

Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis is an initial study of some discourse structures of the Makuri Naga language. This thesis analyzes three Makuri first person narratives by identifying segment boundaries, salience schemes, aspects of participant reference, and reference and ranking for participants. Two narratives are first person narratives relating to animal hunting, and another one is a mixed one with first person and third person perspectives related to human interaction.

Chapter 1 includes an overview of the Makuri people, and a brief phonology and grammar sketch to serve as an introduction to the discourse level in the Makuri language.

1.1 The Makuri people and the language

The Makuri people are speakers of a Naga language. They live in Hkamti district of Sagaing Division in the north-western Myanmar, and Phek and Kiphri districts of Nagaland, a north-eastern state of India. They are geographically located between 26° 15' N and 27° 10' N, and from 94° 50' E to 95° 45' E. The Makuri Naga Culture Committee (2003) lists the total population at about 15,000. It is said that more than half of the population lives in Myanmar, the remainder live in India. The majority of the villages in Hkamti district are found in Layshee Township. There are also some villages located in Homalin, Hkamti, and Lahe townships. These places are shown in Figure 1.

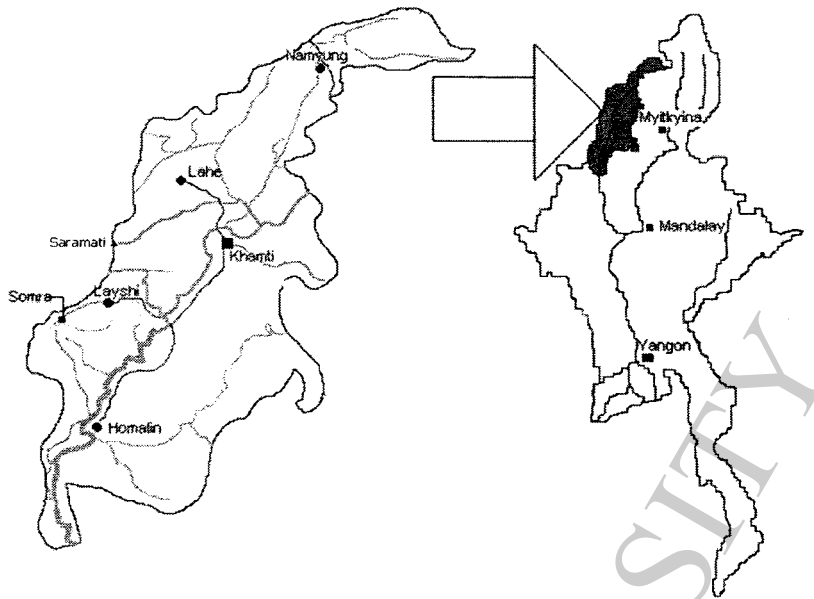


Figure 1: General location of Naga people in Myanmar

Just as many other Naga groups have a name which covers two or more dialects, so Makuri does not refer to one particular language group. The name Makuri refers to a group of people who have common customs and practices, and live in the same region around Mt. Saramati. The name itself bears the meaning ‘the people who live around Mt. Saramati’. One widely spoken language of the group became a language for interrelational communication between the villages. This people group was officially named and registered as Makuri in 1960 by the people themselves (Makuri Naga Culture Committee 2003: ii).

Traditionally the Makuri are said to have come to Myanmar by three routes from Nagaland, India. One group came to Makheot village, Lahe Township, and another came through Amimi (a Longphuri village at present) to Khula, Layshee Twonship. The last group came through Phokhongri and Avakhong villages (in Nagaland, India) to Shera, Layshee Township. Then they gradually spread to the present locations.

Makuri has a Roman-based orthography which was introduced by church leaders at around 1960. Recently the orthography has been revised in order to better reflect the phonology of the language. However the present Makuri orthography does not represent tone markings, though it is a tonal language.

1.2 Classification of the language

The Makuri Naga language is one of the Naga languages. These languages have been classified differently within the Tibeto-Burman family by different researchers. According to the criteria that Marrison (1967:168) used in sub-classification of Naga languages in north-east India, this language resembles in some aspects the type B, Ao-Tangkhul group of Naga languages as in Figure 2. The criteria that he used to group these languages were phonology, morphology, five lexical similarities, and syntax. These criteria were used to determine the place of Makuri within Marrison's classification.

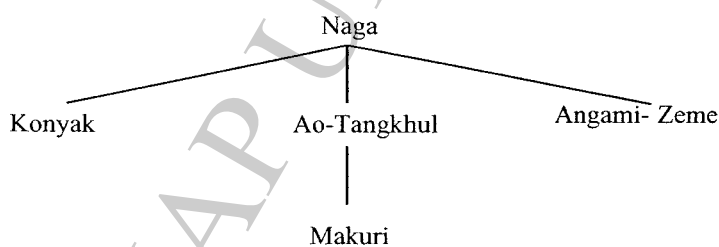


Figure 2: Classification of Naga languages adapted from Marrison (1967)

Bradley (1997:27) proposed four main groups of the Tibeto-Burman family (see Figure 3). According to him Naga languages are grouped into two main groups: northern Naga languages and southern Naga languages. In this grouping the Ao-Tangkhul languages (Marrison's type B Naga languages) are found in the Southern Naga group under the Kuki/Chin/Naga branch.

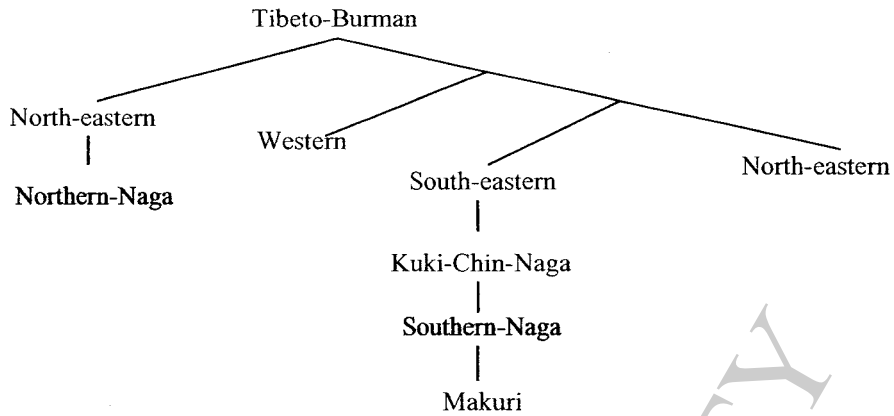


Figure 3: Classification of Tibeto-Burman languages adapted from Bradley (1997)

One of the more recent classification schemes within the Naga languages is the work of J. D. Saul (2005:19-30). He divides them into six sub-groups:

Tangkhul, Zeme, Angami, Ao-Yimchungru, Konyak, and Khiamniungan as mapped in Figure 4. Makuri is placed as a sub-section of Yimchungru under Ao-Yimchungru group.

