to any phrase that would carry the topic marker =ka in a declarative clause.

(6.58)  ai  sauki=en  ku-tauke=in
        2SG.GEN  wife=AGT  2S-stay=PQ
*Are you and your wife at home?*

(6.59)  morobi  ku-wawe=in
girl  2S-get.3PL.O=PQ
*Did you(pl) get the girl?*

(6.60)  ai=so=a  ku-ka-kayawa=in
        3SG.PRO=REF=IT  2S-CONT-fear=PQ
*Are you afraid of him?*

### 6.6 Commands and prohibitions

#### 6.6.1 Commands
Commands are expressed by the use of the 2nd person subject marking and zero marking for tense on the verb. A subject noun phrase is normally omitted but may be expressed. Word order follows that of declarative clauses.
Sequences of imperative verbs may occur, as in the following example:

(6.62)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{en} & \text{yau=so=ka} & \text{ku-kuma} & \text{ku-wawe-n} & \text{ku-rai} \\
\text{2PL.GEN} & \text{mother=REF=TP} & \text{2S-buy} & \text{2S-get-SS.SIM} & \text{2S-come}
\end{array}
\]

Buy it and bring it here for your mother.

Similarly the 1st person inclusive marking with the non-future form of the verb encodes a hortatory construction.

(6.64)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{buuti} & \text{nen=e} & \text{ku-kasi} & \text{ta-ra} \\
\text{island} & \text{DEM=LOC} & \text{2S-paddle} & \text{1INC.S-go}
\end{array}
\]

You paddle (and) let's go to that island.

As with imperatives, hortative verbs may occur in sequence:

(6.65)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{ta-a} & \text{ta-kite} \\
\text{1INC.S-go} & \text{1INC.S-see.3PL.O}
\end{array}
\]

Let's go see them!

### 6.6.2 Prohibitions

Prohibitions are formed by the use of the negative imperative /an/ with the 2nd person continuous form of the verb. The negative imperative /an/ occurs clause initially as a free form, and the irrealis topic marker =a attaches to any noun phrase that would normally host the topic marker =ka in a corresponding declarative sentence. The scope of the negative imperative morpheme includes both prohibitive (‘don’t do that!’) and cessative (‘stop doing that!’) functions.

(6.66)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{an} & \text{au} & \text{somi} & \text{ku-gi-gi} \\
\text{NEGIMP} & \text{1SG.GEN} & \text{shirt} & \text{2S-CONT-hold}
\end{array}
\]

Stop holding on to my shirt!
(6.67) an kava-m-a ku-ya-yasi
NEGIMP mouth-2PSR-IT 2S-CNT-open

Don’t open your mouth.

(6.68) e=ka an funa-i=e ku-tau-toki
2SG.PRO=TP NEGIMP skin-3PL.PSR=LOC 2S-CNT-sit

Don’t sit next to them.
7 Complex Sentence Structure
Maisin exhibits a number of complex clause combinations running along a continuum that expresses the level of integration operative between the two clauses. At one end of the continuum are serial-type constructions where a single predicate is in view and the combination is effectively two clauses merged into one. Further along the continuum are the coordinate-dependent structures where two or more distinct clauses or clause cores are clearly present but in a mutually dependent relationship. Ross, following the terminology used by Olson (1979) and later taken up by Foley and Van Valin (1984), refers to these as cosubordinate structures in his description of Maisin complex constructions. (1984, p. 67) There are also complex sentences where the clauses are in a more clearcut coordinate or subordinate relationship to one another. Each of these constructions will be outlined below, and reference made to any significant differences from Ross’s analysis.

7.1 Serial constructions/merged clauses
These are constructions which take the form of two verb phrases being joined to form a single complex verb phrase. Tense and aspect for the whole phrase is marked on the second verb, and nothing can intervene between the two verbs.

7.1.1 ‘Adverbial’ SVC:
This category comprises verb stems which may follow any other verb to give it adverbial force. Two such verbs have so far been identified, /wakasi/ do in vain, to no purpose and /regeti/ do properly. (When occurring independently of the serial construction, each of these verbs has a separate lexical meaning: /wakasi/ be lacking and /regeti/ put [things] in order, but their most frequent occurrence in Maisin discourse is with this adverbial function.) As the following examples demonstrate, both continuous aspect reduplication and final tense marking occur on the second verb in the series.

(7.1) An-so ku-ra-na a-afi a-ka-wakasi
what-REF 2S-go-DS.SIM 1SG.S-say 1SG.S-CONT-do.in.vain
Why are you leaving while I talk to no purpose?

(7.2) Ari taukiramara=na ta-kite-si ta-regeti=anan
3SG.GEN behaviour=FOC 1INC.S-see-3SG.O 1INC.S- do.properly=FUT
We(inc) will take a good look at his behaviour.
As with all such merged clauses, polarity is shared across the verb phrase:

(7.3)  
\begin{align*}
\text{isa} & \quad \text{i-ra} & \quad \text{i-regeti=ka} \\
\text{NEG} & \quad \text{3SG.S-go} & \quad \text{3SG.S-do.properly=NEG}
\end{align*}

*He didn’t go to the right place (lit. he didn’t go properly.)*

### 7.1.2 Directional focus SVC

This category involves sequences of two verb stems where the second verb expresses movement in a particular direction and so modifies the action of the first verb.

Constructions of this kind are very common in Maisin, and again are characterised by the marking of tense/aspect for the entire verb phrase only on the second verb:

(7.4)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Kaa} & \quad \text{wowo=refe} & \quad \text{i-fe} & \quad \text{e-uku=me} \\
\text{Tree} & \quad \text{above=ABL} & \quad \text{3SG.S-fall} & \quad \text{3SG.S-come.down=PAST}
\end{align*}

*He fell down from the top of the tree.*

(7.5)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Ei=ka} & \quad \text{wakk=e} & \quad \text{ti-ra} & \quad \text{ti-rauku} \\
\text{3PL.PRO=TP} & \quad \text{village=LOC} & \quad \text{3PL.S-come} & \quad \text{3PL.S-come.out}
\end{align*}

*They came out to the village.*

In both of the above examples, the locative phrase operates over the whole verb phrase, and nothing intervenes between the two verbs. These may be distinguished from examples such as the following, which need to be seen as separate clauses, as evidenced by the locative phrase which precedes the final verb, and the intonation pattern which includes a brief pause after the first verb:

(7.6)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Te-e} & \quad \text{yum=e} & \quad \text{te-uki} \\
\text{3PL.S-go} & \quad \text{water=LOC} & \quad \text{3PL.S-go.down}
\end{align*}

*They left [and] went down to the water.*

(7.7)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Ti-ra} & \quad \text{wakk=e=ka} & \quad \text{ti-rauku} \\
\text{3PL.S-come} & \quad \text{village=LOC=TP} & \quad \text{3PL.S-come.out}
\end{align*}

*They came out to the village.*
Both the adverbial serialisation and the directional focus SVC appear to fit the category of nuclear cosubordination described by Foley and Van Valin (1984, p. 262f) in that they share directional and aspectual inflection as well as all arguments.

7.1.3 Constructions involving the medial suffix /-n/

This marker serves to indicate simultaneous action and identity of subject with the verb it marks and the verb that immediately follows it. Both verbs carry subject marking, but final tense marking is indicated only on the second verb in the series, and nothing ordinarily intervenes between the two verbs. Although Ross (1984, p. 69) claims that the medial verb is always unreduplicated, one of his own examples, (308), seems to belie that, and our own data includes several instances of continuous aspect reduplication on the verb that hosts the medial marker. (See example (7.8), (7.9), (7.13) below).

Constructions involving this marker fall into two primary categories:

7.1.3.1 Continuous SVC: Lexical verb + existential verb

This construction involves the use of any lexical verb with the existential verb *tauke* 'stay', here used with aspectual force to indicate continuation of the action of the first verb.

(7.8) Nen=so kaubi kava=e i-te-tesi-n i-tauke
DEM=REF pond edge=LOC 3SG.S-CONT-cry-SS.SIM 3SG.S-stay
So she went on crying beside the pond.

(7.9) Nen=e baya ti-nane-n ti-tauke
DEM=LOC sago 3PL.S-do.CONT-SS.SIM 3PLS-stay
There they went on making sago.

It often involves the continuous aspect form of the medial verb, as in the preceding example, but the unreduplicated form may also be used:

(7.10) Nen=ke dob u ti-wi-ri-n ti-toki
DEM=LOC shelter 3PLS-build-3PL.O-SS.SIM 3PLS-stay
They were busy building shelters there.

7.1.3.2 Lexical verb + verb of motion

All other instances of this construction involve a lexical verb marked with /-n/, followed by a verb of motion. The most frequent lexical verb in this context is /wawe/ 'get', but any verb may occur in the initial position.
Rasi=ka  taru  raati  a-ve-n  a-ra=anan,
tomorrow=TP  dog  small  1SG.S-get.3SG.O-SS.SIM 1SG.S-go=FUT
Tomorrow I’ll take the small dog with me.

