

# 6. GRAMMER OUTLINE

Only the basic features of the grammar needed to aid in the use of the dictionary are given here. A separate Halia Grammar has been written which gives much more detail (see Bibliography). This is now being prepared for publication.

1) Word Classes. Grammatical information has not been given with dictionary entries primarily because most Halia words tend to function as nouns or adjectives or adverbs, as well as verbs (the four major word classes). It is difficult, for example, to classify the word **pika** "pregnant", as it can function either as an adjective, a verb or a noun.

**A tahol a pika**                      The pregnant woman (adj.)

**A tahol e pika talana.**        The woman is pregnant now.  
(verb)

**E ka mena u pika.**                (She) has pregnancy. (noun)

One use seems to be about as frequent as the other. Most Halia words can be verbalized, even words like **lia** "I" and **moa** "no". So it is difficult to list words in the dictionary as being noun, verb, etc. without listing them separately for each word class and greatly expanding the size and expense of the dictionary.

2) Nouns (Singular and Plural). Nouns are usually preceded by either the article **a** with the singular, or the article **u** with the plural. However, some nouns reverse this pattern.

<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>	
<b>a hatu</b>	stone	<b>u hatu</b>	stones
<b>a katun</b>	person	<b>u katun</b>	people
<b>u roei</b>	tree	<b>a roei</b>	trees
<b>u uamunei</b>	raft	<b>a amunei</b>	rafts

Nouns beginning with **u** followed by a vowel (such as **uamunei** above) normally drop the initial **u** in the plural form. When the speaker wants to clearly indicate the plural form, he uses a pluralizing word such as **man**.

**a man roei** trees

Alternate forms in the **u** section of the dictionary are often the plural forms, such as **amunei** (above).

3) Pronouns. There are 4 sets of pronouns, all essentially using the same basic form. Set 1 functions as the subject (or actor) of a sentence, before the verb. Set 2 functions as subject, object or indirect object, more commonly following the verb. Set 3 are possessive pronoun suffixes, used with close relatives and body parts. And set 4 are possessive pronouns used with all other things that can be possessed.

	1	2	3	4
I	alia	lia	-r	i tar
you	alø	lø	-mulø	i tamulø
he/she/it	nonei	-en	-nen	i tanen
we (incl.)	ara	ra	-rara	i tarara
we (excl.)	alam	lam	-mulam	i tamulam
you (pl.)	alimiu	limiu	-milimiu	i tamilimiu
they	nori	-en	-ren	i taren

The following examples of the first person singular pronoun show how the four pronoun forms are used.

<u>Alia</u> e taregen.	<u>I</u> see it.
Nonei e ma tarei <u>lia</u> .	He did not see <u>me</u> .
U hulur e panina.	<u>My</u> hair is big (long).
A luma <u>i tar</u> e omina.	<u>My</u> house is bad (in bad shape).

Set 2 may also be used as possessive pronouns, in conjunction with the subject marking suffixes in the verb (see verb section below).

4) Verbs. Verbs may be classified as either transitive or intransitive.

<b>Nonei e tarana</b>	He sees (intrans.)
<b>Nonei e tarena a apena</b>	He sees a bird (trans.)

Below is a paradigm of the word **tara** "see" as a transitive verb. The first example shows the literal English equivalents beneath the vernacular text.

<b>Alia</b>	<b>e tar-e -gu</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	I see a (the) bird.
I	see-tr-I	bird	
<b>AlØ</b>	<b>e tar-e-m</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	You see a bird.
<b>Nonei</b>	<b>e tar-e-na</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	He (she/it) sees a bird.
<b>Ara</b>	<b>e tar-e-ra</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	We (incl.) see a bird.
<b>Alam</b>	<b>e tar-e-m</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	We (excl.) see a bird.
<b>Alimiu</b>	<b>e tar-e-miu</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	You (pl.) see a bird.
<b>Nori</b>	<b>e tar-e-r</b>	<b>a apena.</b>	They see a bird.

Hyphens show how the verb is divided into morphemes (meaningful parts). The particle **e**, which could be called a verbal pronoun, marks the beginning of a verb phrase. The suffix **-e** marks the transitive; that is, it shows that the verb has an object. This paradigm illustrates a basic form of the verb.

Examples of other basic forms of the verb are as follows (the transitive is included to show contrast with the ditransitive).

Imperative:

**La.**

Go.

Negative:

**E ma lai.**

(He) did not go.

Question:

**Ime te la uen?**

Where did (he) go?

Transitive:

**Halema ta uele.**

Give (bring) some coconut.