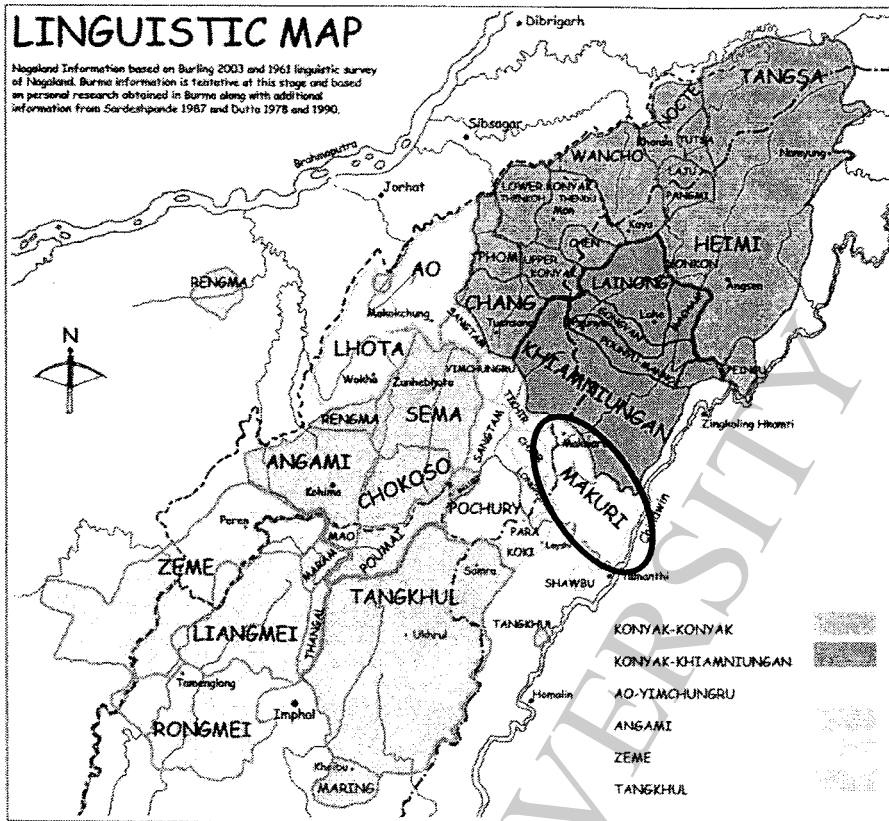


Figure 4: Naga Linguistic map adapter from Saul (2005)

The dialect groups included under Makuri are Phuvle (Chomi)¹, Makheotle (Makhale), Sengphuvle (Samphuri), Muvle (Longphuri), and Jeile (Salomi) (see Saul 2005:25). The relationship of the Makuri language analyzed in this thesis to other Makuri dialects is shown in Figure 4.

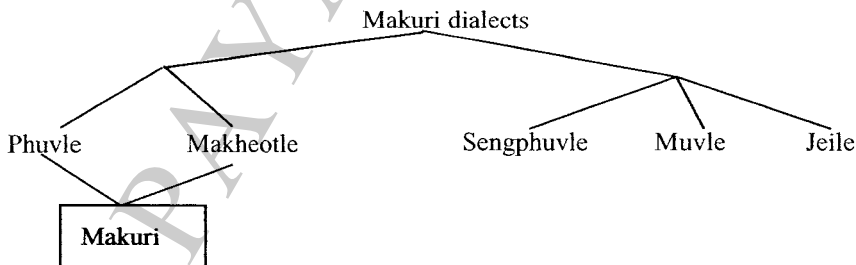


Figure 5: The relationship of Makuri dialects

¹ I am a native speaker of Phuvle dialect.

In this thesis the Makuri language is composed of the two dialects from the first group to the left in Figure 5 . They are intelligible with each other and currently use the same literature. The dialects from the second branch to the right in Figure 5 are not intelligible with the ones from the first group. However, all of these dialect groups have lived together in the same villages for decades; thus most of the villagers of these dialects are now able to communicate using this interrelational language, which is Makuri. It is reported that Muvle (Longphuri) speakers can speak and can communicate Makuri well (Nahhas, private communication).

1.3 Phonology and orthography

The phonology along with orthography presented in this section is organized by treating progressively larger units of the sound system: the consonant and vowel phonemes, syllable structure and finally the tones. Since the data analyzed in this thesis is presented using the orthography of the language, this orthography is discussed along with the phonology.

1.3.1 Consonants

The Makuri language has 25 consonants. They are shown in Table 1.

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar
voiceless stop	p p ^h	t t ^h			c c ^h	k k ^h
voiceless fricative	f	s		ʃ		
voiced fricative	v	z		ʒ		
voiceless affricate		ts ts ^h		tʃ		
voiced nasal	m	n			ɲ	ŋ
voiced approximant	w	l	ɹ		j	

Table 1: Makuri consonants phonemes

All the consonants can be used in the syllable initial position. The glottal stop [ʔ] occurs word medially in words with two or more syllables, but it is always syllable final. Since it occurs only in the coda, it can be analyzed as the allophone of /t/, which never occurs in the coda. The phonological rule for this can be stated as /t/ becomes [ʔ] in the coda.

The occurrences of the consonants /w, f, ts^h/ are rare in the language. The affricates are not considered to be consonant clusters because no other non-suspicious consonant cluster can be seen in the initial position. The orthographic representations of the consonants are shown in Table 2.

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar
voiceless stop	p ph	t th			c ch	k kh
voiceless fricative	f	s		sh		
voiced fricative	v	z		zh		
voiceless affricate		ts	tsh	j		
voiced nasal	m	n			ny	ng
voiced approximant	w	l	ɹ		y	

Table 2: Orthographic representation of Makuri consonants

1.3.2 Vowels

The inventory of ten vowel phonemes includes nine simple vowels and one diphthong vowel /ai/. This vowel /ai/ is always followed by the velar nasal /ŋ/. The simple vowels can occur in syllable final position. Since there is only one diphthong, it is suspected that /ai/ might be a phonetic realization of one of the front vowels when it is followed by velar nasal /ŋ/, because none of the front vowels precedes /ŋ/. In the orthography this sound is written using the symbol 'e', which is used for the open mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/.

