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Warao

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1 Ethnohistorical and sociolinguistic background

Warao is a language isolate of northeastern Venezuela and adjacent parts of Guyana (Forte 1990; Heinen 1988a; wara1303). Today, the Warao territory covers the Venezuelan state of Delta Amacuro, a network of *caños*, or channels, forming the delta of the Orinoco, and adjoining parts of the states of Monagas, Sucre, and Bolívar, as well as the Barima-Waini region of Guyana. Until recently, the language was spoken as far east as the Maratakka River in Suriname (Staffeleu 1975), and in former times, on the island of Trinidad, visited by the Warao for trading and ritual purposes. Although an isolate today, Warao may have once belonged to a larger linguistic grouping. Deltaic groups known from historical sources as Siawani (Chaguanes), Veriotaus (Farautes), and Tiuitiuas (Tibitíbis) spoke Warao or related languages. The extinct Aricari and Pirao from Cayenne and Guaiqueri from the island of Margarita may have spoken related languages as well (Boomert 2000: 90). Granberry and Vescelius (2004: 75) also claim that *Macorís* toponyms of the Greater Antilles are of Waraoan origin, though the evidence is inconclusive (cf. Carlin & Hofman 2010).

The evidence of a larger linguistic grouping, dependence on marine resources, and Warao oral traditions that remember the time when Trinidad was connected to the mainland by a land bridge suggest that the Warao may descend from archaic people who occupied the coastal areas from Margarita to Cayenne, displaced by the Arawakan and Cariban expansion (Wilbert 1979). In the resultant sphere of interaction, surrounding the Warao, lived speakers of several Arawakan and Cariban languages, of which all but the Lokono and Kari'na are now extinct. When the Europeans arrived in the area, they portrayed the Warao as barterers of canoes – trade items some Warao contingents were celebrated for – which were exchanged for goods absent in the delta (e.g., tobacco and quartz, Boomert 2000: 424). The Warao

developed oral traditions shared with the Lokono and Kari'na and may have adopted ritual elements from populations as distant as the Ye'kuana (Roth 1915; Heinen & García-Castro 2000). These contacts are reflected in loans from Arawakan and Cariban languages (e.g., *kareko* 'quartz', *mawari* 'spirit', cf. Lokono *khaleko*, Kari'na *imawari*), most conspicuous in the Warao spoken closest to the Lokono and Kari'na territories (Lorenzano et al. 2009).

The autonym *Warao* has two possible etymologies, based on a possessive phrase with *arao* 'people of': 'people of the canoes' (with *wa* 'canoe', Barral 1979: 460) or 'people of the swamps' (with *waha* 'swamp', Heinen 1998). Both etymologies are supported by the Warao and speak to the riverine nature of the people. It is thus not surprising that the Warao are often stereotyped as fishermen who extract starch from the swampy moriche palms (*Mauritia flexuosa*) and deprecate hunting due to food taboos on mammals (Heinen 1973; Heinen & and Ruddle 1974). The fabric of their society is a polygynous, matrilineal family group which relocates following seasonal changes in the availability of resources. Warao spiritual life is in turn characterized by an animistic system of beliefs, regulated by three types of spiritual leaders. However, while this model is found in remote parts of the delta, in other areas the Warao adapted to different socioecological niches (Heinen 1982, 1988b). Guyanese Warao, like most of their modern Lokono and Kari'na neighbors, are monogynous sedentary cultivators of manioc (*Manihot esculenta*) who represent various Catholic orders and define themselves in opposition to 'moriche eaters'.

Lately, Warao society has undergone further changes. While the Warao population has increased, reaching 32,000 in Venezuela (Simons & Fennig 2018), the traditional socioeconomic model is waning (Barreto & Mosonyi 1980; Heinen, Lizarralde & Gómez 1994). The introduction of taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) and rice in the 20th century fostered sedentism and horticulture. Logging, mining, and the palm heart industry led to migrations toward often ethnically mixed economic centers. This has had an adverse effect on language vitality. Language shift to Spanish in Venezuela is conspicuous, particularly among younger generations in mixed communities. As a result, Warao monolinguals include all inhabitants of the isolated parts of the delta (e.g., *caños* Winikina and Sakobana), but only the elderly people elsewhere. In the easternmost communities in Guyana, furthest removed from the Orinoco, only a few elderly speakers remain, all fluent in Warao, Guyanese Creole English, and often Guyanese English. This geographic pattern is undergoing further changes, as the ongoing economic crisis in Venezuela drives the Venezuelan Warao to migrate to Guyana and Brazil in search of food, safety, and employment.

Venezuelan Warao shows little dialectal variation, as evidenced by studies from distant parts of the delta (Olea 1928; Osborn 1966a; Barral 1979, but see Herrmann 2018). Guyanese Warao, on the other hand, differs structurally from the Venezuelan variant, which qualifies it as a distinct dialect. Unless stated otherwise, the present analysis applies to both dialects, but to keep track of the differences, the examples from Venezuelan Warao are cited as coming from Romero-Figeroa's materials, while

those from Guyanese Warao are indicated as coming from Rybka’s corpus. Variation has also been observed on the level of discourse. Several speech genres, lexically and structurally distinct from everyday speech, have been identified in Venezuelan Warao. Examples include myths, incantations, and several genres of songs, some of which are exclusive to the ritual practices of spiritual leaders (e.g., Barral 1964; Olsen 1974, 1996; Lavandero & Heinen 1986). Linguistic descriptions of Warao include articles (e.g., Osborn 1966a, 1966b, 1967), grammar sketches (e.g., Olea 1928; Vaquero 1965; Romero-Figueroa 1997), and dictionaries (Barral 1979; Edwards 1980), but there is no comprehensive grammar. Literature on oral traditions, both in Warao and the official languages, is abundant, particularly for Venezuela (e.g., Roth 1915; Wilbert 1970; Daisy & Mosonyi 1980). There are also several detailed ethnographic studies (e.g., Heinen & Ruddle 1974; Heinen 1973, 1988b; Wilbert 1993; Olsen 1996). Publicly available primary data are limited to recordings by Heinen and colleagues (Heinen n.d.) for Venezuelan Warao and a corpus of Guyanese Warao by Rybka (2018). Notably, a movie by Crespo (2015), spoken in Warao by a cast of Warao actors, was selected as the Venezuelan entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 88th Academy Awards.

2 Phonology

The Warao consonant inventory contains eleven consonants. Notable anomalies include the lack of a voiceless bilabial and the presence of a labialized velar in the plosive set, as well as the lack of a lateral. Extra-systemic consonants, such as [l], may appear in onomatopoeia (e.g., *lakaatata* ‘red-throated caracara’). Most of the allophones described in Table 28.1 are optional, though the speakers tend to credit them to dialectal variation. Morphophonemic rules are only mentioned in the following sections if relevant to the understanding of the presented data.