Siko nen=ro  ti-faf-si-n  te-uku
pig  DEM=ETP  3PL.S-carry-3SG.O-SS.SIM  3PL.S-come.down
They carried the pig too down.

Bangu=na  ti-ra-radde-n  ti-sese
shellfish=FOC  3PL.S-CONT-pick.up-SS.SIM  3P.S-walk
They were collecting shells as they walked.

Ari yei=e  ai=so  ti-bewusi-n
3SG.GEN  sibling=PL  3SG.PRON=REF  3PL.S-be.cross-SS.SIM

ti-ra
3PL.S-go
His brothers were cross with him as they went along.

Although the subject of the medial verb is normally identical with that of the final verb, there may also be referential overlap, where the subject of the marked verb is included within the reference of the subject of the final verb (There are, however, no attested instances of the same subject medial suffix being used in the converse overlap situation, where the subject of the final verb is included in the subject of the medial verb)

i-faf-si-n  ka-rai  vaasi=e=ka  ka-rauku
3SG.S-carry-3SG.O-SS.SIM  1EX.S-come  camp-LOC=TP  1EX.S-come.out
We arrived back at the camp with him carrying it.

This construction also frequently includes sequences of two verbs of motion, the first of which has a more specific directional focus, and the second more general, typically ra ‘go’ or rai ‘come’. This form of serialisation appears to have the same semantic force as that described above under 1.1.2 Directional Focus SVC, where the two verb forms are simply juxtaposed without any medial verb marking.

Buram=e  ti-va-n  ti-ra
bush=LOC  3PL.S-go.up-SS.SIM  3PL.S-go
They went up into the bush.
We went down and stayed the night at Manumanu.

In the overwhelming majority of instances of this construction, the conjoined verbs form a tight semantic unit with no intervening elements between them. However, examples like the following seem to indicate that there is no syntactic barrier to either of the verbs governing an argument of its own:

(7.18) l-te-tesi-n begati=e i-ra=me
3SG.S-CONT-cry-SS.SIM garden=LOC 3SG.S-CONT-come=PAST
She came crying to the garden.

(7.19) ti-rot-si ti-ve-n wakki=e ti-ra
3PLS-tie-3SG.O 3PLS-get-SS.SIM village=LOC 3PLS-go
They tied him up [and] took him to the village.

Although this form of serialisation has much in common with the with adverbial and directional merged clauses described in the preceding section, the freedom of the individual verbs to take separate arguments, even if rarely used, seems to confirm that Ross is right in treating this as an example of core, rather than nuclear, cosubordination. (1984, p. 69)

### 7.1.4 Object-subject serial causative

In the absence of morphological causative marking in Maisin, this construction is regularly used to express causation. It involves a series of two verbs in which the object of the first is identical with the subject of the second. All tense/aspect marking, medial or final is carried by the second verb, and continuative aspect reduplication is only marked on the second verb. Although the verbs have different subject marking for person and number, the construction is viewed as a single event with two actions merged and shares the same polarity.

(7.20) Sauki nen=ka ari jamen arore
woman DEM=TP 3SG.GEN boy.PL together
He killed (lit. 'he hit they died') that woman together with her children.

I'm sending it for you to look at and ...

Put me down!

You didn't write back an answer to my letter.

No other clause constituent may intervene between two verbs which combine to form this construction. In the following example, the first two verbs comprise one of these 'merged clauses' but the second two, separated by the locative case-marked phrase are to be analysed as two separate clauses.

Although Ross classes this construction as the coordination of two cores it it seems to better meet the criteria for treatment as core cosubordination in that in all the above instances the verbs have one core argument in common, as well as sharing tense, polarity and all peripheral arguments. (Foley & Van Valin, 1984, p. 261)
Related to this form of serialisation is the more formulaic combination *ifi ruwa* ‘tell (lit. ‘say-hear’). Here the two verbs share the same object argument (though neither marks it morphologically) rather than the object of the first being the subject of the second. This is a very tightly knit construction, which is semantically and structurally treated as a single clause. As with the preceding examples all tense/aspect marking is borne by the second verb, nothing can intervene between them and they share polarity. They are individually marked only for subject person and number.

(7.25) Ai rai kindi ku-ifi i-ruwa=fe
2SG.GEN come time 2S-say 3SG.S-hear=IR.SEQ
*Tell her your return date and then...*

(7.26) a-rau afun totoruga in=na a-ifi
1SG.S-go.in today meeting DEM=FOC 1SG.S-say
i-ruwa=aka
3SG.S-hear=POT
*I went to tell him about today’s meeting.*

A form of syntactic causation involving the verb /nane/ ‘do, make’ and another, intransitive verb has also been identified. In most of the instances of this attested to date the intransitive verb belongs to the class of verbs which mark subject by suffixation, but example (7.30) below indicates that this is not an obligatory feature of this construction.

(7.27) Tatami tamata-ri=na i-nane jebuga-ten
Sickness person-PL=FOC 3SG.S-do recover-3PLS
*He healed sick people.*

(7.28) Fusi=yen ti-fu ti-ne sii-en
cat=AGT 3PLS-defecate 3PLS-do go.bad-3SG.S
*The cats soiled and ruined it.*

(7.29) Ei fu tamati i-ne sirorari-yen
3PL.GEN grandfather man 3SG.S-do happen-3SG.S
*Their grandfather made it happen.*

(7.30) Ti-ne dagari i-ne=anan o ti-ne
3PLS-do disabled 3SG.S-do=FUT or 3PLS-do
7.2 Clause chaining/coordinate dependent clauses

The term ‘coordinate dependent’ describes clauses in a clause chain ‘in which all clauses except the last are incompletely marked for aspect and mood: the final [independent] clause is marked for the aspect and mood of the whole chain.’ These clauses are not coordinate in the sense of existing independently of one another, nor is there a one-way relationship of dependence between them that would justify one of them being classed as a subordinate clause. This clause chaining is a standard feature of Maisin discourse and involves the use of medial verb enclitics and suffixes, expressing switch reference and sequential action, in relationship with final tense-aspect marking on the final verb in a clause chain. All verbs are marked for subject person and number and may have their own arguments in the form of subject and object noun phrases and case-marked phrases, but final tense/aspect marking only occurs on the final verb in the series. Each of these markers is described below, and examples given of their usage in clause chains.

7.2.1.1 Irrealis sequential marker =fe

The irrealis sequential enclitic /-fe/ marks the action of the clause as sequentially prior to the action of the following final clause, which may be marked for future or non-future tense. This marking is typically used in discourses with a future time orientation, or those in which no specific time frame is in view. It does not necessarily imply co-referentiality of subject with the clause which immediately follows it.

(7.31) Ai rai kindi=ka ku-ifi i-ruwa=fe i-ra
       2SG.GEN come time=TP 2S-say 3SG.S-hear=IR.SEQ 3SG.S-come

       Wanigela=e kaifi-i-nan-na ku-ra=fe
       Wanigela=LOC wait 3SG.S-do=DS.SIM 2S-come=IR.SEQ

       arore wakki=e ku-ra-aka i-ifi.
       together village=LOC 2S-go=POT 3SG.S-say

---

8 Ross 1996:187
She said for you to tell her your return date and she will come and wait for you at Wanigela and when you come you’ll all go to the village together.

(7.32)  ku-tar-si  i-ra  i-to  ku-ikam-si
2S-chop-3SG.O  3SG.S-come  3SG.S-lie  2S-measure-3SG.O

ku-kaito-n=fe  ku-watavi-si-na  ari  deeki
2S-cut-3SG.O=IR.SEQ  2S-turn-3SG.O-DS.SIM  3SG.GEN stern

bougi=na  ku-wakiro-si=fe  sombi=ka  ku-ta=ana
prow=FOC  2S-check-3SG.O=IR.SEQ  ends=TP  2S-carve=FUT

You chop it down, then measure it and as you turn it over and over you will check where you will put the stern and the prow and then you’ll carve the ends.

As the following example shows, the two clauses do not need to share the same polarity:

(7.33)  Wakki  ite=e  ku-ro=fe  isa  nene
village one=LOC  2S-go.in=IR.SEQ  NEG  OK

te-ifi=anan=ka
3PL.S-say=FUT=TP
You’ll enter a village then if they don’t say OK...

7.2.1.2  Realis sequential =ate
The realis sequential marker /=ate/ also locates the action of the clause so marked as sequentially prior to the following clause, and is used of actions that can be asserted to have definitely taken place at a certain point in time. It is most commonly used in past tense narrative. Like /=fe/, /=ate/ does not imply co-referentiality or otherwise of subject with the following clause.

(7.34)  Inate  a-kaffari  a-uki  yabu=e  a-ise=ate
Then  1SG.S-jump  1SG.S-go.down  ground=LOC  1SG.S-stand=RL.SEQ

wanno  sinati=en  wannani  ka-kiro  timosa=ate
and  three=AGT  again  1EX.S-laugh  completed=RL.SEQ
Then I jumped down to the ground and when the three of us had stopped laughing we peeled and ate our pawpaw. Once we had tied up the pig I started carrying it, then about halfway Remengius took over and so we took it back to our campsite.