The open mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/ is phonetically realized as close mid front unrounded vowel [e] when it stands by itself or when it follows after the consonants /h/ or /n/. The sound /ɛ/ is chosen as the underlying form for these two allophones [ɛ, e] because [ɛ] is the most common sound. Also /ɔ/ is phonetically realized as [o] when it follows /h/ or /n/. But the difference between /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ is that /ɔ/ is realized as [ɔ] when it is by itself.

Another vowel that has two allophones is the close front rounded vowel /y/. It is phonetically realized as [ø] when it is followed by the glottal stop [ʔ] in the coda. The mid central unrounded vowel /ə/ is the only vowel that does not occur before any of the final consonants. Other vowels occur with a limited number of final consonants. The vowels are shown in Table 3.

	Front		Central	Back	
Close	i	y		u	u
Near-close	ɪ				
Mid			ə		
Open-mid	ɛ				ɔ
Open				a	

Table 3: Makuri vowel phonemes

The Makuri writing system uses two symbols for each allophone of /y/. For instance, /y/ is written as *iu* when it occurs without [ʔ] as *kiu* /ky/ ‘to feed’, and is written as *eo* when it occurs with [ʔ] as in *keot* /kyʔ/ ‘clan’. One reason for these allophones to use two symbols is that there is one common word *amiut* [amyʔ] ‘3S’ in another dialect of this language which is contrastive with the regular occurrence of *ameot* [amøʔ] ‘moisture’. In order to preserve this distinction in these two dialects using a single writing system, the present Makuri orthography retains two symbols for this phoneme. The vowels in the current orthography are given in Table 4.

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i	iu (eo)	ü u
Near-close	ei		
Mid		ë	
Open-mid	e		o
Open			a

Table 4: Makuri vowels for orthography

1.3.3 Syllable patterns

All syllables have a vowel nucleus except a syllabic bilabial nasal /m̩/ 'T'.

Vowels that stand as a syllable are: /u/ 'that', /ɔ/ 'ABS', /a/ 'and, then, 3S'.

There are five final consonants: /v, k, ʔ, h, ŋ/. Glottal stop [ʔ] is the only final that occurs with the front vowels. The consonants /k, ŋ/ occur with the back vowels /u, o, a/. The consonants /h, v/ can occur only following the close back vowel /u/. Only the glottal stop [ʔ] occurs after one final consonant /v/. This combination in the coda seems to be a consonant cluster in this language. In this case the possible syllable structure of this language is (C1) V (C2) (C3), where:

C1: {all C} except [ʔ],

C2: {v, k, ʔ, h, ŋ}, and

C3: {ʔ} only if C2 is / v /.

1.3.4 Tones

This language seems to have three phonemic tones in both open and closed syllables. They are low, falling, and high. Some examples of the open and closed syllables with tone markings are given in Table 5.

Tone mark	Open syllable		Closed syllable	
1) Low	[k ^h ā]	(to) keep	[pōŋ]	threshing place
2) Falling	[k ^h â]	crate	[pôŋ]	cup
3) High	[k ^h á]	(to) tend	[póŋ]	(to) bloom

Table 5: Phonemic tones

Syllables closed with [ʔ] never occur with high tone. They can appear with either low or falling tone, e.g. /k^hāʔ/ ‘one’ and /k^hâʔ/ ‘to rake with hands/ with implements’. Since the orthography of the language does not mark tones, the present data will not mark them either. Tone marking distinctions are not necessary for this current discourse analysis.

1.4 Grammar

The grammar sketch in this section expands the work of Son (2006). The data used by Son was a Makuri Naga primer, which was circulated two years earlier. As I am a native speaker of Makuri Naga I was able to add to and clarify Son’s grammar sketch in several areas. This current summary attempts to provide an adequate grammatical foundation for the Makuri Naga language to chart texts and prepare them for analysis at the discourse level.

The specific areas of interest described in the following sections are noun phrases, postpositional phrases, verb phrases, sentence initial phrases, and clause types.

1.4.1 Noun phrases

Constituent order, noun phrase heads, possessors and modifiers, demonstratives, classifiers and quantifiers, and complex noun phrases are discussed in this section on the noun phrase.

1.4.1.1 Constituent order

The complete schematic for the noun phrase (NP) constituent order consists of head noun (N_H), possessor (POSS), modifier (MOD), demonstrative (DEM), classifier (CLF), and quantifier (QNT). The head noun and its relationship to the other components are given below in Figure 6. The order of CLF and MOD in the NP is not fixed, as with the DEM and QNT. The components in parenthesis are optional. The components indicated may also be phrases.

$$NP_1 = (\text{MOD}_{RC, PP}) + (\text{POSS}_{NP}) + N_H + (\text{CLF}) + (\text{MOD}_{Adj, Appo}) + (\text{DEM}) + (\text{QNT})$$
$$NP_2 = (\text{MOD}_{RC, PP}) + (\text{POSS}_{NP}) + N_H + (\text{MOD}_{Adj, Appo}) + (\text{CLF}) + (\text{QNT}) + (\text{DEM})$$

Figure 6: Noun phrase constituent

Example (1) presents an NP_1 , where a relative clause and possessive pronoun *alë* ‘their’ precede the head noun *shüngkü* ‘ginger’, which is followed by classifier *mëkhüt* ‘root’, a modifier *atei* ‘big’, demonstrative *ulë* ‘those’, and the number *këse* ‘three’. In this sentence *atei* ‘big’ modifies the classifier, which again, like an appositive noun modifies the head noun. However, the position of the demonstrative follows the number when a classifier occurs before the number in a noun phrase as NP_2 in example (2). The classifier for the fruit *peng* takes the place of the demonstrative of NP_1 and occurs after the number in NP_2 .

(1) Elicited example.078

yong ta kha lei alë shüngkü mëkhüt atei ulë këse o
barn in keep STAT 3PL ginger root big those three ABS

those three big ginger roots of theirs kept in the barn

(2) Elicited example.079

yong chak kha lei alë mërongvüh-sei ate peng këse ulë o
barn on keep STAT 3PL pineapple-fruit big body three those ABS

those three big pineapples of theirs kept in the barn

1.4.1.2 Head Noun

The head of a noun phrase can be a common noun, a proper noun, a pronoun, or a demonstrative. In example (3) a common noun *mënyüv* ‘wild pig’ is the head of a noun phrase *mënyüv pei* ‘a herd of wild pigs’, the subject of the sentence.