Consonantal phonemes are represented by the following allophones. The bilabial /b/ may be realized as a labio-velar [w] in some words (e.g., [wu.‘ra.ka] ‘sloth species’). The voiceless allophone [p] is limited to ad hoc borrowings (e.g., [‘pot] ‘pot’) in Guyana but is in free variation with [b] in some words in Venezuela. Loans

Tab. 28.1: Warao consonants and their allophones.

	bilabial	alveolar	palatal	velar	labio-velar	glottal
plosive	b [p, b, w]	t [t, t̪]		k [k, kʲ kʰ]	kʷ [kʷ, kʷˀ]	
fricative		s [s, ɕ, z]				h [h, h̃]
nasal	m	n [n, ɲ]				
flap		r [d, dʒ, ʝ]				
glide			j [j, z, ð, ʝ]		w [w, β, w̃]	

Tab. 28.2: Warao vowels and their allophones.

	front	central	back
high	i [i, j]		u [u, ũ]
mid	ɛ [ɛ, ĕ, i]		ɔ [ɔ, ɔ̃, u]
low		a [a, ā, e]	

with /p/ are typically recast with a /b/ (e.g., [bu.'ra.ta] ‘money’, from Spanish *plata* ‘money’). The labio-velar /k^w/ appears only in about 150 words, usually word-initially before /a/. Both /k/ and /k^w/ are fronted before /ɛ/ and /i/ (e.g., [sɛ.kʲɛ] ‘sure’, [k^wɛ.ru] ‘coast’), and /k/ may be aspirated in stressed syllables (e.g., [k^ha.ba] ‘part’). The flap /r/ is obligatorily realized as [d] word-initially (e.g., [di.mā] ‘father’, but [mā.'ri.mā] ‘my father’), and may palatalize to [dʒ] after /i/ (e.g., [hi.'dʒa.kɔi] ‘your sister’, from [da.kɔi] ‘sister’). However, between /i/ and /i/, [r] appears (e.g., [hi.'ri.ri] ‘your roaster’, from [di.ri] ‘roaster’). In some idiolects, /r/ becomes an alveolar lateral flap [ɺ] between /a/ and /a/ (e.g., [wa.'la.o] ‘Warao’). In [di.a.nā] ‘already’, a word of high frequency often realized as [dʒa], [dʒ] may appear before /i/, an isolated case of regressive palatalization of [d], perhaps triggered by Spanish *ya* ‘already’, which has a similar form and function. The fricative /s/ may palatalize to an alveolo-palatal [ç] after /i/, even across morpheme boundaries (e.g., [hi.'ca.ba] ‘for you’, from [sa.ba] ‘for’). Rarely and not after /i/, /s/ is voiced intervocally. Before /i/, /n/ palatalizes to [ɲ] (e.g., [ɲi.'bɔ.ra] ‘husband’) and alveolar /t/ optionally (and rarely) to [tç]. The labio-velar /w/ may be realized as a voiced bilabial [β] before /ɛ/ (e.g., [βɛ.'rɛ.te] ‘will grate’). The palatal /j/ is usually fronted to a dental fricative [ð] between /o/ or /a/ and /a/ (e.g., [ka.'ba.ða] ‘cutting’). It may also surface as [z] before /a/ (e.g., [za.mī] ‘fire fan’). Phonemes /h/, /w/, and /j/ are nasalized in nasal sequences. It merits a mention that /h/ is often elided, which is crucial to understanding Warao grammar, given its presence in a few high-frequency grammatical forms.

Warao has five oral vowels, exhibiting three dimensions of allophony (Table 28.2). First, after nasals, consonants /w/, /j/, and /h/ and all vowels form nasalized sequences (e.g., [m̃ɔ.ħ̃ɔ] ‘hand’). Second, word-finally, /ɔ/, /ɛ/, and /a/ may be realized as [u], [i], and [e], respectively. Third, long, stressed, and often stretched final vowels are a defining feature of ideophones (e.g., [hi.'ri:] ‘thunder’). Homologous vowel clusters resulting from the elision of intervocalic /h/ may also surface as long vowels (e.g., /i.ri.'da.ha/ often pronounced as [i.ri.'da.a] or [i.ri.'da:] ‘which is big’). However, for lack of underlying minimal pairs, long vowels are not treated as phonemes, with the possible exception of /i:/ and /ɛ:/, allophones of a suffix that derives ideophones (Section 3.6).

Warao has a (C)V syllable template; onsets are optional word-initially and word-internally; codas are prohibited, and they are avoided in loans by epenthesis or

elision. In Guyanese Warao, however, unstressed word-final vowels and sometimes whole syllables may be elided, resulting in phonetic codas (e.g., [ˈsab], from /ˈsa.ba/ ‘for’). Another striking feature of Warao is its vowel clusters (of up to four segments), which often result from verbal suffixation (e.g., *temoiae* [te.mõ.ĩ.ã.ẽ] ‘blew’). The clusters may surface as diphthongs, long vowels, or short vowels, but the individual segments are identifiable in slow speech. Finally, onomatopoeic words may have aberrant syllable structures (e.g., [ha.bi.ˈtak.tak] ‘ringed kingfisher’, with /k/ in the coda).

Primary stress is usually penultimate; secondary stress is assigned on a right-to-left iterative trochaic basis. When roots are suffixed, as in (1), where *nahoro* ‘eat’ appears with suffixes of different lengths, primary stress shifts to the penultimate syllable, and secondary stress is reassigned. In Guyana, when word-final vowels are elided, stress usually remains unaffected, creating word-final, stressed syllables, as in (2), indicative of the underlying word-final vowels. In (2), the elided vowels appear in parentheses; in the remainder of the chapter, Guyanese examples are rendered as if they were articulated with all vowels pronounced.

- (1) a. [nã.ḥṣ̌.ɾɔ.tɛ] b. [nã.ḥṣ̌.ɾɔ.ˈnã.ka]
 ‘will eat’ ‘Do not eat!’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997; Rybka, 2018)
- (2) a. [ta.ˈtum(a)] b. [u.ˈba.ki.ˈtan(ɛ)]
 ‘they’ ‘to sleep’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Ultimate stress appears, for instance, in ideophones (e.g., [sɛ.ˈrɛ:] ‘perched’) and first-person plural mandatory forms (e.g., [ho.bi.ˈki] ‘we must drink’). Moreover, word-final stressed phonetic syllables disambiguate numerous surface forms of grammatical import. The word-final past tense combination *-nae*, for instance, is usually reduced to a syllable with a stressed monophthong; the form [kɔ.ˈnã.ru.ˈnã.ẽ] ‘brought’ from *konaru* ‘bring’, for example, often surfaces as [kɔ.ˈnã.ru.ˈnẽ]. Ultimate stress distinguishes it from [kɔ. nã.ˈru.nẽ], a form derived with the continuative *-ne*. Antepenultimate stress appears mostly in words with the syllable structure aeCV, aiCV, oiCV. The spelling used here represents the phonemes and employs their symbols, except /kʷ/, /j/, /ɾ/, /ɔ/ and /ɛ/ spelled as <kw>, <y>, <r>, <o>, and <e>, respectively; [d], the word-initial allophone of /ɾ/, is spelled as <d>. Penultimate stress is unmarked; ultimate and antepenultimate stress is marked with an acute accent. Long, stressed, and often stretched word-final vowels in ideophones are written as triple, for example, <iii>, to avoid confusion with homorganic vowel clusters.