Ditransitive:

**Hale mei lia ta uele.**

Give me some coconut.

5) Word Formation. There are many processes involved in forming words which are more than just basic forms. Here we are interested primarily in the processes which affect the use of the dictionary.

Prefixes. Verb prefixes, added to the basic form of the verb, determine how a verb may be listed in the dictionary. There are 5 verb prefixes in Halia. These are listed below, with their alternate forms, meanings and examples.

<b>ha- (h-)</b>	causative (before verbs and adverbs)
<b>nou</b>	eat
<b>hanou</b>	feed
<b>opö</b>	lie down
<b>hopö</b>	lay (something) down
<b>ta-</b>	non-causative
<b>peko</b>	break (something)
<b>tapeko</b>	(something to) break
<b>hi- (hihi-)</b>	habitual or repeated action, or involving two or more actors
<b>hol</b>	buy
<b>hihol</b>	buy (many things)
<b>koto</b>	bite
<b>hihikoto</b>	bite (habitually)
<b>hia-</b>	reciprocal action
<b>ngil</b>	love
<b>hiangi ngil</b>	love one another
<b>tu-</b>	(affected subject)
<b>hopö</b>	lay (something) down
<b>tuhopö</b>	lay oneself down

The noun-making prefix **ni-** can make a verb into a noun.

<b>sasala</b>	happy
<b>nisasala</b>	happiness

The prefixes **ha-** and **hi-** can also make some verbs to be used as nouns.

<b>gum</b>	sit
<b>hagum</b>	meeting
<b>tö1</b>	marry
<b>hitö1</b>	marriage

The pluralizing prefix **ei-** may be used on some nouns.

<b>ngal</b>	galip nut
<b>eingal</b>	a heap of galip nuts

Repeating words and parts of words. Some words or parts of words are repeated to form a word with a different function or a different meaning.

<b>gum</b>	sit
<b>gumgum</b>	chair
<b>koela</b>	curve
<b>kokoela</b>	crooked

Combining words. Some words are compounds formed by two words combining together.

<b>matahie</b>	crazy man (from <b>mata</b> "eye" and <b>hie</b> "wild")
<b>matesil</b>	desire strongly (from <b>mate</b> "die" and <b>sil</b> "for")

6) Word Breaks. Halia words can be very long, especially verb forms. For example, a verb can be pronounced as one word, as follows:

**Ime te mar talasamenalaleien u mona?**

How did he carve the mona (earlier today)?

Because of the difficulty in reading long, unbroken words, a committee of teachers and leaders decided that it would be better, for reading purposes, to divide the larger Halia words (especially the verbs) into shorter words. This has proved to make reading easier. The above Halia verb is now written as four words rather than as one:

**Ime te mar talasa mena lale ien u mona?**

Words such as those above which follow the main verb could be called verb satellites; that is, they are part of the verb and stay close to it, but are written separately after it. These verb satellites cannot be easily defined, as they are usually one or a combination of verb suffixes. (For more details consult the Halia Grammar). So they are not entered in the dictionary. Below are a few examples of some of the more common verb satellites.

<b>gula</b>	<b>guma</b>	<b>iam</b>	<b>ien</b>	<b>lala</b>
<b>lila</b>	<b>men</b>	<b>mena</b>	<b>meni</b>	<b>mula</b>
<b>muma</b>	<b>nama</b>	<b>nen</b>	<b>nen</b>	<b>ren</b>
<b>rima</b>	<b>u</b>	<b>uana</b>	<b>uar</b>	<b>uen</b>

The basic rule which determines how verb satellites are written is this: satellite forms (otherwise called suffixes) following the verb (or adverb) form separate words when they consist of three to six letters, the optimum size (of the most common Halia words) being 4 letters. A satellite word of more than 6 letters is written as two words. Satellite words normally begin with a consonant, or with u or i when they function as consonants.

The rule for hyphenating (breaking) words at the end of a line (when space has run out on a page) is as follows:

Hyphenate after vowels or between consonants,  
but do not divide the following symbols:

ng      ts      ei      au      ou

Following are examples of wrong ways and right ways to hyphenate words:

Wrong

~~mat-skö~~

~~haman-ana~~

~~mato-utuna~~

Right

~~mats-kö~~

~~hama-nana~~

~~matou-tuna~~

# Dictionaries of Papua New Guinea Volume 6

Jerry Allen  
Marcello Latu  
Maurice Koesana  
Maurice Tsirumits

HALIA LANGUAGE

Halia to English

English to Halia

SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS  
Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea

Published 1982