(3) Wild Pig.008

mënyüv pei o Chiuthong lüv ta kë a-cheot net
... wild.pig crowd ABS ...Chiuthong field in at ...come-out PAST.RL

...A herd of wild pigs ...came out in Chiuthong’s field.

A proper noun can also head a noun phrase in the subject slot as in example (4), where the name *Yongcuv* is seen as the head of the noun phrase.

(4) Wild Pig.043

Yongcuv a-tüv shüv pë
... Yongcuv come-up for TOP ...

... for Yongcuv came up...

Pronouns can also head a noun phrase. They can function as a subject or an object of a clause as in example (5), where *alë* ‘they’ is functioning as a subject of that clause.

(5) Thief on Bus.036

alë o khatti në arë jeot tüh-vu net
... 3P ABS once PRT come jump down-go PAST.RL

... at once they jumped down.

The Makuri personal pronouns are shown in Table 6. Makuri generally distinguishes between singular, dual and plural. In first person dual and plural Makuri further distinguishes between exclusive and inclusive.

	Singular	Dual		Plural	
		Incl.	Excl.	Incl.	Excl.
1 st person	m	ajě	mjě	asa	va
2 nd person	ně	nějě		něsa	
3 rd person	amitpi/ amiut	anit		alě	
Generic	zūv				

Table 6: Makuri pronouns

Makuri also has a generic pronoun *zūv* ‘one’ which can fill the place of any other personal pronouns and is understood in context. In example (6) the generic pronoun is used twice, and its later context explains that this pronoun is first person singular pronoun. Thus this generic pronoun can also fill the head slot of a noun phrase.

(6) Thief on bus.044

hüh zě zūv sūh la zūv ně tsa rě ně rēcak sutsei tengla M
 ... this MAN GEN do because GEN ERG call then trouble meet because IS
o tsūhtsa mēla mēlūt zě khēyak net
 ABS very confuse MAN feel.ashamed PAST.RL

... because I (asked) [called] (him) and (he) met trouble [like this because of me], I was so confused [not knowing what to do] and felt guilty (about it).

Example (7) shows a demonstrative *u* ‘that’, filling the subject slot of the head noun.

(7) Wild Pig.006

u ket a- khēyit pē khēyit zě jūv teitei vu ně mē ngu ti ceot
 that also 3S- blood TOP bleed and track REP go and NEG get NEG lose
net
 PAST.RL

Also it was bleeding [its blood] and (we) tracked (it) down, but (we) lost (it) without getting (it).

1.4.1.3 Possessors

A possessor is a noun phrase that can be headed by a noun, a pronoun or a proper noun. In Makuri the possessors and the possessed are unmarked, the

possessor precedes the possessed. Example (8) presents the proper noun *Yonglei* as the possessor of the noun phrase.

(8) Elicited example.048

Yonglei khënu
Yonglei wife

Yonglei's wife

In example (9) the pronouns *m* '1S' in the noun phrase *m kësüh* 'my gun', and the affix *a-* '3S' in *aküiv* 'its head' function as possessors. The third person possessive pronoun *a-* is a reduced form of *amitpi* or *amiut*. It directly precedes the possessed noun as in *aküiv* 'its head'. Even though the use of this reduced third person pronoun is common in this language, its full form *amitpi* or *amiut* can also be used as in example (10).

(9) Barking Deer.021

M kësüh ce-vu shüiv pë shokmëchei o züing te phëlong-vu yet a sa
1S gun burst-out after TOP barking,deer ABS see when fall-down sleep then
në a- küiv në lei khëmë - tei zë yet lei net
3S- head ERG ground hit - REP MAN sleep STAT PAST.RL

After my gun fired, when I looked at the barking deer, (it) lay fallen and its head was hitting the ground.

(10) Elicited example.075

u o amit lephu net
that ABS 3S book EOC

That is his book.

Some common nouns such as *khëlüiv* 'field' or *khëye* 'house' drop the first syllable and are reduced to the last syllable, *lüiv* and *ye* respectively, when they are the head of the possessed noun phrase as in example (11).

(11) Wild Pig.008

Chiuthong lüv ta kē
... Chiuthong field in at ...

... in Chiuthong's field.

1.4.1.4 Modifiers

The modifier of a noun phrase can be an adjective, an appositive noun phrase, a relative clause or a post-positional phrase. Relative clauses and post-positional phrases precede the head noun, but in the case of adjectives and appositive noun phrases the modifier follows the head noun. Example (12) presents an adjective *amēceng* 'white' modifying a noun *pengkhüv* 'shirt'.

(12) Elicited example.072

pengkhüv amēceng kēse
... shirt white one

... a white shirt

The head of a noun phrase can have modifying appositive noun phrases as in (13) and (14). In example (13) the head noun *Yongleng* is modified by another preceding noun *miu* 'older-brother'. Also example (14) has two appositive nouns. There were at least five people involved in killing the gaur. The expression *alotsatlē* 'the ones who killed' may refer to all of them, but *aphei ngulē* 'the ones who got the thighs' separates from among them as the only people who shot the animal first. So the preceding noun *aphei ngulē* 'the ones who got the thighs' modifies the head noun *aloksatlē* 'the ones who killed'. This example also shows a post-positional phrase *asa chē ta kē* 'in our group' modifying the head noun by preceding it.

(13) Elicited example.076

miu *Yongleng*
older.brother Yongleng

brother Yongleng

(14) Gaur.052

asa *chë* *ta* *kë* *a-* *phei* *ngu* *-* *lë* *a* *-* *loksat* *-* *lë*
... 1pl.incl group in at 3S- thigh get - persons DEF - kill - persons ...

... in our group those who killed (it) and have the thighs ...

A relative clause that modifies the head noun is seen in example (15). In this example the noun *vokkhërak* ‘pheasant’ is the head noun, which is modified by a relative clause *amitpi në katsat* ‘(the one) he killed’. In this case the head noun is preceded by the relative clause.

(15) Barking Deer.033

amitpi *në* *kat-sat* *vokkhërak*
3S ERG shoot-kill pheasant

the pheasant that he killed

1.4.1.5 Demonstratives

Demonstratives in Makuri have three sets: singular, dual, and plural as in Table 7. The basic ones are *hüh* ‘this’ and *u* ‘that’. The others are created when the dual marker *-nit* is suffixed for dual demonstratives, or the plural marker *-lë* for the plural demonstratives.

	singular	dual	plural
near	<i>hüh</i>	<i>hüh nit</i>	<i>hühlë</i>
approximate	<i>u</i>	<i>u nit</i>	<i>ulë</i>

Table 7: Makuri demonstratives

Demonstratives follow the head noun. In example (16) *u* ‘that’ modifies *mulü-sei tiu* ‘gooseberry-fruit tree’.