3 Word classes and their morphosyntactic properties

Warao is a morphologically rich and agglutinative language with a preference for suffixation, particularly conspicuous in the verbal domain. Several word classes are defined on morphological grounds. Nominals include pronouns (Section 3.1), nouns (Section 3.2), and determiners (Section 3.3). Nouns fall into non-attributive and attributive, the Warao equivalents of adjectives. Postpositions exhibit nominal and verbal features (Section 3.4). Verbs are morphologically complex and often form composite predicates with ancillary verbs (Section 3.5). Warao also makes extensive use of ideophones (Section 3.6), and adverbs form a heterogenous class (Section 3.7).¹

3.1 Pronouns and person affixes

Warao has free pronouns and person affixes, divided into the *subject set* encoding the subject and the *object set* encoding the object of the predicate, the object of postpositions, and the possessor (Table 28.3). Subject markers have free and suffixal forms in the first-person and second-person singular, which may co-occur within a clause, though this is rarely the case, as core arguments need not be explicitly marked. There are prefixal object markers for the same person–number categories, with pronominal equivalents in Venezuelan but not Guyanese Warao. Finally, the second-person plural *yatu* has no bound equivalent in either dialect and indiscriminately encodes the subject, object, and possessor. There are no third-person pronouns; pronominal demonstratives are used instead (Section 3.3).

Since basic word order in Warao is OSV (Section 4), subject pronouns usually precede the verb, as in (3), where the second-person *ihi* is the subject of the transitive *ereta* ‘scare’. By contrast, subject suffixes are verb-final, as in (4), where the first-person *-ine* appears on the intransitive *naru* ‘go’.

- (3) *ihi* *m-e-reta-e*
2SG.SBJ 1SG.OBJ-CAUS-be.afraid-PST
 ‘You scared me.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

¹ For reasons of space, we do not discuss particles separately (e.g., interjections, which are quite numerous), though some of those, especially those that have a grammatical function, e.g., =*yana* NEGATION, =*yata* GENERAL LOCATIVE and =*yama* HEARSAY, are mentioned in this chapter.

Tab. 28.3: Warao person marking; forms in parentheses appear in Venezuelan Warao only.

number	person	subject set		object set	
singular	1 st	<i>ine</i>	<i>-ine</i>	<i>(ma)</i>	<i>ma-</i>
	2 nd	<i>ihi</i>	<i>-ihi</i>	<i>(hi)</i>	<i>hi-</i>
plural	1 st	<i>oko</i>	<i>-oko</i>	<i>(ka)</i>	<i>ka-</i>
	2 nd	<i>yatu</i>		<i>yatu</i>	

- (4) *Wauta omi naru-kitia-ine*
 Wauta without go-INTN-1SG.SBJ
 ‘I intend to go without Wauta [a mythical frog].’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Object prefixes occupy the leftmost slot, losing the vowel /a/ when attached to *a*- and *e*-initial stems, as in (3), where first-person *ma*- appears on *ereta* ‘scare’. Venezuelan Warao also has object pronouns, as in (5), with first-person *ma*, the object of *abu* ‘bite’. Guyanese Warao has no such pronouns, as evidenced by clauses with *e*-initial verbs such as (3), which cannot be transformed into **ma ihi eretae*. Object prefixes and pronouns also encode the object of postpositions (Section 3.4) and the possessor (Section 3.2).

- (5) *ma behoro-era abu-bu-n-ae*
 1SG.OBJ dog-AUG bite-INTS-TEL-PST
 ‘A pack of dogs bit me.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

3.2 Nouns

Nouns can take the possessive prefix *a*- and fall into non-attributive and attributive. Nouns are formed by compounding, derivation, lexicalization of possessive phrases, and reduplication. Left-headed compounds are productively used with attributive nouns (Section 3.2.1); right-headed compounds are mostly lexicalized (e.g., *honina-ba* ‘manatee’, from *honi* ‘creek’ and *naba* ‘tapir’). There are several denominal derivational suffixes (Table 28.4), many of which trace to the N₂ in compounds (e.g., *-noko*, from *noko* ‘place’) and also function as nominalizers. Lexicalized possessive phrases differ from compounds and derivations in that the possessive *a*- is visible on the possessed (e.g., *araho* ‘manioc juice’, from *aru* ‘manioc’ and *a-ho* ‘juice of’). As a derivational process, sound symbolic reduplication is found in animal names (e.g., *kirikiri* ‘golden-winged parakeet’).

Nouns are marked as possessed by the possessive *a*-, while the possessor is encoded with prefixes from the object set, which occupy the leftmost position (Ta-

Tab. 28.4: A selection of denominal and deverbal suffixes used to coin nouns.

suffix	base	example
agent nominalizer <i>-tu</i> (SG) <i>-mo</i> (PL)	N, V	<i>nahorotu</i> ‘one who eats’, from <i>nahoro</i> ‘eat’
place <i>-noko</i>	N, V	<i>nahoronoko</i> ‘table’, from <i>nahoro</i> ‘eat’
collective place <i>-ina</i>	N	<i>ohina</i> ‘moriche grove’, from <i>ohi</i> ‘moriche’
augmentative <i>-ida</i>	N	<i>nabaida</i> ‘sea’, from <i>naba</i> ‘creek’
abstract nominalizer <i>-na</i>	V	<i>enana</i> ‘laughter’, from <i>ena</i> ‘laugh’
instrument nominalizer <i>-koina</i>	V	<i>yamikoina</i> ‘fanning tool’, from <i>yami</i> ‘fan’

Tab. 28.5: Warao possessive marking: combinations of person and possessive prefixes.

person			possessive		example	translation	
			<i>a-</i>	>	<i>a-</i>	<i>amoho</i>	‘hand(s) of’
1 st	SG	<i>ma-</i>	<i>a-</i>	>	<i>ma-</i>	<i>mamoho</i>	‘my hand(s)’
2 nd	SG	<i>hi-</i>	<i>a</i>	>	<i>hi(a)-</i>	<i>hi(a)moho</i>	‘your hand(s)’
1 st	PL	<i>ka-</i>	<i>a-</i>	>	<i>ka-</i>	<i>kamoho</i>	‘our hand(s)’
RECI	PL	<i>ori-</i>	<i>a-</i>	>	<i>oria-</i>	<i>oriamoho</i>	‘each other’s hands’

ble 28.5). The possessive *a-* is inconspicuous in the first-person, where the prefixes are *a*-final and lose the /a/ when attached to the possessive. It is visible, however, with the second-person *hi-* or reflexive *ori-*, though many speakers drop the /a/ in *hia-*. The prefix is also visible in the third-person which has no corresponding prefix and when the possessor is expressed with a noun. The combinations of prefixes and the possessive are further phonologically conditioned when attached to nouns: /a/ is deleted before *a-* and *e*-initial roots. In the third-person, *a-* alternates thus with Ø on nouns in /a/ or /ε/, as in the equative clauses in (6), contrasting the *a*-initial *aru* ‘manioc’ with the consonant-initial *koko* ‘coconut’.