As Ross has noted (1984, p. 50), when a clause marked by the enclitic /=ate/ is negated, the negative enclitic /=ka/ cannot be used and the negation is expressed only by the preceding negative suffix /isa/:

(7.35)  
isa i-ruwa=ate   tere-i=e   i-ra=me  
NEG 3SG.S-hear=RLSEQ  back-3PL.PSR=LOC  3SG.S-go=PAST

ti-tarawur-si  
3PL.S-hit-3SG.O

He didn’t listen then he went off behind them [and] they beat him.

Ross regards the enclitic /=ate/ as a conjunction, and so treats it as a means of expressing clause coordination rather than an example of serialisation. (1984, p. 73). However, as discussed above (5.1.7.4) /=ate/ seems to operate semantically and phonologically in a different manner from the conjunction /ate/, notwithstanding their likely common historical origins, and it has a clear parallel function to its irrealis counterpart /=fe/.

In clause chains both markers serve to reference sequence of action and both depend on a following final verb for tense and aspect marking.
7.2.1.3 Switch reference marker /-na/

Ross (1984:48; 70f) classes this morpheme as a durative medial enclitic, preceding a final verb that is normally (but not obligatorily) punctiliar in sense. Although he states that it may attach to either simple or progressive aspect verb form, all the examples he cites involve the reduplicated progressive or continuous aspect, as do all instances of it attested in our own data, indicating that this is may be an obligatory condition of its usage.

This marker is here being treated as a switch-reference suffix, rather than a durative enclitic, because our data suggest that the affix primarily denotes change of subject and simultaneous/overlapping action between the marked clause and the reference clause. Classing it as a marker of switch reference does, however, entail defining that term more broadly than as simply indicating change or otherwise of syntactic subject in the succeeding clause. Examples of various such ‘violations’ of the subject condition of a canonical switch reference system are discussed by Stirling. (1993, p. 25ff) In his survey of switch reference in Papua New Guinea, Roberts also illustrates the use of switch-reference systems to track not only subject but agent or topic, concluding that in Papua New Guinean languages, most such systems are topic-oriented rather than agent-oriented (1997, p. 177).

Maisin too appears to relate switch-reference to pragmatic, and not just syntactic features, although with regard to focus rather than to topic. The majority of attested occurrences of /-na/do involve a change of syntactic subject, as in the following examples:

(7.36) a-ma-matu-na ai-fi i-kan
1SG.S-CONT-sleep-DS.SIM 3SG.PRO-ISO 3SG.S-eat
*While I was asleep, she ate it all by herself.*

(7.37) i-uki i-ye-ye-na furen nen=ka
3SG.S-go.down 3SG.S-CONT-bathe-DS.SIM wallaby DEM=TP

*i-rauku
3SG.S-come.out
*He went down [and] while he was bathing, a wallaby came out.*

This may include instances of referential overlap, where the subject of the final verb is included in the subject of the medial verb. (This is in contrast to the reverse situation, where the subject of the first verb is included in that of the second verb, and the same subject marker is used.)
They [i.e. the pigs and the human boy] were eating the garden food, the pigs were eating the taro.

In some cases, the subject of the medial verb is the object of the final verb:

While that fish was coming out, he speared it.

I helped them with writing their words and spelling.

In the bush, a pig gave birth [to a litter] and in the midst of them, she bore a human boy.
Similarly, in (7.42), taken from the same story, the human pig-boy is the subject of both clauses, but a different patient object is in focus in the final clause and again /-na/ is used to mark the switch. (Note that this example, like (7.38) above, does not entail a punctiliar action in the final clause.)

(7.42) ando=ka i-fe-fe-ri-na faya-ri kora
skin=TP 3SG.S-CONT-throw-3PL.O-DS.SIM fruit-PL only

i-kan-kan=me
3SG.S-CONT-eat=PAST
He was throwing away the peel and was eating only the fruit.

Although this last example does not explicitly include the focus marker /=na/, it is arguable that the meaning of the delimiting particle /kora/ supplies an inherently focal element, allowing for the use of the different subject marker in this context.

In the following example, excerpted from a text on how to make a canoe, the subject of both verbs is the same, but the shift in focus to the particular parts of the canoe have motivated the use of the switch reference marker:

(7.43) ku-ta-watavi-si-na ari deeki bougi=na
2S-CONT-turn-3SG.O-DS.SIM 3SG.GEN stern prow=FOC

ku-wakiros-si=fe sombi=ka ku-ta=anan
2S-check-3SG.O=IR.SEQ end=TP 2S-carve=FUT
As you’re turning it over, you’ll check out its stern and prow and then you’ll carve the ends.

7.3 Coordinate constructions
Independent clauses and simple sentences may be conjoined by a range of coordinating conjunctions, or by simple juxtaposition, to form complex sentences.

7.3.1 Clause coordination using conjunctions

7.3.1.1 Coordinate sentences
The conjunction /wanno/ is sometimes used to conjoin noun phrases but may also be used to conjoin clauses.

(7.44) Tauri=ka ti-mu-mutu wanno tauri=ka daibi
others=TP 3PLS-CONT-dive and others=TP hook
In the following example /wanno/ can be found coordinating two clauses and two noun phrases

(7.45) a-kute-ren a-re-regeti wanno
1SG.S-greet-1/2.0 1SG.S-CONT-do.properly and

au sauki au teiti wanno au morobi
1SG.GEN wife 1SG.GEN son and 1SG.GEN girl

te-kute-ren ti-re-regeti.
3PL.S-greet-1/2.0 3PL.S-CONT-do.properly.
I send you my warmest greetings and so do my wife, my son and my daughter.

7.3.1.2  Contrastive sentences
The contrastive conjunctions /ate/ now, however, /ataika,aika/ but, and /eseka/ but (contrary to expectation) are used to conjoin two clauses where a contrast is being drawn between them. /ate/ is the most frequently occurring and carries the least adversative force. /ataika/ marks a stronger contrast, and /eseka/ is used to denote an unexpected, and usually unwelcome, result. All three occur between the two clauses that are being conjoined.

(7.46) May 19ka aiti=ka SIL ate en=ka isa
May19=TP 1INC.PRO=TPSIL but 2PL.PRO=TP NEG

in=ke=ka.
DEM=LOC=TP
May 19th is [the day set down for] us as SIL, but you aren’t here.

(7.47) Tambun nen=e a-me-n i-rai ate
month DEM=LOC 1SG.S-give-3SG.O 3SG.S-come but

au vinaka isa ku-kayam-si i-ra=ka.
1SG.GEN answer=TP NEG 2S-write-3SG.O 3SG.S-come=NEG
I sent it that month but you haven’t written back.
She got up and lifted the pot lid but (to her disappointment) [she saw] only taro skin.

They came back and looked around but [to their surprise and annoyance] the verandah was empty.

Your house is just fine, but the cats defecated and so the mats are spoiled.

Whether she died or is alive, I was coming to see her.

7.3.1.3 Disjunctive sentences
The disjunctive enclitic /=ai/ is used to conjoin two or more alternative clauses. The free form /o/ (from English ‘or’) is also being increasingly used for this function. As discussed in section 3.2.7.2 above, the main distinction between them is that /ai/ is limited to separating mutually exclusive alternatives, while /o/ may be used more generally. Both morphemes occur between the two clauses that are being contrasted.

Whether she died or is alive, I was coming to see her.
When that bird called ‘ayako’ is crying or chirping, that small boy is crying for his mother.

### 7.3.1.4 Sequential sentences

The conjunctions /ineate/, /neate/, /inate/, /nate/ and /inefe/, /nefe/ are used to denote temporal sequence between clauses. Morphologically they can be analysed as original medial clauses with aspect/mood marking for realis sequential and irrealis sequential respectively.

(7.53) a. inate
    i-nane=ate
    3SG.S-do=RLSEQ
    he did and then...

b. inefe
    i-nane=fe
    3SG.S-do=IRSEQ
    he will do and then...

However, these forms no longer undergo any kind of inflection or affixation and have become ‘frozen’ as conjunctions linking independent clauses to mark the sequential ordering of the clauses.

(7.54) Ti-bewusi ti-rasoso inate tamati nen=ka i-ifi
    3PLS-be.cross 3PLS-argue then man DEM=TP 3SG.S-say
    They got cross and argued then that man said...

(7.55) Au rasiran fufufi a-wawe nate in=e=ka
    1SG.GEN morning hot 1SG.S-get then DEM=LOC=TP

    a- rai
    1SG.S-come
    I had my breakfast then I came here.

(7.56) Ran sinati ti-kuven ti-mayati=anan inefe sora=ka
    time three 3PLS-blow 3PLS-pull=FUT then wailing=TP

    ti-wafikko-n=anan
    3PLS-start-3SG.O=FUT
    They’ll blow three long blasts [on the conch] and then they’ll start wailing.