(16) Barking Deer.008

mulisei tju u o shok në tsok shë tjuŋ
... gooseberry-fruit tree **that** ABS animal ERG eat IMPF or ...

... whether some animals are eating that gooseberry or...

Example (17) presents a plural demonstrative *hühlë* 'these'. As it is seen in this example demonstratives precede numerals when they co-occur.

(17) Elicited example.050

lephu song hühlë këse
book red **these** three

these three red books

1.4.1.6 Classifiers, quantifiers and number

Classifiers serve to identify nouns and to count those nouns which precede them.

Quantifiers also indicate the quantity of the head noun. The constituent order of this part of the noun phrase is N_H-(CLF)-(NUM)-(QNT). Example (18) shows the order of the head noun with a classifier and a numeral. It presents the head noun *nyalë* 'children', and a classifier *mit* for human with the numeral *khënet* 'two'.

(18) Elicited example.012

anit rong nya - lë mit khënet lei le
DU to child - PL person two STAT PRES.RL

They have two children.

Example (19) shows the head noun *tsa* 'rice' is followed by a measure classifier *vë* 'bag', which is followed by a numeral *sei khat* 'one hundred'.

(19) Elicited example.032

nyüŋke alë tsa vë sei khat ngu net
last.year 3P rice bag hundred one get PAST.RL

They got one hundred bags of rice last year.

The quantifier in Makuri comes after the head noun, the classifier, and the number as in example (20).

(20) Elicited example.073

amitpi nẽ tsa vë sei khat akhepi khëlei net
 3S ERG rice bag hundred one all buy PAST.RL

He bought all of the one hundred bags of rice.

1.4.1.7 Complex noun phrases

Complex noun phrases are composed of two or more noun phrases. These noun phrases are connected by a discontinuous conjunction *khëlë...zë* as in example (21). The first noun phrase *tsatsü* ‘uncooked_rice’ is connected first with *khëma* ‘salt’ and then with *vitikhëlüv* ‘vegetable’ by the coordinative conjunction. More than three noun phrases can be joined in this way with the conjunction *khëlë...zë* placed on either side of the last component NP connecting exactly two NP components.

(21) Elicited example.074

amitpi nẽ tsatsü khëma khëlë vitikhëlüv zë khëlei net
 3S ERG uncooked.rice salt and vegetable and buy PAST.RL

He bought rice, salt and vegetables.

A dual marker *nit* can also function as a coordinative conjunction. In example (22) two noun phrases, *Semeng rüv* ‘Semeng River’ and *Thëngokpü rüv* ‘Thengokpu River’ can be joined with this dual marker following them. Sometimes this dual marker *nit* is used twice, occurring one time between the nouns and a second time after the two nouns.

(22) Gaur.006

Semeng rüv Thëngokpü rüv nit cheng kheng
 ... Semeng river Thengokpu river DU meet place ...

... at the joining of Semeng River and Thengokpu River ...

1.4.2 Postpositional phrases

Makuri is a postpositional language. A postpositional phrase consists of a postposition as a head of the phrase and of a noun phrase. This section presents locative, benefactive and instrument postpositional phrases.

1.4.2.1 Locative phrases

Locative phrases indicate where the action of the verb takes place in time, space and direction. This includes both goal and source phrases. The position of a Makuri locative phrase in a clause is S-Locative-O-V. Locative postpositions are *kë* ‘at’, *në* ‘with’, *ta* ‘in/ inside/ to’, *rong* ‘near/ with/ to’, *cong* ‘from’, *chak* ‘on’, *khë* ‘under’, and *mong* ‘beside’. Often these markers co-occur with another locative marker in a phrase; especially *kë* ‘at’ and *në* ‘with’ optionally follow other postpositions.

Example (23) shows the three postpositions *chak* ‘on’, *cong* ‘from’, and *në* ‘with’ co-occurring with each other in a phrase. The first postposition *chak* ‘on’ indicates where the event took place, and the second *cong* ‘from’ indicates the direction of the event, and the last one *në* ‘with’ is a kind of case marking on the postpositional phrase. Either one of the first two (*chak* and *cong*) postpositions can be followed by *kë* ‘at’. In this example the first one, *chak* ‘on’, is required and others are optional, and other possible co-occurrences in this context are *chak cong*, *chak në*, *chak kë në*, *chak kë cong*, *chak kë cong në*, and *chak cong kë në*. All of these optional co-occurrences of locative markers have almost no change in meaning.

(23) Wild Pig.012

uche sangmi chak cong në shë meikësüh khang-lü rë në
then stump on from PRT just gun pull-up then ...

Then just from the stump (I) pulled up the gun...

1.4.2.2 Benefactive and recipient phrases

The beneficiary of an action is marked with *yeng* and *teng/ tengla*. They follow the recipient of the action. In example (24) the recipient of the action *pit* ‘give’ is *yalë sühlë* ‘workers’ which is followed by the recipient case marking *yeng*. The position of a benefactive phrase in a clause is S-benefactive/ recipient-O-V.

(24) Elicited example.052

amitpi në yalë süh - lë yeng leke pit net
3S ERG thing do - persons RECIP money give PAST.RL

She gave money to the workers.

In example (25) the beneficiary of the action, *chong* ‘cook’, is *khëyilë* ‘guest’, which is marked with *teng*. Sometimes the benefactive action verb is followed by a post-benefactive verbal element, *pit* ‘give’, as in (25) or *lüv* ‘take’, for non-benefactive action².

(25) Elicited example.023

amitpi në khëyilë teng thëvi shok vi chong pit net
3S ERG guest for chicken meat dish cook give PAST.RL

He cooked a chicken dish for the guest.

1.4.2.3 Instrument phrases

Instruments in Makuri are followed by the postpositions *në* or *la/ la në* ‘by, with, by means of’. In example (26) the action *chisat* ‘throw-kill’ is carried out by the instrument *kësok* ‘spear’, which is marked with *në* ‘by’ following it. The position of an instrument phrase in a clause is either following the object as in example

² If the cooking is done for a guest who is not present at the cooking event, then *lüv* is used.

(26) or preceding it. The instruments that are containers such as *mēleot* ‘plate’, *chiv* ‘basket’, and *phēlongpu* ‘car’ are followed by the markers *la* or *la nē*.

(26) Elicited example.026

amitpi nē kēzheot o kēsok nē chi.sat net
3S ERG deer ABS spear INST throw.kill PAST.RL

He killed a deer with a spear.