- (6) **tamaha** Ø-*aru* *tamaha* **a-koko-tuma**
DEM:PROX POSS-manioc **DEM:PROX POSS**-coconut-COLL
 ‘This is [his] bitter manioc, these are his coconuts.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The possessive *a-* appears on the possessed in possessive phrases, even when the possessor is not explicit, in which case a third-person possessor is assumed. It merits a mention that the order of constituents in possessive phrases, where the possessor precedes the possessed, differs from that of other noun phrases, as modifiers typically follow the head noun. Finally, body part terms rarely appear without the possessive *a-*, but there is no alienability distinction, as shown in (7), where *hara* ‘forearm’ is the subject of a predicate consisting of an ideophone and the auxiliary *ta*, a response to a video showing a hand drop an apple into a bowl.

- (7) *hara bohiii ta-n-ae*
forearm IDEO.appear AUX-TEL-PST
 '[A] forearm appeared.'
 (Rybka, 2018)

Nouns can take the reflexive prefix *ori-*, which is mutually exclusive with person prefixes. The reflexive is only compatible with (often implicit) plural possessors in combination with which it has a reciprocal reading, as in (8), where it appears on *horu* 'pot', the object of *hohara* 'wash with water'. A reflexive meaning is achieved by using possessive marking on the object which cross-references the subject.

- (8) *oko ori-a-horu hobara-ya*
 1PL.SBJ **REFL**-POSS-pot wash.with.water-PRS
 'We are washing each other's pots with water.'
 (Rybka, 2018)

Nouns are transnumeral; when informationally salient, collectivity is marked with *-tuma*, or its allomorphs *-ma* and *-mo*, both restricted to certain nouns denoting people (e.g., *nobotomo* 'children', from *noboto* 'child'). The transnumeral nature of nouns is illustrated with the equative clauses in (9), from a story in which missionaries ask the Warao if they have individual names, as opposed to an autonym, hence the collective on the noun *wai* 'name'. The reply is a negative existential clause unmarked for collectivity, as collectivity is already clear from the context.²

- (9) A: *katukane a-wai-tuma?*
 how POSS-name-**COLL**
 'What are your names?'
 B: *k-a-wai ekida*
 1PL-POSS-name NEG.EXIST
 'We have no names.' (Lit. 'Our names do not exist.')

(Rybka, 2018)

The singular and plural agent nominalization in *-tu* and *-mo* respectively, are the only number-marked nouns. The collective can appear on plural agent nominalizations for emphasis (e.g., *nahoromotuma* 'all those who eat', from the verb *nahoro* 'eat'). The collective functions also as an associative plural (e.g., *Mariatuma* 'Maria and her family').

² In this story, the Warao are presented through the Western gaze as a poor and uncivilized people, who even lacked proper names, and whom the missionaries "saved" from their plight. This image is highly contested today.

To function as locative adjuncts encoding location and goal, nouns are followed by spatial postpositions or the locative enclitic =*yata*, both of which can take the distributive *-ya* and the source *-mo* (Section 3.4). The distributive signals that the event is distributed through the location or goal, while the source *-mo* marks the phrase as the source of motion. However, select nouns appear unmarked as locations and goals and can take the distributive and source suffix directly. The speakers' judgments of such forms vary, but all such nouns encode places (e.g., locative nominalizations in *-noko*, toponyms, *hanoko* 'house'). Finally, nouns can attach the non-subject suffix, which disambiguates (di)transitive clauses with third-person human core arguments (Section 4.2).

3.2.1 Attributive nouns

Attributive nouns are nouns that usually modify another noun. Like other nouns, they can receive the possessive *a-*, which allows them to function as core arguments, as in (10), with the attributive *hoko* 'white' and *simo* 'red' as the subjects of equative clauses. Unlike non-attributive nouns, their roots are bound and reduplicate for collectivity. The distinction between the types is fuzzy, as evinced in pairs such as non-attributive *muhu* 'bone' and attributive *muhumu* 'skinny'.

- (10) *a-hoko tamaha a-simo amaha*
 POSS-white DEM:PROX POSS-red DEM:DIST
 'White [color] is this one, red [color] is that one.'
 (Rybka, 2018)

Attributive nouns modify another noun in either of the following ways. First, the attributive root can be the N_2 in a left-headed compound with a non-attributive head noun, as in (11), where *kaba* 'short' forms a compound with *mekoro* 'Creole', functioning as the subject of the intransitive *nao* 'come'. As compounds, such forms have one primary stress, attach the collective *-tuma*, and often become lexicalized (e.g., *domuana* 'dusky parrot', from *domu* 'bird' and *ana* 'black'). As opposed to structurally similar possessive phrases, there is no possessive prefix in the compounds. Right-headed compounds with attributive nouns are also attested (e.g., *dau-hanoko* 'wooden house'), but the constructional difference between the compound types remains unclear.

- (11) *mekoro-kaba m-a-hanoko=wata nao-ae*
 creole-short 1SG-POSS-house=LOC come-PST
 'The short Creole [man] came to my house.'
 (Rybka, 2018)

Attributive nouns can also form relative clauses postposed to the head noun. To this end, attributive nouns usually attach the approximative *-u*, which adds the meaning ‘somewhat, quite’ (e.g., *anau* ‘blackish’, from *ana* ‘black’, *basau* ‘flattish’, from *basa* ‘flat’). Once suffixed, the noun is followed by the tense-marked form of the auxiliary *ta*, completing the *attributive clause* (Section 4.3). The clause can be relativized by attaching a relativizer, as in (12), where *simo* ‘red’ forms a relative clause with the present form of the auxiliary. Less commonly, attributive nouns that do not normally appear in attributive clauses with *ta* form *equative clauses* with the copula *ha* (Section 4.3). These can also be relativized and postposed to the head noun, as in the equative clause with *hido* ‘new’ (13). The contrast between attributive and equative clauses is discussed in Section 4.3, but it is unclear whether it corresponds to the contrast between left- and right-headed compounds mentioned above and whether either of these two constructional differences maps onto the difference between qualitative and classifying uses of attributive nouns.

- (12) *tamaha diana hiaka simo-u tia-ha batoko-bu-ae*
 DEM:PROX already cloth red-APRX AUX.PRS-REL:INDF hang-INTS-PST
 ‘This red cloth is hanging’ (Lit. ‘this cloth, which is reddish, is already hung’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (13) *tamaha hota hido ha-kore*
 DEM:PROX earth new COP-COND
 ‘When this earth was new [...]’ (a common opening of traditional stories)
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.3 Determiners

There is some variation in the form and function of determiners, in particular demonstratives, the focus of this section, which may be the result of both language-internal change and language contact. However, some generalizations can be made (Table 28.6). There are three transnumeral pronominal demonstratives, with collective equivalents, as well as three general locative demonstrative adverbs, from which another set of locative adverbs with spatially narrower meanings is derived.