Although the final clause in a sentence of clauses conjoined by /inefe/ will often be marked for future tense, this is not obligatory:
I'll put them in the boat and come up, then let's go down and be off.

### 7.3.1.5 Causal sentences

The conjunction /watika/ is used to conjoin two clauses where one is semantically linked to the other by cause.

(7.58) isal dinunu i-ra morobi ite=ka  
NEG mistake 3SG.S-go girl other=TP

i-va=ana **watika** ari sauki=ka  
3SG.S-go.up=FUT because 3SG.GEN wife=TP

**ti-katete-n**  
3PL.S-choose-3SG.O finish.  
*He won't mistakenly go after another girl because they've already chosen his wife.*

(7.59) Ai kora, watika ai kora tamati tauban  
3SG.PRO only because 3SG.PRO only man good

*[We will look at] Only him, because he is the only good man.*

### 7.3.2 Clause coordination by juxtaposition

#### 7.3.2.1 Potential marker /=aka/

The potential marker /=aka/ may also be used to coordinate two clauses which otherwise operate with independent arguments and mood. The semantic relation between the clauses is generally one of purpose, and as the following examples illustrate, the clause marked with /=aka/ may either precede or follow the clause with which it is conjoined:

(7.60) Inate i-watavis-si ari foyan=e  
Then 3SG.S-turn-3SG.O 3SG.GEN tail=LOC

i-karafe=aka  
3SG.S-bite=POT  
*Then he turned around, in order to bite at his tail.*
7.3.2.2 Counterfactual conditional
As described earlier (5.1.6.5) the counterfactual conditional is expressed by a past tense marker on the first clause and counterfactual enclitic on the second.

(7.62) Nene=me, afun=ka yabu=wen ti-wi-wi-ri=akafen?
OK=PAST, now=TP earth=AGT 3PL.S-CONT-build-3PL.O-CFAC
If it had been OK, wouldn’t they be building [houses] with mud now?

(7.63) Aa mana nombo=me mana raat-e=ka
1SG.PRO fish big=PAST fish small=PL=TP

a-n-kan=akafen
1SG.S-CONT- eat=CFAC
If I were a big fish, I’d be eating small fish.

7.4 Subordinate-Main structures
Subordination only takes place in Maisin at clause level. In subordinate-main structures, a subordinate clause is nominalised by the addition of the demonstrative /nen/. Thus transformed into an NP, it may host topic, focus or semantic case markers, like any other NP, and is used to express a range of functions, including temporal and conditional contingencies, reason-result and relative clauses.

7.4.1 Temporal/conditional contingencies
In a temporal contingency the temporal clause precedes the main clause and hosts the demonstrative clitic /nen/. The resulting nominalised clause is marked for topic by the clitic /=ka/. The temporal clause may have past, present or future reference. Future temporal contingencies and conditional contingencies are syntactically identical.

(7.64) [en=so Leah e-kute nen=ka] a-ifi ei=ka
2P.PRO=REF Leah 3S.S-ask DEM=TP 1S.S-say 3P.PRO=TP
When Leah asked about you, I said, ‘They left this morning.’

(7.65) [Ari kefe venonowatti=so ti-raa nen=ka]  
3SG.GEN place prepare=REF 3PLS-go.CONT DEM=TP

    tauri=en ari fana=ro ti-wi-n=anan.  
    some=AGT 3SG.GEN stretcher=ETP 3PLS-build-3SG.O=FUT

When they go to prepare his [burial] place, others will make his stretcher.

As Ross (1984:76) notes, the nominalising demonstrative /nen/ may be deleted from a sequence of / =anan=nen=ka/ to avoid a string of nasal consonants.

(7.66) [E=ka arore ku-ra=anan=ka] ti-nau-eren=anan=ka  
2SG.PRO=TP together 2S-go=FUT=TP 3PLS-kill-1/2.O=FUT=TP

If you go with them, they will kill you.

(7.67) [susa a-kwaito-n a-me-n=anan=ka] a=ka
breast 1SG.S-cut-3SG.O 1SG.S-give-3SG.O=FUT=TP 1SG.PRO=TP

    a-mati=anan  
1SG.S-die=FUT

If I cut off my breast and give it [to you], I will die

7.4.2 Reason-result clauses

In a reason-result construction, a subordinate clause indicating cause or reason precedes a main clause expressing result. The nominalised clause is marked for referential case, by the addition of the case-marking clitic / =so/.

(7.68) A=kam=e kaa keisi nen=so isa  
1SG.PRO=POSS=LOC boat no DEM=REF NEG

    a-uki=ka  
1SG.S-go.down=NEG

I had no canoe, so I didn’t go down.
We gave Stanley his things too, so don’t worry about that.

7.4.3 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are also formed using the clause nominalisation strategy. Maisin relative clauses are postnominal in that they follow rather than precede the nominals which they modify. No non-restrictive relative clauses have been attested in our data. The basic structure of a relative clause is the head or domain noun, followed by the restrictive clause which is nominalised by the demonstrative /nen/.

Ross (1984, p. 76f) regards Maisin relative clauses as being internally headed, in that the head noun phrase occurs within the relative clause itself rather than in the matrix clause. The normal constituent ordering of Maisin can lead to some ambiguity as to whether the relative clauses are to be regarded as internally or externally headed. For instance, the first example provided by Ross (346, reproduced twice below for convenience, with separate bracketing to indicate the varying analyses) could be analysed either as internally headed, where the head noun /tauri/ remains entirely inside the relative clause as Ross claims:

\[
(346) \quad \text{[tauri bangi ti-rot-i=nen=ka] ti-ra} \\
\text{[some raft 3PLS-tie-3PL.O=DEM=TP] 3PLS-come} \\
\text{Those who had made rafts came.}
\]

Or it could be understood as externally headed, as the bracketing below indicates. In this case the head noun is functioning explicitly as head of the matrix clause and there is a gap in the subject position in the relative clause.

\[
(346) \quad \text{tauri [bangi ti-rot-i=nen=ka] ti-ra} \\
\text{some [raft 3PLS-tie-3PL.O=DEM=TP] 3PLS-come} \\
\text{Those who had made rafts came.}
\]

Many of the extant examples of Maisin relative clauses are subject to this ambiguity and hence could apparently be treated as either externally or internally headed. However, it
seems preferable to analyse them as externally-headed, on the basis of examples such as the following:

\[(7.70)\] Au letter [tere-ti ari yaa a-me-n]i-ra nen]ku-ve=\in\] 
1SG.GEN letter back-1INC.PSR 3SG.GEN year 1SG.S-give-3SG.O

\[3SG.S\text{-}come DEM 2S\text{-}get.3SG.O=PQ\]

Did you get the letter I sent last year?

Since the default position for time expressions is initial in the clause, if the relative clause were internally-headed, we would expect to see the head noun /au letter/ occurring immediately after the temporal phrase. Its initial position in the sentence suggests, instead, that it is to be regarded as part of the matrix clause and that there is a corresponding gap in the relative clause where that noun would otherwise occur.

No examples of relativisation on objects of comparison occur in our data, but otherwise relativisation is possible at every point of the accessibility hierarchy. Where the head noun is functioning as either subject or object of the relative clause, the primary means of relativisation is the gapping strategy just described. In the following example, the NP /tamati/ serves as the subject of both matrix and relative clauses, but receives no explicit reference in the latter.

\[(7.71)\] Tamati [i-yonki i-tauke=me nen]=ka i-ramara man 3SG.S\text{-}hide 3SG.S\text{-}stay=PAST DEM=TP 3SG.S\text{-}get.up

The man who was in hiding got up.

In the next example, /au letters/ is the direct object of the verbs in both matrix and relative clause, and again, the noun phrase is absent from the relative clause itself.

\[(7.72)\] au letters [ku-me ti-rai nen]=ka seseka a-wawe. 
1SG.GEN letters 2S\text{-}give 3PL.S\text{-}come DEM=TP all 1SG.S\text{-}get.3PL.O

I received all the letters which you sent me.
Where the relativisation involves roles other than subject or object, however, the domain noun retains its place in the matrix clause and a pronoun, with appropriate case-marking, fills its expected slot in the relative clause:

(7.73) Morobi [ai=so ta-nane=me nen]=ka
girl 3SG.PRO=REF 1INC.S-do=PAST DEM=TP

dagari in=en i-ta-n
disfigured DEM=AGT 3SG.S-marry-3SG.O

As for the girl we were all after, that disfigured guy married her.

Occasionally a coreferential pronominal form may also occur in the matrix clause, as in the following example, where the pronoun /eina/, referencing the already stated head noun phrase /yeiyabi tauri/, follows the relative clause, and occurs in addition to the pronoun in the relative clause itself.

(7.74) yeiyabi tauri [eiaro buuro ta-nane nen]
brother.father some 3LP.PRO.with work 1INC.S-do DEM

ei=na a-ifi ti-ruwa=fe
3PL.PRO=FOC 1SG.S-say 3PL.S-hear=IR.SEQ

I’ll tell some of the elders with whom we work.