1.4.3 Verb phrases

The Makuri verb phrase is discussed in terms of the order of the components in relation to one another in this section. The constituent order of verbs, head verb, preverbal elements and post-verbal elements are presented in the following.

1.4.3.1 Constituent order

The verb phrase is composed of an obligatory head verb, and optional preverbal and post-verbal elements. The terms ‘preverbal’ and ‘postverbal elements’ are general terms used in this discussion. The preverbal elements are the elements that come before the head verb, and the post-verbal elements are the elements that follow the head verb.

1.4.3.2 Head verb

The head verbs are the main verbs which carry the most semantic content of the verb phrase. They can stand independently in clauses. In example (27) *ngu* ‘see’ is the head verb, which carries the most semantic content of the verb phrase. But *vu* ‘go’ in example (28) is not a head verb. It is a directional verb for the head verb *jong* ‘run’, serving as a post-verbal modifier.

(27) Gaur.042

liureng khat ngu net
... cliff one see PAST.RL

... (we) saw a cliff.

(28) Wild Pig.038

unë patei pu jong vu te
thus close.off IRR run go when ...

So when (I) ran to close off the way, ...

The preverbal elements and post-verbal elements are further discussed in the following section. Makuri also has compound verbs that are composed of action and result, and they together function as a head verb; *kat-sat* 'shoot-kill' is such a verb seen in example (29). There are also serial verbs that collocate; they both function equally as head verbs in a clause. In the second clause of example (29), both *chong* 'cook' and *tsok* 'eat' are acting as head verbs.

(29) Gaur.004

akhënet-nipu ket M në shokvü khat shë kat-sat a va u chong
second-day even IS ERG monkey one only shoot-kill and 1pl.excl that cook

tsok net
eat PAST.RL

Even on the second day I killed only a monkey, and we cooked and ate it.

1.4.3.3 Preverbal elements

The preverbal elements found in Makuri includes adverbs such as negatives, intensifiers, *rapa* 'together', and *sei* 'able-skill', a verb denoting skill. Example (30) presents a type of negative particle *më* 'not' which precedes the head verb *ngu* 'get'. When the head verb is negated, it optionally has TAM (Tense, Aspect, and Modal) markers following it (see the discussion also in post-verbal elements in section 1.4.3.4).

(30) Wild Pig.004

tanēket mē ngu
but NEG get

But (I) did not get (it).

In example (31) a preverbal element *sei* ‘able-skill’, which is a light verb, is preceded by the intensifier *thēri a* ‘very’, and they can co-occur before the head verb *khi* ‘read’. The term ‘light verb’ refers to a dependent verb, which can follow or precede the main verb depending on the type of light verb.

(31) Elicited example.039

amitpi nē le thēri a sei khi le
3S ERG book very able.skill read PRES.RL

He is able to read [book] very well.

Adverbs of manner are another type of adverb in the preverbal position that can modify the head verb. In example (32) the head verb *yi* ‘follow’ is preceded by the manner verb *jüv* ‘track’ which is marked with the manner particle *zē*.

(32) Gaur.011

amitpi ket jüv zē yi rē pu kho
3S also track MAN follow PRES.IRR PROB ...

... he also would follow (us) while tracking, ...

1.4.3.4 Post-verbal elements

Some of the Makuri post-verbal elements are shown in the Table 8.

lexeme	gloss/ function
<i>rē</i> ‘come’, <i>vu</i> ‘go’	directives
<i>zhüv</i>	able-capability
<i>ceót, che/ khe</i>	completive
<i>tat</i>	promptness of action
<i>mī</i>	want
<i>sit</i>	causative
<i>pīt</i> ‘give’	benefactive
<i>lüv</i> ‘take’	non-benefactive
<i>tü</i>	‘again’
<i>ti/ ti nē</i>	negative particle

Table 8: Post verbal elements

Example (33) displays a directive verb *rě* ‘come’ which expresses the direction of the action of the head verb *jüv* ‘track’ towards the speaker.

(33) Gaur.009

ně pě yiuri ajě nē ngu kheng cong jüv rě no
 ... 2S TOP last.night 1DU.incl ERG see place from track come okay ...

... "You track [towards the speaker] from the place we (dual) saw last night, right?" ...

Completive elements can function as independent verbs, but when they follow the head verb they indicate that the action is completive. In example (34) *khe* ‘finish’ expresses the action of the preceding head verb as completed. The non-benefactive verb *lüv* ‘take’ also expresses that the action of the head verb *she* ‘divide’ does not benefit others but them.

(34) Barking Deer.043

M yepu mjě shok she khe lüv shüv
 1S friend 1DU.excl meat divide finish NO.BEN after ...

After my friend and I (dual) divided the meat [for ourselves], ...

TAM particles are also post-verbal elements. The negative particle *ti* occurs following the negated verb in order to show TAM marking on the negated verb. For instance, if the earlier example (30) is followed by *ti süh net* ‘NEG_be_PAST’, the aspect of the sentence is made explicit and could be glossed as ‘did not verb’. But when the negative clause is followed by another clause, *ti/ ti ně* acts as conjunction to the following clause (see in example (51)).

The particles that mark tense in Makuri are *le* ‘present-realis’, *net* ‘past-realis’, *pu/ punet* ‘future-irrealis’. Example (35) shows that the action of the head verb *patei* ‘close off the way’ is to happen in the future because it is followed by the future tense marker *punet*. Usually these particles are clause-final.

(35) Wild Pig.037

zë-süh-khêlë M në patci punet
that-do-if 1S ERG close.off IRR ...

... "If so, I will close off the way, ..."

In example (36) both the completive particle *ceot* and the past tense *net* express that the head verb *zhüing* 'be-dark' has already happened.

(36) Gaur.050

sang - sük kheng ci tü pë zhüing ceot net
... wood - saw place reach when TOP be.dark COMPL PAST.RL

When ... (we) arrived at the saw pit, (it) was already dark.

There are also post-verbal elements that denote aspect in Makuri. They are *khüvt* 'semi-perfective' and *shë/ shële* 'imperfective' as in example (37).

(37) Gaur.029

tanëket ukë zu yet khüvt hühkë hühtsühkhat pache shële
...but there go.in sleep PFT ...here little rest IMPF ...

... "But (it) went in and slept there. ... (we) are resting for awhile here..."

It is noted that when the stative verb *lei* follows the head verb, it expresses the perfective aspect of the action as in example (38) and (39).

(38) Wild Pig.018

e hüh pë shit shit süv vu lei le
eh this TOP now now rise.up go STAT PRES.RL ...

(I) thought, "Eh, it got away just now."