In Venezuelan (Herrmann 2018) and Guyanese Warao, pronominal demonstratives can be used adnominally. Since /h/ and word-final vowels can be elided (Section 2), *tamaha* and *amaha* may surface as shorter forms with ultimate stress (e.g., [ta.^hma:] or [ta.^hma]). This phonetic process may have been reanalyzed in some areas; Romero-Figueroa (1997) distinguishes adnominal forms without the final syllable from the full pronominal forms. The elision of /ha/ does not apply to the demonstrative *tai*, used pronominally and adnominally, which, however, often surfaces as [ta]. Given the above, the pronominal–adnominal contrast noted by Romero-Figueroa for

Tab. 28.6: Warao demonstratives.

	pronominal		adverbial	
	transnumeral	collective	general	precise
proximal	<i>tamaha</i>	<i>tama(ha)tuma</i>	<i>tamate</i>	<i>tamatuka</i>
distal	<i>amaha</i>	<i>ama(ha)tuma</i>	<i>amate</i>	<i>amatuka</i>
anaphoric	<i>tai</i>	<i>tatuma</i>	<i>tata</i>	<i>tatuka</i>

proximal and distal forms only is likely a language internal development. Moreover, all three demonstratives may attach the collective *-tuma*. Romero-Figueroa (1997) reports the transparent forms with /ha/ such as *tamahatuma*, phonologically reduced to *tamatuma* in other varieties; the collective form of *tai* is consistently *tatuma*. Like nouns, pronominal demonstratives are transnumeral, as in (14), where *tamaha* appears despite the head noun referring to a plural entity.

- (14) *tamaha karata ori-arai er-ida toboooow ta-n-ae*
DEM:PROX book REFL-on many-AUG IDEO.stacked AUX-TEL-PST
 ‘These stacks of books are piled on top of one another [...]’
 (Rybka, 2018)

There are also differences in the use of demonstratives. In Venezuelan Warao, *tamaha* and its derivatives (including the locative forms) are distance-sensitive and apply to entities within the speaker’s reach or those easily brought within it and are usually accompanied by a touching or pointing gesture (Herrmann 2018). The *amaha*-forms are used for objects beyond the search zone of *tamaha*-forms, as in (15), and contrastively with this search zone. In Guyana, *tamaha*-forms, accompanied by a gesture, are used at all scales, while *amaha*-forms are mostly used contrastively.

- (15) *ure amaha-tuma saba ihi kona-n-ae*
 taro **DEM:DIST**-COLL BEN 2SG.SBJ bring-TEL-PST
 ‘You brought taro for those yonder.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997; Rybka, 2018)

The demonstrative *tai* and its derivatives are not distance-sensitive. Herrmann (2018) writes that they are used when speech participants pay attention to the referent. While this formulation is accurate, the forms refer, more broadly, to previously mentioned entities even when these are not attended to at a particular moment. The anaphoric rather than deictic nature of *tai* shows in its use as a reference-tracking device, as in (16), which sums up a monologue about manioc. It is the only demonstrative that attaches the non-subject suffix (Section 4.2), which disambiguates

(di)transitive clauses with third-person human arguments, a redundant feature for a deictic form.

- (16) *tai* *omi* *oko* *ha-komoni*
DEM:ANPH without 1PL.SBJ COP-NEG.POT
 ‘We cannot [live] without [manioc].’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Locative demonstrative adverbs are derived from the pronominal forms with *-te* and *-ta*, most likely the reduced forms of the locative enclitic =*yata* (Section 3.4), and, like the collective pronominal forms, may have undergone phonological reduction (e.g., /*tamaha=yata*/ > /*tamatε*/). From the locative triad, adverbs indicating a smaller search zone are formed with the diminutive *-uka* (or *-ika*). The contrast between the two sets is shown in (17), where *tatuka* and *tata* indicate a smaller and a larger area, respectively. Both sets are used to locate entities in space *and* time.

- (17) *tat-uka* *duuu* *ta-n-ae* *takore tata* *isia*
ANPH.LOC-DIM IDEO.appear AUX-TEL-PST but **ANPH.LOC** about
kokotuka=witu namina-naka ta-n-ae
 all=REST know-NEG AUX-TEL-PST
 ‘I reached that place, but I did not get to know all about the whole place.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Locative demonstratives of both types do not require additional morphology to function as adjuncts encoding the location or goal, as in (18). They do, however, require the source suffix *-mo* when encoding the source, as in (18), where *tatukamo* is used to refer to a ‘place’ in time.

- (18) *tat-uka-mo* *i-yakara-t-ubu-ne* *tane diana nahoro*
ANPH.LOC-DIM-SRC CAUS-clearing-VRB-INTS-CONJ then already food
aba-ya
 put-PRS
 ‘After that, they cleaned [the meat] and then they were preparing food.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Determiners include the indefinite and definite enclitics =*ha* and =*hakotai*, numerals, quantifiers, and three question words that may be used adnominally: *sina* ‘who’, *kasikaha* ‘which (thing)’, and *katukaya* ‘which (kind)’. These modifiers and the demonstratives follow the head noun in Venezuelan Warao, as in (19). In Guyana, however, the adnominally used question words and demonstratives precede the head, as in (14) above. Given that in Guyanese Creole English determiners appear before the head and that the Guyanese Warao are bilingual, this constituent order may have been borrowed.

- (19) *Warao-tuma sina yaota rubuhi-te-ra?*
 Warao-COLL **who** work hurry-FUT-INT
 ‘Which Warao will hurry [their] work?’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

3.4 Postpositions

Warao has various postpositions which form postpositional phrases that function as locative or temporal adjuncts or introduce non-core arguments, for example, the beneficiary (Table 28.7). Postpositions form phrases with nominal expressions. Alternatively, they take person prefixes, mutually exclusive with the explicit postpositional object or the reflexive *ori-*. The postpositional object need not be expressed at all, while the prefixes are attached without the intervening possessive *a-*, which contrasts postpositional and possessive phrases. Both features of postpositions are illustrated in (20), where the addressee introduced by the benefactive *saba* is known from the context and remains implicit. In (21) and (22), the reflexive, which has a reciprocal meaning on postpositions, and the second-person prefix, respectively, attach to the benefactive.

- (20) *tane seke saba dibu-ae=yama*
 then sure **BEN** speak-PST=HRS
 ‘Then of course [the missionaries] spoke to [the Warao], it is said.’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (21) *nebu-tuma tuatane ori-saba wara-e*
 young.man-COLL like.this **REFL-BEN** talk-PST
 ‘The young men talked to each other like this.’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (22) *koko Roni hi-saba ma-moa-e*
 coconut Ronnie **2SG.OBJ-BEN** 1SG.OBJ-give-PST
 ‘Ronnie gave me a coconut for you.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Tab. 28.7: A selection of Warao postpositions.

postposition	meaning	postposition	meaning	postposition	meaning
<i>arai</i>	above, on top	<i>isia</i>	by, about	<i>kwarika</i>	above
<i>autu</i>	in the middle	<i>isiko</i>	with	<i>monika</i>	like
<i>awere</i>	near	<i>isimo</i>	from	<i>noika</i>	under
<i>diboto</i>	against	<i>kaika</i>	together	<i>nokaba</i>	behind
<i>ebe</i>	in front	<i>kawana</i>	among	<i>omi</i>	without
<i>eku</i>	inside	<i>kware</i>	towards	<i>saba</i>	for

To function as locations or goals, most nouns form postpositional phrases or are followed by the enclitic =*yata*, treated here because of its locative function. Unlike postpositions, the locative =*yata* (or =*wata* if the preceding word ends in /o/) is an enclitic that does not attach to prefixes but follows nouns and subject pronouns. While postpositions express specific spatial relations, such as *kwarika* ‘above’ in (23), =*yata* has a general locative or goal meaning, as in (24).