Only one example of relativisation on the genitive occurs in our data, and involves the possessor pronominal suffix on directly possessed nouns, rather than a separate possessive pronoun:

(7.75) Tamati[ke-e fake-e ti-mati nen]=ka
man leg-3SG.PSR arm-3SG.PSR 3PL.S-die DEM=TP

The man whose arms and legs were dead (i.e. the man who was paralysed)

Headless relative clauses are permissible in Maisin where the head noun is easily recoverable from context or is indefinite.

(7.76) [A-ifi nen] ku-ne=in?
1SG.S-say DEM 2S-do=PQ

Did you do what [action] I said?
When those [people] who lived at the Tafota river mouth got up...

The nominalised relative clause often carries topic, focus or semantic case marking according to its role in the matrix clause. In the following two examples, the relative clauses are marked for instrumental and locative case, respectively:

I was hitting it on the head with the large knife which I was holding.

I jumped onto the tree which stood beside me.
presupposed material and so to be marked for topic (1984, p. 77f). This may be true, but the above two examples indicate that Maisin relative clauses are susceptible to a range of different roles in the matrix clause, not all of which will entail topic marking. Several examples in our corpus of relative clauses which are either marked for focus (see (7.81), (7.82) below) or which have no particular marking (e.g. (7.76), (7.77) above), further suggest that the trend to topic-marking on relative clauses may be less pervasive than Ross proposes:

(7.81) [Kay]an ti-nane nen]=na amai a-kite-n
    school 3PLS-do DEM=FOC just 1SG.S-see.3PL.O-SS.SIM
    a-tauke
    1S.S-sit
I just sat watching the ones who were doing the workshop.

(7.82) a=ka buran veise tamata-ri[ti-ra-ra
    1SG.PRO=TP bush stand man=PL 3PLS-CONT-come
    nen]=na a-ki-kit-e
    DEM=FOC 1SG.S-CONT-see-3PL.O
I'm watching the men who come hunting.

7.4.3.1 Indefinite relative clauses
An indefinite relative clause in Maisin is one in which the head noun slot is filled by an interrogative pronoun or relative pronoun. There may be an antecedent noun phrase preceding the clause, as in (7.83) below, but it is not obligatory. When a noun phrase does occur in that position, it hosts the irrealis topic marker / =a/.

(7.83) a-marun kefe=a [man=e begati=a a-nane=anan
    1SG.S-set.out place=IT which=LOC garden=IT 1SG.S-do=FUT
    nen]=e a-ra
    DEM=LOC 1SG.S-go
    I set out and went to the place where I will make my garden.

(7.84) isaa=fe [ta-kite-reti=anan nen]=ka isa
    when=IR.SEQ 1INC.S-see-1INC.O=FUT DEM=TP NEG
Some Maisin predicates, both verbal and non-verbal, take arguments in the form of complement clauses. Noonan (Noonan, 1985, p. 49) observes that ‘all languages have some sort of sentence-like complement type, one that without its complementisers has roughly the same syntactic form as a main clause.’ This generalisation is true of Maisin, where complement clauses tend to comprise either an independent clause which follows the complement-taking predicate and which may be nominalised by the demonstrative /nen/, or a nominalised verb phrase, with or without case-marking, which generally precedes the complement-taking predicate. Some complement-taking predicates may employ either of these strategies.

Listed below are some of these predicates along with an account of how they combine with complement clauses. This list does not purport to be exhaustive, and is ordered according to semantic, rather than syntactic properties

### 7.5.1 Utterance predicates
The complements of utterance predicates may appear as direct quotation of the discourse itself, or indirectly as the reporting of it. Since Maisin employs different strategies for each of these options, they are presented separately here.

#### 7.5.1.1 Direct quotations
In direct quotations, any reporting clause always precedes the quoted speech. The quoted speech may be a statement, command or question. In the vast majority of cases the utterance predicate in the preceding clause is /ifi/ *say*, but this is not obligatory and other verbs such as /kute/ *ask* /taran/ *call* and /mon/ *think* are also attested.
He said to his mother, "Mother, cut off your breast and give it [to me]!"

Their mother asked, “Where is your small brother?”

In oral narratives, where the identity of the speakers and the boundaries of the quoted material are recoverable from context and intonation, the reporting clause is sometimes omitted altogether, as in the following exchange:

"Ku-too=in?"
"Have you slept?"
"Ka-too."
"We slept."

"En begat=a kw-ite=yin?"
"Did you see your garden?"
"Ka-kite-ti"
"We saw it."

7.5.1.2 Indirect quotations

7.5.1.2.1 Using potential aspect marker /-aka/
The potential aspect marker /-aka/ is used with the verb ifi say for reported commands and statements in irrealis mode. In contrast to the direct speech formula, the speech predicate is always sentence final in this construction:
He told me to put him on that island.

He said he would come across here.

She said that when you come you’ll go to the village with her.

The realis sequential marker -ate is used with the verb ifi say to express reported commands in realis mode. Here the speech predicate precedes the resulting action.

That’s why she sent you (lit. ‘told you and you went.’)

They invited us to their house. (lit. told us and we came.)

7.5.2 Predicates of propositional attitude and knowledge
The content of some predicates of thought and cognition is expressed by a nominalised clause, involving a verb of cognition, thought etc. followed immediately by a clause expressing the content of that propositional attitude. In these constructions, the nominalised clause is always marked for topic.
However, like the predicates of direct quotation cited above, these predicates may simply be followed by the content clause, without any clause nominalisation taking place. There is no apparent difference in semantic force between these two constructions. Compare the following two examples with (7.94) above.

(7.96) kasan a-nan e=ka nene kora ku-tauke
knowledge 1SG.S-do 2SG.PRO=TP OK only 2S-stay
I know you're just fine.

(7.97) kasan a-nan Ukarumpa=ka kororo bejji
knowledge 1SG.S-do Ukarumpa=TP cold big
I know Ukarumpa is really cold.

The transitive verb /vetimowe/ believe, however, does not appear to be able to take a complement clause as its object argument in the same manner as the predicates in the above examples. All attested examples of /vetimowe/ involve either a noun phrase object or relative clause:

(7.98) ari yei i-ifì nen=ka isa
3SG.GEN sibling 3SG.S-say DEM=TP NEG

i-timowe-n=ka
3SG.S-believe-3SG.O=NEG
She didn't believe what her sister said.
They believed this message that they heard.

7.5.3 Predicates of modality
This diverse group of both verbal and non-verbal predicates includes abilitative, conative, inceptive and desiderative modalities. As no generalisations can be made about the complement-taking strategy of this class each predicate will be described individually.

7.5.3.1 Abilitative /kam/
The impersonal verb /kam/ be adequate/able which must always bear 3rd singular person marking, is used to express ability to perform an action. It most commonly occurs in present continuous aspect and may be followed by an independent clause, usually with future or potential tense/aspect marking.

(7.100) i-ka-kam=in arore ta-ra=anan
3SG.S-CONT-be.able=PQ together 1EXCS-go=FUT
Can we go together?

However it also occurs frequently with nominalised verb stems which, while uninflected for subject person, may host tense/aspect and case marking.

(7.101) Isa i-kan-kam=ka jobi=ka nane=anan=ka
NEG 3SG.S-CONT-able=NEG price=TP do=FUT=TP
If it isn’t possible to pay the price,

(7.102) o rai=so isa i-ka-kam=anan
or come=REF NEG 3SG.S-CONT-able=FUT
Or, [maybe] he won’t be able to come [lit. ‘concerning coming, it won’t be possible.’]

7.5.3.2 Desiderative /marawa/
The noun /marawa/ want/desire may also take a complement in the form of an independent clause or a nominalised verb stem. In the former case, the verb in the complement clause is usually marked for future or potential tense/aspect marking. The clause may precede or follow the complement taking predicate.
And I wanted to go up onto the neck [of the coconut cluster].

Do you want me to die?

They want to get married.

I don’t want to do what you say. (lit. ‘hear your talk’)

He began chasing fish and spearing them.

I began chopping down large trees.
7.5.4 Predicates of immediate perception

The verbs /kite/ see and /ruwa/ hear may both be preceded by complement clauses which comprise the object of the perception predicate in the matrix clause. The complement clause normally takes one of two forms. In some cases it consists of a clause with the medial switch reference marker /-na/, indicating change of subject and simultaneity of action:

(7.111) taru=en ro-u=e=ka i-ise-na
dog=AGT face-1SG.PSR=LOC=TP 3SG.S-stand-DS.SIM

a-kite-si
1SG.S-see-3SG.O
I saw a dog standing in front of me.

Alternatively it may comprise a subordinate clause nominalised by the demonstrative /nen/, in which case it is formally identical to a relative clause.

(7.112) ari fii raati=ka ti-ya-yan-na
3SG.GEN bird small=TP 3PL.S-CONT-sing-DS.SIM

i-ru-ruwa=ate
3SG.S-CONT-hear=RL.SEQ
He heard his small birds singing.

Alternatively it may comprise a subordinate clause nominalised by the demonstrative /nen/, in which case it is formally identical to a relative clause.