(39) Wild Pig.019

te pushit lüv-sei tiu khë kë li-vu khatti yet tü lei net
then even vine-fruit tree under at near-go once sleep again STAT PAST.RL

Then (it) went under the vine-fruit tree and slept (there) once again.

Modal particles also can fill the post-verbal position as in example (40) where the particle *rë pu* 'present irrealis' is marking the head verb *vu* 'go'. In such

constructions the possible final particles are *kho* and *titnet*. There is another particle to denote past irrealis, *lei pu*. If *rě pu* in example (40) is replaced with it, it could be translated as ‘she might have gone to school’. Another modal particle is *a-shě-net* ‘must’ as seen in example (41).

(40) Elicited example.037

amitpi o le vu rě pu kho
 3S ABS school go **PRES IRR** **PROB**

She may go to school.

(41) Gaur.051

těliu ci nong vu a-shě-net zě ceitei net
 ... village till return go **must** that discuss PAST,RL

... (we) discussed that (we) must return to the village...

1.4.4 Sentence initial phrases

Sentence initial non-argument elements can be temporal phrases, locative phrases and conjunctions. In Makuri syntax these elements are peripheral in a sentence. They often express a relationship with the previous sentence in time or logic. Some of the phrases found in the data are shown in Table 9. The topic marker *pě* is given in parentheses after the phrases in which it can optionally occur.

lexeme	gloss
<i>tel te něl tě ně</i>	then
<i>ta</i>	well
<i>tăněl tănēket</i>	but
<i>u tēngla/ u tēnglaněl/ u ně</i>	so, therefore, thus
<i>u yi/ u yi ně (pě)</i>	following that, then
<i>u shūv (pě)</i>	after that, then
<i>ú che (pě)</i>	finishing that, then
<i>zěsa/ zěsaně (pě)</i>	after doing that/ and, then
<i>khělě (pě)</i>	and, also
<i>zě sūh khělě (pě)</i>	if so
<i>u tū/ u tū kě (pě)</i>	that time
<i>u tētū/ u tētū kě (pě)</i>	at that moment

Table 9: Sentence initial elements

Example (42) illustrates two temporal conjunctions co-occurring, *te* ‘then’, and *uyině* ‘after that’.

(42) Barking Deer.023

te uyině pē ma sūv tū ti sūh net
then after.that TOP NEG rise.up again NEG do PAST.RL

But (it) did not get up again after that.

Example (43) is a complicated temporal phrase, *kējuliu mē lēi ti nē* ‘(it) was not long after that’, in other words ‘soon’.

(43) Barking Deer.026

kējuliu ma lei ti nē M yepu nē ket kēsūh kat rē net
long NEG STAT NEG IS friend ERG also gun shoot come PAST.RL

Soon my friend also shot the gun.

1.4.5 Clause types

The clause types presented in this section are intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive clauses. The constituent order of a clause, as well as dependent and independent clause types are also discussed.

1.4.5.1 Intransitive and transitive clauses

Makuri Naga is a head-final language. Nominal arguments are followed by the case markings and post-positions. There is an ergative-absolutive system of case marking. The basic clause structure is SOV as in examples (44) and (45). It is possible to have an OSV structure in order to show prominence and to focus on the object as in (46).

(44) Elicited example.002

ti o tak net
pig ABS run PAST.RL

The pig ran.

(45) Elicited example.003

Tanyei nĕ phĕyut o jüŋ net
cat ERG mouse ABS bite PAST.RL

The cat bit the mouse.

(46) Elicited example.004

phĕyut o tanyei nĕ jüŋ net
mouse ABS cat ERG bite PAST.RL

It was the mouse that the cat bit.

The term ‘ergative-absolutive case marking system’ refers to the structure where there is parallel marking on the object of the transitive verb and the subject of the intransitive verb, which is different from that of the subject of the transitive verb (see, Crystal 2003:2, 164). Figure 7 demonstrates this characteristic of the Makuri language. It has parallel markings on the object of the transitive verb and the subject of the intransitive verb.



Figure 7: Makuri Naga ergative-absolutive particles

The ABS marker *o* is optional in most cases either for the intransitive subject (44) or the transitive object (45). This marking is obligatory in sentences that have OSV order as in (46). Sometimes the marking *o* can also function as a topic marker which is interchangeable with another topic marker *pĕ*. These topic markers optionally follow the ERG markings as in example (47). Moreover *pĕ* optionally follows temporal phrases and conjunctions as in example (48), see also Table 9 in section 1.4.4. The ERG marker *nĕ* is obligatory.

(47) Barking Deer.033

M yepu nē o M nē kat-sat shokmēchei u veng khēlē M nē
...1S friend **ERG TOP** 1S ERG shoot-kill barking.deer that carry and 1S **ERG**

pē amitpi nē kat-sat vokkhērak khēlē mjē kēsüh zē khēlak a sa nē
TOP 3S ERG shoot-kill pheasant and IDU.excl gun and carry then

a-nong net
come-back PAST.RL

... my friend carried the deer that I killed, and I carried the pheasant that he killed and our guns, and (we) returned.

(48) Wild Pig.028

u tētū pē la khēnet pi nē shē a-li rē mēre ceot
that time **TOP** two.yards two about INST just come-near then be.near COMPL

net
PAST.RL

That time (it) came within about two yards (of me).

1.4.5.2 Di-transitive clauses

Di-transitive clauses have three arguments: a subject (S), a direct object (DO) and an indirect object (IO). The word order of a Makuri di-transitive clause is S-IO-DO-V. In the same way as the transitive object, the direct object is optionally marked by *o* in this word order, but indirect objects have an obligatory marking based on their semantic role. The subject of a di-transitive clause also uses the same marking *nē* as the transitive subject. In example (49) the verb *pit* 'give' requires i) a subject, the one who gives- *M* 'I', ii) a direct object, the thing being given- *mēsak* 'a gift of meat', and iii) an indirect object, the one who receives- *thēliulē khepi* 'all the villagers'. The recipient is marked with *yeng*.

(49) Barking Deer.043

M yepu mjē shok she khe luv shüv M tengshe ta yeng nē
1S friend IDU.excl meat divide finish NO.BEN after 1S share in POSS INST

tēliulē khepi yeng mēsak hühtsühzang pit net
villager all **RECIP** gift.meat little.each give PAST.RL

After my friend and I divided the meat, (I) gave a gift of some meat to all the villagers from my share.

In example (50) the subject is asking for a gun to be given to him from the person named Suthong. This indirect object of whom the thing has been asked is marked with *rong*. In both examples (49) and (50), the subjects are implicit.