- (23) *naba kwarika kwai yaburu-ae*
 river **above** high climb-PST
 ‘He climbed high above the river.’ (i.e., ‘high on a branch overhanging the river’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (24) *ine diawara-e Waromuri=yata*
 1SG.SBJ be.born-PST Waramuri=**LOC**
 ‘I was born in Waramuri.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

To function as locative adjuncts encoding source or path, both =*yata* and postpositions take the source suffix -*mo*, as in (25) with *noikamo* ‘from under’, or the distributive -*ya*, signaling that the event is distributed through the space, as in (26) with =*yataya* ‘through’.

- (25) *ha noika-mo beroro ehobo-n-ae*
 hammock under-**SRC** dog come.out-TEL-PST
 ‘The dog came out from under the hammock.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

- (26) *oko waromuri=yata-ya naru-ae*
 1SG.SBJ waramuri=**LOC-DISTR** go-PST
 ‘We went through Waramuri.’ (i.e., ‘we passed through Waramuri’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

The distributive -*ya* is lexicalized in the postposition *isia* ‘by, about’, while the postposition *isimo* ‘origin’ lexicalized the source suffix -*mo*. The latter is worth discussing, as it is felicitous in static scenes and dynamic scenes that do not involve locomotion (i.e., when moving an object across a table but not when carrying it across a room). If *isimo* appears in a clause expressing locomotion, it is read figuratively, as in (27), where it implies a contribution to an event. The postposition contrasts with =*yatamo*, the combination of =*yata* and -*mo*, used when locomotion is involved.

- (27) *ka-isimo ine kona-te*
 1PL.OBJ-**origin** 1SG.SBJ bring-FUT
 ‘I will bring [this] from us.’ (i.e., ‘[This] will be our contribution.’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

Several postpositions derive from nouns that lexicalized the possessive *a-*, which otherwise does not appear on postpositions (e.g., *arai* ‘above’, from *dai* ‘back’). Several other postpositions contain the diminutive *-uka* (or *-ika*), which narrows their spatial or temporal scope, as it does with demonstratives (Section 3.3), as illustrated in (28), with *ebe* ‘in front’ and *ebika* ‘right in front’.

- (28) *m-eb-ika yaaa ta-ne naru-ø ote=witu yaaa*
 1SG.OBJ-in.front-**DIM** IDEO.walk AUX-CONT go-2SG.IMP far=REST IDEO.walk
ta-naka!
 AUX-NEG
 ‘Walk right in front of me, do not go too far!’
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.5 Verbs

The Warao verb is a multiplex product of agglutinative morphology. For the purposes of this exposition, its most important features are grouped into several broad themes. Core arguments can be referenced on the verb with subject and object affixes, as described in Section 3.1. Verb formation includes compounding, reduplication, and denominal verbalization (Section 3.5.1). There are several, mostly prefixal, valency-changing operators (Section 3.5.2). The pluractional prefix and the intensifying suffix partly compensate for the lack of number marking on nouns (Section 3.5.3). Tense (Section 3.5.4), telicity (Section 3.5.5), and mood (Section 3.5.6) are closely intertwined and expressed mostly by suffixes. Several modal categories, as well as negation, are expressed by suffixes which block further suffixation, requiring ancillary verbs to form a complete predicate (Section 3.5.7).

3.5.1 Derivation

Setting aside valency-changing operations (Section 3.5.2), which are not treated as derivational here, verbs are formed with denominal verbalizers or by compounding or reduplication. The intensifying suffixes *-era* and *-ida*, which have an augmentative function with nouns, also derive intransitive verbs encoding states. The verb *ahera* ‘be painful’ in (29), identical to the attributive noun *ahera* ‘painful’, for instance, derives from *ahi* ‘pain’. As verbs, such forms do not require the copula, as

in the second clause in (29), which is present in nominal predicates, and they attach verbal suffixes such as the conditional *-kore* in the first clause of (29).

- (29) *hokohi ah-era-kore yaka-**era** ha nona-kitane*
 sunshine pain-AUG-COND good-**AUG** hammock make-INF
 ‘When the sun shines hard (Lit. ‘is painful’), [it is] good to make hammocks.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

From nouns, verbs encoding the action of attaining the state encoded by the attributive noun are derived with the verbalizer *e-* (or *i-* if the following syllable contains /a/), which functions also as a causative. The prefix is illustrated in (30), where it derives *ehido* ‘sharpen’ from the noun *hido* ‘new’. Both attributive and non-attributive nouns can also be verbalized with the suffix *-ta*, as in (30), with *kabata* ‘cut’ (i.e., ‘divide into parts’), derived from *kaba* ‘part’. Borrowed verbal roots (e.g., *start*) are also overtly verbalized with *-ta*, which likely grammaticalized from the auxiliary *ta* (Section 4.3).

- (30) *dau kaba-**ta**-ne e-hido-ne*
 tree part-**VBZ**-CONJ **CAUS**-new-CONJ
 ‘[He] cut a stick and sharpened it and [...]
 (Rybka, 2018)

Verbs are also formed by compounding and reduplication. In compound verbs, a nominal root appears before a verbal root, as in the transitive *hohara* ‘wash with water’ in (8) above, derived from *ho* ‘water’ and the transitive *hara* ‘wash’. Moreover, many verb stems can be reduplicated to express iterativity (e.g., *bahibahi* ‘circle round’, from *bahi* ‘turn around’), similarly to ideophones (Section 3.6), and in contrast to attributive nouns, where reduplication signals collectivity (Section 3.2.1).

3.5.2 Valency-changing affixes

Valency-decreasing devices are limited to the reflexive *ori-*. The reflexive appears on nouns, postpositions, and verbs and is incompatible with person prefixes. With (di)transitive verbs, where the prefixes encode the object, *ori-* reduces valency, resulting in reflexive or reciprocal verbs. With singular subjects, *ori-* has a reflexive meaning, as in (31) with the ditransitive *inamina* ‘teach’.