(7.113) kayan ti-nane nen=na amai a-kite-n
school 3PL.S-do DEM=FOC just 1SG.S-see-SS.SIM

a-tauke
1SG.S-sit
I just sat and watched them doing their workshop.
Can you hear her crying and screaming and calling out?
8 Topic and Focus

8.1 Introduction

Topic and focus markers have been briefly mentioned in Chapter 3 in the context of word classes and morphology but little comment was made there about their functions and interrelationship at a discourse level. The present chapter will seek to provide some initial exploration of these issues, with the proviso that considerable study remains to be done on the information structure of Maisin and any conclusions presented here should be considered very tentative. Nor will the coverage be entirely even-handed, since more attention has been given to the topic marking system than to the less frequently occurring focus marker.

8.2 Topic and focus markers

As outlined in 3.2.6.2, there are three enclitics marking topic in Maisin, /=ka/ the ‘default’ topic marker, /=a/ the irrealis topic marker and /=ro/ the emphatic topic marker. All three may attach to noun phrases, case-marked postpositional phrases and demonstratives functioning as clause nominalisers. At a syntactic level, /=ka/ obligatorily attaches to the subject NP in a non-verbal equative or descriptive clause. Pragmatically it performs several other functions which will be explored below. /=ro/ has identical distribution to /=ka/ but occurs with less frequency, and adds contrastive emphasis to the constituent so marked. The irrealis topic marker /=a/ marks topic in questions, prohibitions, indefinite relative clauses and reported statements. (This was termed an interrogative topic marker by Ross (1984, p. 63) but is here referred to as irrealis topic marker to acknowledge its occurrence in broader contexts than simply interrogative constructions.)

The focus marker /=na/ has a much more restricted distribution than the topic markers and attaches only to noun phrases. While, it primarily marks noun phrases filling the patient object role in their clause, it may also mark undergoer subjects, and the subjects of stative verbs. It never occurs with case-marked phrases, nor with agent subject noun phrases. Although it most often marks patient object, it is not an obligatory marker of object, and its primary purpose appears to be to highlight essential new information.
8.3 Defining Topic

Topic is far from an easy term to pin down, although there is general agreement that in very broad terms it denotes 'the thing being talked about'. As Lyons puts it, "we will call the person or thing about which something is said 'topic' and the statement made about this thing 'comment'." (1968, p. 335). Dik makes the same point: "Topicality characterizes those entities 'about' which information is provided or requested in the discourse" (1989, p. 266).

Reference to 'persons' or 'things' or 'entities' however, tends to imply nominal properties, and as both Årsjö (1994, p. 2) and Seiler (1983, p. 158) point out, topicality at a discourse level often requires an interpretation broad enough to include non-NP topics, such as clauses and adverbials. At any rate, as far as Maisin topic-marking is concerned, the concept of topic as the 'thing being talked about' is a good starting point.

Also of relevance to topic-marking in Maisin is an element already referred to, namely the 'givenness' of the information, in contrast to new or focal information. This also provides the rationale for the use of the topic marker in many Papuan languages, including Maisin, to mark subordinate clauses. "The use of the topic marker to mark subordinate clauses is semantically appropriate because both topics and subordinate clauses express given information which set the frame of reference for the rest of the sentence." (Foley, 1986, p. 203) Haiman notes the same tendency specifically in relation to topic-marking on the protasis of a conditional clause. (Haiman, 1985, p. 36) Temporal and conditional clauses in Maisin are obligatorily marked for topic, and other dependent clauses optionally so marked.

An additional important element of topic is highlighted in a study of topic marking in Ama, a Papuan language of Papua New Guinea belonging to the Left May family in the East Sepik province. The function of the Ama topic marker /mo/ bears some striking similarities to that of the Maisin topic-marking enclitic /=ka/ at both a syntactic and pragmatic level. In defining topic as it is expressed in Ama discourse, Årsjö, like Ross, draws on the terminology used by Comrie, contrasting topic, as the given information, or 'point of departure', with focus, the new information supplied by the sentence. (Årsjö, 1994, p. 2) However, she goes further to include a broader understanding of the concept of topic, and cites Chafe, whose interpretation of topic is also quoted here because it seems particularly relevant to Maisin. "Typically, it would seem the topic sets a spatial, temporal, or individual framework within which the main predication holds." (Wallace L. Chafe, 1976, p. 50)

Årsjö interprets the 'individual framework' referred to by Chafe as referring to the identification of participants, and illustrates how, in Ama, /=mo/ is regularly used to establish the temporal and spatial deictic centres in a discourse, and to re-establish them as necessary, as well as to introduce and track main participants. All of these functions are also carried out by the Maisin topic marker /=ka/. Her observation that the topic marker occurs
more frequently with temporal than with locative expressions is also true of Maisin, as is her further comment that when the action in a given text is judged to have moved too far from the original centre, a new spatial centre will be established and marked for topic. (1994, p. 14) As applied to Maisin then, Chafe’s treatment of topic usefully supplements the concepts of ‘aboutness’ and ‘givenness’ already mentioned.

8.4 Previous discussion of Maisin information structure

8.4.1 Topic
In terms of the function of the topic marker in Maisin discourse, Ross (1984, p. 62) refers to the distinctions made by Comrie (1981) between topic and comment, defining the topic as what the speaker is talking about, as opposed to what he is saying about it. He then illustrates this with reference to a series of examples of information questions in Maisin, where the topic marker clearly attaches to the component about which the question is being asked.

Ross goes on to use an extended extract from a Maisin narrative text to demonstrate the way that the topic markers are used to signal the introduction of a new topic in a discourse, or to re-activate a topic that may need to be brought back into the hearer’s immediate awareness (1984, p. 64ff). The topics occurring in this text include noun phrases in subject and object roles as well as time expressions and case-marked phrases. No specific instances of topic-marked locative phrases are included, although these occur regularly in our own data, and will be referred to below in the context of one of the topic’s functions of setting a spatial framework for the discourse.

Ross further notes the tendency for the topic marker to attach to nominalised subordinate clauses, including relative, temporal and conditional clauses, in keeping with an observable pattern in languages in Papua New Guinea whereby such clauses are treated as presupposed information, and so marked for topic. (1984, p. 78) In our own data, temporal and conditional clauses are regularly marked for topic ⁹, but relative clauses do not obligatorily receive topic marking.

8.4.2 Focus
Ross again draws on Comrie’s terminology in treating focus as ‘the essential piece of new information that is carried by the sentence.’ (Comrie, 1981, p. 57). Once more he illustrates this both from information questions, where the focus marker may attach to a non-case-marked question word, highlighting the unknown, hence new, information being sought,(1984, p. 62f) and from narrative text, where it again signals unpredictable, new information. (1984, p. 66f)

⁹ Haiman (1978: 564 ‘Conditionals, like topics, are givens which constitute the frame of reference with respect to which the main clause is either true (if a proposition), or felicitous (if not).’
His suggestion (1984, p. 67) that one of the functions of the agent/instrument marker /=en/ when attached to a subject is to mark focus, seems well-founded. Our own data supports his claim that no subject marked with /=en/ functions also as the topic of its sentence. (Although there are attested instances of /=en/ with the topic marker /=ka/ attached, all those so far identified involve /=en/ in an instrumental role, rather than functioning as agent subject.) While he rightly points out that this claim can only be adduced as negative evidence for the topic-marking status of /=en/ rather than positive evidence for its focus-marking capacity, examples from our data, such as the following, may offer a more solid basis for the focus-marking function of /=en/.

In the following exchange, involving a content question, the topic is the rooster (/biyoki=a/) and the information-seeking wh-element of the question is inherently focal. The new information being sought can also be expected to be the focus of the response, and it here comprises the personal pronoun /a/ with the agent marker /=en/, lending weight to Ross’s proposal, that /=en/, attached to a subject NP, is being used to indicate focus.

(8.1) Sauki ratti nen=ka e-efi, "Se=ate
woman old DEM=TP 3SG.S-say who=RLSEQ

au biyoki=a i-vavan iate i-ya-yan
1SG.GEN rooster=IT 3SG.S-disturb then 3SG.S-CONT-crow

i-ra-ra?"
3SG.S-CONT-come

That old woman said, “Who’s disturbed my rooster and now it’s running round crowing?”

(8.2) Morobi nen=ka e-efi, "Abe,
a=sen
Girl DEM=TP 3SG.S-say Granny 1SG.PRO=AGT

a-ra-ra=me ai biyoki=ka a-vavan
1SG.S-CONT-come=PAST 2SG.GEN rooster=TP 1SG.S-disturb

iate i-ya-yan i-taisukki i-ra-ra.”
then 3SG.S-CONT-crow 3SG.S-run 3SG.S-CONT-come
The girl said, “Granny, I'm the one who was coming disturbing your rooster so that he's running round crowing.”

8.5 Topic in Maisin
At least three broad statements can then be made about the use of the topic marker in Maisin. It signals the ‘thing being talked about’ in any given discourse. It marks given or presupposed information by contrast with that which is new or unpredictable. It sets the framework for the discourse in terms of time, place and individual participants and re-establishes that framework as appropriate throughout the discourse.