(50) Gaur.034

u tētū Sūthong rong kēsūh chei rēnē M nē kat tū te
that time Suthong to gun ask.for then IS ERG shoot again when ...

That time (I) asked for a gun from Suthong and when I shot (it) again, ...

1.4.5.3 Dependent and independent clauses

Makuri dependent clauses are always preposed, and the independent clauses follow them. Generally the conjunctions that join the dependent clauses include: *khələ* ‘if’, *anēket* ‘though’, *tengla/ tenglanē* ‘because’, *shüv* ‘after’, and *tū, te/ te nē* ‘when’.

There may also be independent clauses that are joined to following clauses.

Conjunctions for the preposed independent clauses are: *a/ a nē* ‘and, then’, *sa/ sanē* ‘so, then’, and *rē/ rē nē* ‘then’.

In example (51) the conjunction *rē nē* ‘then’ serves to mark a close relationship between the clauses, and they form independent clauses joined together in a larger unit. The main conjunction in this sentence is *anēket* ‘though’, which serves the whole preceding clause as a dependent clause to the following independent clause. There is a negative particle *tī nē*, which acts as an independent conjunction between a negative clause and the following clause.

All these clauses share the tense marker *net* ‘past realis’. All clauses share the final TAM marker in a sentence unless there is another closer TAM marker.

edited and translated by the author of this thesis. The names of the people involved in the stories are changed to keep them anonymous.

Some editing of the texts was done in order to yield more consistent analysis (Grimes 1975:33). In the process of editing, speech errors such as repeated words are deleted. Participant reference is supplied in places where the clarity is needed. Some complex sentences are broken down into shorter ones, when there is a change of theme. Sometimes the missing TAM markers at the end of a sentence are supplied to make it a full sentence. In connected speech these missing TAM markers are implied information for the listener.

In order to validate the data's representativeness, the edited stories were checked with seven other speakers in two ways. First there was a group discussion with a team of four speakers at Yangon, and second there was individual checking by three persons at Tamanthi village. To facilitate the checking, copies of all these stories were made, including both the original version as narrated and also of the edited versions.

For the checking with the team, both copies were distributed to the team members two days ahead of the discussion. These team members already had experience in reading and writing in the language. They were requested to make notes in the places necessary when they read through the original copy. Then they were to continue reading the edited copy and to compare it with their suggestions. Later we met and discussed each other's suggestions. The results of the meeting were recorded and changes made to the sentences in the data.

When they were asked about the edited copy, the reply from all of them was that the edited copy was easier to read and clearer to understand. For instance, the

narrator of the Wild Pig Hunting story dropped the final particle *net* at the end of most of the sentences. It was inserted in the edited copy. All of the checkers agreed that it is necessary in writing. There was also a part of the Wild Pig Hunting story that the narrator skipped and inserted later in the story and that was noticed by three out of four readers. In the edited copy they placed it in an appropriate place. That part was from sentences 046 to 050 which actually should occur before sentence 043 in chronological order. Some of the suggestions they made are mentioned below.

In the story of the Thief on Bus (in sentences 012, 015) it was suggested that the onomatopoeia *mükmük* which precedes the verb *shu* 'hit' should be changed to *phokphok*. In another case, the verb *shu* was replaced with *këchë*, another word for 'hit' in the edited copy, but they changed it back to the former because three out of four members of the team preferred it.

There was a double use of adverbs in sentence 010 of the same story, *thak a ngu thënga* 'saw just exactly'; they suggested that one of them could be deleted. I retained original rendering, however, because this occurrence heightens the tension of the narrator.

In the Wild Pig Hunting story sentence 040, a manner marker *zë* had to be added between the two verbs *züng* 'look' and *zhat* 'stand', yielding *züng zë zhat* 'standing while looking/ looking and standing'. This is due to there being no tone marking in the writing system. All three words bear the falling tone. Without *zë* the tone on the first verb changes to a high tone. Since this could not be made clear to the reader, the actual word is supplied here. On the other hand this is a

difference between speaking and writing styles. Even though it is written with the word, its articulation is reduced to a tone on the preceding word.

When checking with the individuals, first the original story was read, and then the edited copy was read again. I read the stories to them because two of them were not fluent readers. Their general opinion was that the edited copy was clearer³. Then the individuals were asked about the suggestions from the previous group's discussion. None of them had any objections to what the other people had said.

In regard to participant reference, some questions were asked of both groups. In doing so, I read the edited copy of the story and stopped at certain points and asked them questions. It should be noted that I did not supply any extra participant reference information in the edited copy. In particular, in sentence 013 of the Wild Pig Hunting story I asked the question, 'Is this one person or two who watched it (the boar run away) and then slept?'. Five out of seven persons were not able to answer right away. It took them a while to process my request. The larger context explains to them that the first verb has the same participant as the preceding events, but the second verb includes the other participant. This shows that a participant reference marker is needed at this point for added clarity.

In sentence 014 of the Wild Pig Hunting story the TAM marker *lei* was seen occurring with a stative verb yet 'sleep'. This event could possibly mean both past continuous and perfect tense. So the question was 'Was the boar still sleeping there when the hunters came?'. Four out of seven gave the right

³Also it might be because the edited copy was read only after the original one. By that time they were familiar with the story.

answer. However when they were asked again for the second time, they admitted confusion with the statement. So in order to get a clear understanding, a motion verb *vu* 'go' is given along with the verb *yet* 'sleep'. When all the checking was finished, the necessary changes were made in the texts using the suggestions.

Next the sentences were interlinearized using SIL's Toolbox software. These interlinearized texts are included in Appendixes 4, 5 and 6. In the gloss line a full stop "." is used between words when more than one English word is required to express the meaning of one Makuri word. In the free translation parentheses () are used if the word is not in Makuri, and square parentheses [] are used to present the literal translation of the Makuri word or words.

1.6 Organization of the thesis

A synopsis of the texts used for this study is presented in chapter 2 along with the literature review on discourse analysis theory. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 contain the main analysis of this thesis. Chapter 3 deals with the boundaries analysis of the texts. Chapter 4 describes the mainline of the texts. Chapter 5 analyses the participant reference throughout the texts. The research findings are summarized in chapter 6.

1.7 Summary

This chapter has presented a brief introduction to the Makuri language and its people. It has also given a phonological sketch of the language. Finally it has provided a brief discussion of the grammatical features of the Makuri language at the phrase and clause levels. Introducing the different kinds of structures at

phrase and clause level prepares the analyst to chart the texts to make them ready for later analysis.

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