- (31) *aruba nona-kitane ine=witu **ori-i**-namina-e*
 manioc.press make-INF 1SG.SBJ=REST **REFL**-CAUS-know-PST
 ‘I alone taught myself how to make a manioc press.’ (Lit. ‘I made myself know.’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

Valency-increasing morphology includes the causative *e-*, which functions as a verbalizer with nouns (Section 3.5.1). As a valency-increasing prefix, it appears on intransitives such as *masibu* ‘be deceived’ in (32), which it renders transitive, and on some transitives, such as *namina* ‘know’ in (31), which it renders ditransitive. In Venezuela, the causative is productive, but its distribution is limited in Guyana. In both dialects, the causer is expressed by the subject, the causee by the object prefix, and the object of the underlying transitive verb is left out or expressed with a noun phrase.

- (32) *amau ihi ma-i-masibu-ae*
 then 2SG.SBJ 1SG.OBJ-**CAUS**-be.deceived-PST
 ‘Then you deceived me.’ (Lit. ‘You caused me to be tricked.’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

The only valency-increasing suffix is the commandative *-moro* meaning ‘order’, as in (33), where it appears on the intransitive *naru* ‘go’. Like the transitivizer, the commandative turns transitive verbs into ditransitive verbs. The subject of the resultant predicate encodes the person giving the order; the object prefix, however, encodes the patient, not the causee, which can in turn be expressed with a noun phrase, as in (34), or inferred from the context.

- (33) *ine tai naru-moro-kore*
 1SG.SBJ DEM:ANPH go-**CMND**-COND
 ‘When I order him to go [...]’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (34) *ine Roni hi-hata-moro-ae*
 1SG.SBJ Ronnie 2SG.OBJ-**shoot**-CMND-PST
 ‘I told Ronnie to shoot you.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Warao has also several applicatives, the exact differences among which remain unclear. The applicative *se-*, for instance, usually promotes a locative oblique to an object, as in (35), where it turns the intransitive *dokoi* ‘vomit’ into transitive *serokoi* ‘vomit on’. The applicative *te-*, while promoting an oblique, intensifies the meaning, as in (36), where it turns the transitive *dibu* ‘say’, which marks the addressee with the benefactive *saba*, into transitive *teribu* ‘speak a lot to’.

- (35) *a-sinoto se-rokoi-ae*
 POSS-shirt **APPL**-vomit-PST
 ‘[He] vomited on his shirt.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (36) *a-tida* *te-ribu-ya*
 POSS-woman **APPL**-say-PRS
 ‘[He] speaks a lot to his wife.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.5.3 Number

Since number is not obligatorily encoded in the noun (Section 3.2), the verb often helps disambiguate the grammatical number of core arguments, which can be indicated by the pluractional *no-* or entailed by the intensifier *-(u)bu*. The former indicates the plurality of an argument, as in (37), where it attaches to the intransitive *dia* ‘disappear’. With transitives, the pluractional implies a plural subject (e.g., *non-ati* ‘(many) stab’, from *nati* ‘stab’), or object (e.g., *nonamu* ‘plant (many)’, from *namu* ‘plant’).

- (37) *no-ria-e* *diana*
 PLURACT-disappear-PST already
 ‘[They] disappeared already.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Number may also be entailed by the intensifier, which often conveys the iteration of the event, and which may imply plural participants, as in (38). The intensifier can co-appear with the pluractional, which brings to the fore their different semantics, as in the forms derived from *tuta* ‘break’: *tutubu* ‘break into pieces’, *notutu* ‘(many) break’, and *notutubu* ‘(many) break into pieces’. In addition, the intensifier has present and past habitual interpretations.

- (38) *tai* *boro-bu-te*
 DEM:ANPH cut.open.trunk.of.moriche-**INTS**-FUT
 ‘That [man] cuts open many trunks of moriche.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.5.4 Tense

Three suffixes can be described as tense markers: present *-ya*, future *-te*, and past *-ae*. The present *-ya* likely developed via insubordination from the combination of the progressive subordinator *-i* (Section 4.5) and the copula *-ha* (Section 3.5.6), which explains why it covers progressive aspect and present tense. As progressive, it does not attach to the copula *ha*, negative existential *ekida*, or intransitive stative verbs derived from nouns. It is compatible with the past and future suffix if these

appear on an ancillary verb (Section 3.5.6.3) and with conditional *-kore* (Section 4.5), together with which it implies a time-reference that overlaps with that of the main clause, as in (39) with *naria*, a phonologically reduced and resyllabified variant of *naru-ya*. However, *-ya* is also used to speak of the present in general, as in (40), where it appears on *namina* ‘know’ and *dibu* ‘say’. Notice that *namina* encodes a state suggesting a shift from progressive to present semantics. For these reasons and to distinguish it from the progressive *-i*, *-ya* is treated as a present tense suffix.

- (39) *nar-ia-kore tane tai a-ramitu diana diboto-n-ae*
 go-**PRS**-COND then DEM:ANPH POSS-husband.of.sister already meet-TEL-PST
 ‘While [they were] going, they met their sister’s husband.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (40) *takore ine namina-ya Wauta dibu-ya*
 but 1SG.SBJ know-**PRS** Wauta say-**PRS**
 ‘“But I know [them],” says Wauta [a mythical frog].’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The future *-te* is typically used with a future time-reference, as in (41), where it appears on *naru* ‘go’. More generally, it signals the next in a series of steps, as in the instructions in (42). By contrast, the past *-ae* (or *-e* after /a/) indicates a past time-reference, as in (43), where it is attached to *diawara* ‘give birth’. As opposed to the present suffix, which can be followed by conditional *-kore*, the future and past suffixes always close the verbal string and are mutually exclusive. This paradigmatic relationship is echoed on the level of meaning in the Venezuelan variety studied by Romero-Figueroa, where the future tense suffix is also used with a present time-reference, thus being in fully complementary distribution with the past tense suffix.

- (41) *hake hokooo ta-ne aniaka=witu oko diana naru-te*
 tomorrow white.IDEO AUX-CONT dawn=REST 1PL.SBJ already go-**FUT**
 ‘Tomorrow right at dawn, as it gets bright, we will be gone.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

- (42) *araho ihi nisa-te horu eku abana ihi nisa-te*
 manioc.juice 2SG.SBJ take-**FUT** pot inside froth 2SG.SBJ take-**FUT**
 ‘You take the manioc juice, in the pot, you take the froth.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (43) *m-a-idamo-tuma ma-riawara-e Waromuri arai*
 1SG-POSS-elderly-COLL 1SG-give.birth-**PST** Waramuri on
 ‘My parents gave birth to me in Waramuri.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.5.5 Telicity

Some verbs may encode a contrast in telicity, where telic verb forms refer to events conceptualized as having endpoints and atelic verb forms refer to events conceptualized as lacking them. However, the difference between clauses with atelic and telic forms is elusive, since telicity status affects the interpretation of the whole clause. This explains why the contrast has also been described as a type of number or aspect marking (cf. Osborn 1959; Romero-Figueroa 1997). The form and function of stem alternation and the operative suffix *-n* remain, however, the least understood part of Warao grammar, and the analysis presented here may need to be revisited in the future. Atelic forms typically imply collective, unaffected patients, and durativity, while telic forms imply non-collective, wholly affected ones, and punctuality. Telicity also interacts with lexical aspect, as atelic forms are typically the only forms available for stative and activity verbs, which are inherently atelic, while telic forms are typically the only forms available for achievement verbs, which are inherently telic. There are also several verbs whose telicity marking does not match their meanings, which are treated as irregular, though in some cases the irregularity can be explained by diachronic processes of semantic shift and lexicalization.