These functions will be illustrated with reference to two extended texts which are set out below, but a few prior comments can be made about topic and focus-marking in Maisin, on the basis of examination of a corpus of 32 texts, comprising 20 narratives, 8 personal letters and 4 procedural texts.

Firstly, the topic marker occurs a great deal more frequently than the focus marker. Typically, instances of topic marker /=ka/ or emphatic topic marker /=ro/ average about one occurrence for every 3 clauses (although their distribution was not necessarily even throughout the text.) By contrast, occurrences of the focus marker were much rarer and some texts lacked any explicit focus marking. Appropriate use of the topic marker appears thus to be essential to the flow of the discourse, as opposed to the more ‘discretionary’ employment of the focus marker.

In the narrative texts, and in the personal letters, the topic marker was most commonly used to track main participants in the discourse, and to a lesser degree for props, for subordinate clauses and for expressions of time or of spatial setting.

In the procedural texts, this pattern is reversed, as more than half the occurrences involved temporal clauses, and there was considerably more topic marking of inanimate props than of human participants. This is perhaps to be expected, since such texts necessarily involve detailing successive stages of an activity or custom, and the human participants are less prominent than these temporal phases and than the equipment used for the activity at each stage.

Where the topic marker attached to a noun phrase, the overall tendency was for it to be more often used with a subject NP than an object NP, but the difference was not significant, and in some individual texts the object NP received more frequent topic marking. As
mentioned above, it was also not uncommon for both subject and object arguments to receive topic marking within the same clause:

(8.3) Tamati nen=ka ari sau ki fona=ka isa man DEM=TP 3SG.GEN wife voice=TP NEG

i-ru-ruwa=me=ka
3SG.S-CONT-hear=PAST=TP

That man wasn’t listening to his wife’s talk.

8.5.1 Topic and focus in a narrative text
The following text, about a woman who is swallowed by a fish but later returned to her family, comprises 76 clauses, containing 30 instances of topic marking with /=ka/ or /=ro/ and 10 instances of focus marking with focus marker /=na/ or agent marker /=en/.

The primary use of the topic markers in this text is to track the 4 main participants (the husband and wife, with their daughter, and the big fish.) All three human participants are introduced in the opening sentence with no explicit marking for either topic or focus. Unusually, the wife is marked with the agent enclitic (and hence bears focus, following Ross’s suggestion above) four times in the first six sentences of the story. This may reflect her atypical, hence unpredictable, role as primary initiator of the action in the opening episodes. In sentence (8) however, where she is no longer in control, the focus transfers to the unexpected new participant, the big fish, and the woman receives topic marking to signal her re-introduction as the patient/victim of the fish’s actions. Although she is physically absent from the scene, her topical status is retained throughout sentences (9) to (12) as her husband and daughter discuss what happened to her. When the woman resurfaces (literally!) in sentence (18) she is marked for focus, with the agentive enclitic /=en/ perhaps because, since she had been given up for dead, her re-entry here constitutes unexpected new information.

The husband, introduced in the first sentence, does not play any further significant part in the narrative until sentence (9) where his reactivation is signalled with topic marking. Similarly the daughter is marked for topic at each new episode in the narrative where she plays a role – in sentence (2) when she accompanies her parents to the garden, in sentence (10) when she learns of her mother’s disappearance, and in sentence (14) where there has been a change in both time and setting and she needs to be re-activated. Finally, the fish is explicitly mentioned four times in the story. In the first three of these, (sentences (8), (12) and (15)) it receives agent/focus status, probably because both its first appearance when it
swallows the woman, and its reappearance to regurgitate her, are unlikely and unanticipated occurrences, rather than given information. In its final appearance in sentence (19), the fish is now a participant known to the hearers and is reintroduced with a topic marker, following several clauses relating the wife and daughter’s actions.

Each of the new locations in the narrative receives topic marking, as it sets the spatial framework for the ensuing action. So the enclitic /=ka/ is found marking the garden (sentence (2)), the island (sentence (5)), and the village (sentences (13) and (15)), as the action of the story moves alternately through each of these settings. In the same way, the temporal subordinate clauses in sentences (4), (9), (13), (15), (18) and (19), all of which carry obligatory topic marking, set the framework, in terms of timing, within which the ensuing main predicate holds.

Less clear is the motivation for the topic marking on, for example, the canoe (/kaa=ka/) in sentence (4), a prop which receives no further mention in the text, unless perhaps its implicit ‘givenness’ as the necessary means of conveyance to the island is adequate reason for it to receive topical status here. A similar example is the topic-marked weeping (/tesi=ka/) in sentence (13) (which also provides an example of a single clause in which both syntactic subject and object are marked for topic). This is perhaps a case of the topic switching to the girl, then more specifically to her activity of weeping, which is further commented on in the following clause.

The focus-marking on both the woman and the fish in their roles as agents of unlikely activity has already been mentioned, but there are also three instances of focus marking on the sun (/yaa=na/ in sentences (3) and (6)) the basis for which is less obvious.

Sauki I-yonki=ate Wanno Ti-rafa-ra-n
woman 3SG.S-be.lost=RLSEQ And 3PL.S-find-3SG.O
The Woman who was lost and found

(1) Sauki fafi wanno ei morobi ratti nan
wife husband and 3PL.GEN girl small thus
ti-tauke=me sirari ite=rate sauki=en e-efi,
3PL-stay=PAST day other=RLSEQ wife=AGT 3SG.S-say

“Tamati=in afun=ka ta-ra begati=fe
man=DEM today=TP 1INC.S-go garden=IRSEQ
There was a married couple with their young daughter, one day the wife said, "Husband, let's go to the garden today then tomorrow we'll go to the garden and picnic."

So they got up, the woman took the daughter and they went off to the garden.

They walked, the sun was going down so the wife said, "Husband, OK, the sun is going down so we'll return to the village."
They arrived, they slept and when dawn was breaking they went down, pulled down the canoe and set off.

They were making their way, then they came to the island.

They went in, they cooked there, the sun went down so the wife said, “Husband, let’s sleep here then tomorrow we’ll go back to the village.”

So they slept there.
While they were sleeping at night a large fish went up and swallowed the woman down inside its stomach.

Ari fafi=ka i-tomi=me mana nen
3SG.GEN husband=TP 3SG.S-stay=PAST fish DEM

e-uki=aka i-yavaddi nen=na i-ruwa
3SG.S-go.down=POT 3SG.S-flap DEM=FOC 3SG.S-hear

nen=so i-ramara e-kira nen=ka
DEM=REF 3SG.S-get.up 3SG.S-search DEM=TP

ari sauki ari kefe=e=ka amura.
3SG.GEN wife 3SG.GEN place=LOC=TP nothing.

Her husband was still there, he heard the fish flapping its way down so he got but when he searched, his wife's place was empty.

Nen=so ari morobi=ka funa=e i-gi
DEM=REF 3SG.GEN girl=TP body=LOC 3SG.S-hold

e-ise=ate e-efi, “Aiti=ka ta-ra=ana
3SG.S-stand=RL.SEQ 3SG.S-say 1INC.S=TP 1INC.S-go=FUT

wakki=e.”
village=LOC
So he shook his daughter awake, he said, “We’re going back to the village.”

Nen=so ari morobi e-efi,
DEM=REF 3SG.GEN girl 3SG.S-say

“Ate au yau=ka?”
But 1SG.GEN mother=TP
So the girl said, “But my mother?”
“Ai=ka foim=e mana=en i-vei.”

3SG.PRO=TP night=LOC fish=AGT 3SG.S-get.3SG.O

“She was taken by a fish in the night.”

E-e nenanan ari yabi e-efi

3SG.S-go thus 3SG.GEN father 3SG.S-say

3SG.S-go=TP girl small DEM=TP crying=TP

When she went in accordance with what her father said, that small girl started crying, she was crying as they went back to the village.

Ti-tauke=me kindi ite=ate morobi nen=ka

3PL.S-stay=PAST time one=RLSEQ girl DEM=TP

They were living there then one day the girl was walking along the beach, then she went up and sat under an ute tree.

i-tauke=me tassa torafa=e e-kira nen=ka

3SG.S-sit=PAST sea surface=LOC 3SG.S-look DEM=TP

She was sitting there and when she looked at the surface of the sea a large fish was coming up and saw her.
(16) Nen=so i-ramara-n buram=e i-rau.
DEM=REF 3SG.S-get.up-SS.SIM 3SG.S-get in
So she got up and went into the bush.

(17) Ai i-yonki i-tauke nen=ka mana
3SG.PRO 3SG.S-hide 3SG.S-sit DEM=TP fish

nen=ka i-vasi jeri=en.
DEM=TP 3SG.S-come up beach=3SG.S
While she sat in hiding the fish came up and beached itself.

(18) Inate kava i-ya-yasi nen=ka sauki=en
Then mouth 3SG.S-CONT-open DEM=TP woman=AGT

sau-en i-rauku morobi nen=ka i-tauke=me
jump-3SG.S 3SG.S-com.out girl DEM=TP 3SG.S-sit=PAST

e-komossen nen=ka ari yau=na
3SG.S-crane.neck DEM=TP 3SG.GEN mother=FOC

i-kite-si nen=so i-ramara
3SG.S-see-3SG.O DEM=REF 3SG.S-get up

i-te-tesi-n i-taisukki e-uki.
3SG.S-CONT-cry-SS.SIM 3SG.S-run 3SG.S-go.down
Then when it opened its mouth a woman jumped out, when the girl sitting there craned
her neck, she saw her mother so she got up and ran crying down.

(19) E-ukaa nen=ka mana nen=ka
3SG.S-CONT-go.down DEM=TP fish DEM=TP

i-watavi-si-n sibo=e e-uki.
3SG.S-turn-3SG.O-SS.SIM deep=LOC 3SG.S-go.down
When she was going down, the fish turned and went back into the deep water.

Nate morobi nen=ka ari yau=en
Then girl DEM=TP 3SG.GEN mother=AGT
Then the girl and her mother hugged each other and wept and went to their village.

8.5.2 Topic and focus in a procedural text

The text below is an account of the customs and procedures followed when a member of the community dies. Within its 77 clauses there are 8 occurrences of focus marking, and 26 instances of the topic marking enclitics, a ratio comparable with that in the narrative text described above. In terms of the kinds of constituents which receive the topic marking, however, the distribution differs from that of the narrative text. Here, nearly half (12) of the topic-marked elements are time expressions or temporal clauses and the remaining 14 are evenly divided between human participants and inanimate props, each of which may occur only once or twice in the entire discourse. Rather than track the actions of a group of main participants, as in the narrative, the topic marking here traces a series of chronological stages within the overall event and switches from topic to topic in recounting what happens at each of those stages.

So for example, in the first sentence the topic-marked temporal clause sets the basic framework for the entire discourse (When a person dies...) and then the topic of what happens first (/wawaun=ka/) is introduced. In sentence (2) the topic switches to the mourning (/sora=ka/), with a description of that, then in sentence (3) to the burial place (/kefe=ka/) and its preparation. In sentence (4) the temporal clause establishes that the grave is ready, and the topic switches yet again, this time to the stretcher (/fana=ro/) and then in sentence (5) to the treatment of the dead person’s body (/mati saukitamaten=ka/). In this way, at frequent intervals, the topic markers indicate where we are in terms of the timeframe of the operation, and then alert us to the topic under consideration at that point. This topic may be the action being undertaken, the instrument used or the people performing the action, as in sentences (10), (11) and (12) where the topic switches in turn from the actions of the womenfolk (/sauke momorobi=ka/) , to those of the youth (/waunkaru=ro/) and finally to those of the elders (/yeiyabi wanno sauke roi=ka/).

Of the eight instances of focus-marking in this text, five involve the focus marking enclitic /=na/ attaching to a direct object NP, (in sentences (3), (5), (6) and (15)) and three involve the agent enclitic /=en/ attaching to a subject agent (in sentences (3), (4) and (8). Unlike the topic marker, the focus marker is never obligatory and is presumably used in each of these instances because the speaker wishes to highlight the new information being given about the topic of the sentence. So for example in sentence (3), the main topic is the burial place, but the use of the agent/focus marking /yeiyabi=en/ highlights the fact that it is the elders who determine the location of the burial site. Similarly, in sentence (6) the village
community (/saukitamati=ka/) are the topic (as 'given' participants in any occasion of mourning) but focus attaches to less predictable elements such as the Triton shell (/tavu=na/) which drew them out for the mourning, and on the string bags (/yati=na/) which they bring with them to the wake.

Mati Kindi ari Kikiki
Death Time 3SG.GEN Story
Story about when someone dies

(1) Sauki o tamati i-mati=anan=ka wawaun=ka
woman or man 3SG.S-die=FUT=TP first=TP
ikosi yun wanno sissi masa=tom=en
coconut water and flower smell=ACMP=AGT
teiyou-si funa ti-ma-masi yan embobi
3PLS-bathe-3SG.O body 3PLS-CONT-rub mat tapa.cloth
ti-ne ti-ter-si=fe i-to=fe, kariyateri
3PLS-do 3PLS-put-3SG.O=IRSEQ 3SG.S-stay=IRSEQ notice
tavu=ka ran sinati ti-kuven ti-mayati=ana.
Triton=TP time three 3PLS-blow 3PLS-pull=FUT

When someone dies first they will bathe the body in coconut water and rub fragrant flowers on it, then they'll put tapa cloth and mats over it and then announce the death with three long blasts of the Triton shell.

(2) Inefe sora=ka ti-wafikko-n=anan.
Then mourning=TP 3PLS-begin-3SG.O=FUT
Then they'll begin the mourning

(3) Nan ti-ve-n ti-tauke-n saukitamati
Thus 3PLS-get.3SG.O-SS.SIM 3PLS-stay-SS.SIM people
o ari roise siname ti-rauku
or 3SG.GEN sibling.PL friend.PL 3PL-come.out
ti-kit-kite-n sora ti-nan-na
3PLS-CONT-see.PL.O-SS.SIM mourning 3PLS-CONT.do-DS.SIM
While that's going on, people, especially the deceased's friends and relations will come out and be watching, and while the mourning is going on the sun will come up and the elders will tell people the place, then the youth will go and prepare his burial place in the graveyard.

While some come to prepare his burial place, others will construct a stretcher for him.
When they get back from preparing the grave, they'll go and wrap the body of the deceased and carry it down on a stretcher, then they'll put it down into the grave, complete the prayers and bury it.

Now people heard the death announcement on the Triton shell in the morning and came out, so they will go back home, bathe, change their clothes, get their string bags and go to the dead person's home for the funeral vigil.

When the youth come back, they'll climb coconut tries, husk the coconuts, make a big fire, roast those coconuts and give them to the adults and children at the wake for them to eat and drink.

Then sun go evening 3SG.S-CONT.do DEM=TP
Then when the sun is going down, one of the elders at the dead person’s village will speak up, thank the people then they will leave and go home to sleep.

(9) I-siran rasi=ka mati ari kindi sandei, 3SG.S-dawn tomorrow=TP death 3SG.GEN time two

then=so wanno mati wakki=e gumema. DEM=REF again death village=LOC wake.

The next day is the second day after the death, so the funeral vigil continues at the dead person’s village.

(10) Rasiram=e mati kefe nen sauki-e mo-morobi=ka morning=LOC death place DEM woman-PL PL-girl=TP

    kaa fifi=so tauri=ka begati=e te-ra=ana. wood chop=REF others=TP garden=LOC 3PL.S-go=FUT

In the morning at the dead person’s place, some of the women and girls will chop firewood, others will go to the garden.

(11) Waunkaru=ro nan san=e buram=e ti-ra=ana Youth=ETP thus beach=LOC bush=LOC 3PL.S-go=FUT

Likewise, the youths will go fishing in the sea, or hunting in the bush.

(12) Yeiyabi wanno sauki-e roi=ka yaa nuka Elders and woman-PL sisters=TP sun middle

    yove=e=fe gumema=ka ti-rauku=ana mati kefe. side=LOC=IRSEQ wake=TP 3PL.S-come.out=FUT death place

The older men and women will come out to the funeral vigil in the dead person’s village around the middle of the day.
When the sun has passed over that piece of ground, and the ones who went in come out again, they will cook and give food to all the people at the wake and its leaders, they will eat and drink and then depart.

Now the third day is the time for bathing and letting the smoke go up again after the death.
bush=FOC  thus

So then in the morning, they’ll go to the garden, and look for firewood for all the cooking and likewise go fishing and hunting.

(16)  Seseka  ti-ve-n  ti-rauku=fe,
All  3PLS-get.3SG.O-SS.SIM  3PLS-go.out=IR.SEQ

raruti=ka  mati  ari  yun  ye  kasu  te-ri.
afternoon=TP  death  3SG.GEN  water  bathe  smoke  put-3PL.O

They’ll bring everything back, then in the afternoon will be the bathing and smoke putting for the dead person.

(17)  Nefe  sauki-e  mo-morobi  ti-kassi  ti-vav-si
Then  woman-PL  PL-girl  3PLS-bake.3SG.O  3PLS-boil-3SG.O

ti-buwandi  gumema  tamata-ri  aro  ti-kan  ti-kun
3PLS-share  wake  owner-PL  with  3PLS-eat3PLS-drink

toto  te-kute-ri=fe  ti-taramosa-ri=ana.
RECIPI  3PLS-greet-3PL.O=IR.SEQ  3PLS-depart-PL=FUT

Then the women and girls will cook, the food will be shared out, they’ll eat and drink with the chief mourners, then they’ll take leave of each other and go home.

(18)  Nene  mati  ari  vavatta=ka  timosa.
OK  death  3SG.GEN  heavy=TP  finish.

OK, then the main part of the death observance is over.
REFERENCES