Telicity is marked either by stem alternation if the following suffix starts with a consonant, or the suffix *-n*, if the following suffix starts with a vowel, which is only the case in the past tense and the 2nd person singular imperative (Section 3.5.6). In the past tense, the telic *-n* attaches to the stem before the past suffix *-ae* (or *-e* after /a/). Some verbs thus have two past forms, an atelic one without *-n* and a telic one with *-n* (e.g., *tuara* ‘stop’, which becomes *tuarae* ‘rested’ or *tuaranae* ‘stopped’ in the past). Some verbs have only one past form, dependent on their lexical aspect. Achievement verbs (e.g., *nabaka* ‘arrive’) typically have only a telic form, while stative and activity verbs (e.g., *namina* ‘know’ and *uba* ‘sleep’, respectively), typically have only an atelic form. Examples (44) and (45) contrast the two past forms of *nisa* ‘take’; notice that here the atelic–telic contrast translates into a contrast between a partly and wholly affected patient.

- (44) *m-a-merehi* *ihi* *nisa-e*
 1SG-POSS-cashew 2SG.SBJ take-**PST**
 ‘He took some of my cashews [from the bag].’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (45) *m-a-merehi* *ihi* *nisa-n-ae*
 1SG-POSS-cashew 2SG.SBJ take-**TEL-PST**
 ‘He took [e.g., a bag of] my cashews.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

If the following suffix is consonant-initial, as in the non-past tenses, telicity is encoded with stem alternation, a process restricted to some verbs that end in a vowel

other than /a/. Such verbs change the final vowel to /a/ or rarely /e/ to form a telic stem (e.g., atelic *wiri* ‘paddle’ and telic *wira* ‘paddle a stroke’). That said, many verbs that end in a vowel other than /a/ and all verbs that end in /a/ have only one stem. In such cases, the lack of the telicity contrast in the non-past may correspond to its lack in the past, as predicted by lexical aspect. In some cases, however, the contrast is available in the past, where it is marked by the suffix, but not in the non-past (e.g., *tuarate* ‘will rest’ or ‘will stop’). Examples (46) and (47) contrast the two stems of *duhu* ‘sit’ and illustrate the inherently telic accomplishment verb *nawaha* ‘dry out’ and two inherently atelic activity verbs *koita* ‘call out’ and *yaburu* ‘climb’, all of which have only one stem.

- (46) *ine arai duhu-te nawaha-kitane*
 1sg.SBJ on sit-FUT dry.out-INF
 ‘I will sit on [the manioc press] to dry [the manioc].’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (47) *yaburu-kitane diana duha-te tane diana koita-te*
 climb-INF already sit.TEL-FUT then already call.out-FUT
 ‘After climbing the tree, [the howler monkey] will sit down and howl.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Stem alternation and the suffix *-n* normally do not co-occur. However, there are cases where a verb is double-marked as telic. In some cases, the telic stem may have become lexicalized, as appears to be the case with *namu* ‘plant (vegetables)’ and *nama* ‘stick in the ground vertically’. It appears also that the system is regularizing, with *-a*, the most common marker of telic stems, spreading to contexts where it is not expected, such as the second-person imperative (Section 3.5.6).

3.5.6 Mood

Warao has several suffixes that fall into the category of mood, most notably imperative (Section 3.5.6.1) and interrogative (Section 3.5.6.2), as well as several other suffixes that straddle the border between mood and aspect (Section 3.5.6.3). Many of these suffixes block the addition of further verbal suffixes, which must then be carried by an ancillary verb and are therefore treated here as well. The following sections discuss the suffixes that may require the formation of complex predicates with such ancillary verbs. Warao has two such verbs, the auxiliary *ta* and copula *ha*, the latter of which has a lexicalized collective equivalent *eha* (from *era ha* ‘be plenty’). Both verbs function as auxiliaries with verbal predicates and as copulas with non-verbal predicates. In the former function, the auxiliary is more common; in the latter function, the copula prevails, hence their names. As auxiliaries, the two verbs fol-

low a content predicate marked by a suffix that closes the verbal string, pushing further morphology to the ancillary. Often both verbs are acceptable; where semantic differences between the construction with the auxiliary and copula have been detected, the auxiliary implies an action while the copula indicates a state, in keeping with the broader set of their uses in verbal and non-verbal predicates, respectively (Section 4.3). Both ancillaries appear in clauses with many of the suffixes; it is also common for a sentence with and without the ancillary to be acceptable. It is beyond the present scope to delve into the form and function of such clauses, but it is worth signaling that some forms derived with these suffixes bear features of deverbal nouns and adverbs.

3.5.6.1 Imperative

Starting with canonical imperatives, the second-person singular imperative is expressed by *-u* or a morphological zero (postulated here because all verb stems apart from stative verbs derived from nouns, the copula *ha*, and the negative existential *ekida* are bound stems). Verbs that end in /a/ form imperatives by the addition of *-u*; other verbs have unmarked imperative forms. Provided that the telic marking is compatible with the lexical aspect of the verb, the verb can attach the telic *-n* to encode a telic event, the expected form of telicity marking since the following suffix, the imperative *-u*, is vowel-initial. The atelic and telic second-person singular imperatives of *bere* ‘sweep’, a verb that happens to exhibit stem allomorphy, are given in (48) and (49), respectively. However, as mentioned above (Section 3.5.5), the stem-final /a/, the most common marker of telic stem alternants, may be spreading to such forms as well, as illustrated in (50).

- (48) *borohoro bere-Ø*
 floor sweep-2SG.IMP
 ‘Sweep [the] floor.’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (49) *ha-noko bere-n-u*
 hammock-PLACE sweep-TEL-2SG.IMP
 ‘Give the house (Lit. ‘hammock place’) a sweep.’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (50) *ha-noko bera-n-u*
 hammock-PLACE sweep.TEL-TEL-2SG.IMP
 ‘Give the house (Lit. ‘hammock place’) a sweep.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The second-person plural *-kotu* and the remaining imperative suffixes, all of which are consonant-initial, attach to telic and atelic stems and are incompatible with the

telic *-n*. Hortatives include *-kí* and *-kí*, both inclusive, the second of which attracts primary stress and expresses a mandate rather than an exhortation. The contrast is on the wane, with *-kí* becoming a general hortative. The jussive *-kunarae* expresses an order addressed to a third person. Worth recalling is also the valency-changing commandative *-moro*, which has imperative semantics (Section 3.5.2).

Negative imperatives are formed with the negator *-naka*, which closes the verbal string and requires further morphology to be carried by the copula *ha* or the auxiliary *ta*. The negator *-naka* pushes the imperative marking to the auxiliary or, less often, the copula, as in (51) with the jussive *-kunarae*. In the second-person singular imperative, however, the ancillary verbs are often dropped altogether.

- (51) *ka-nuha-naka* *ha-kunarae*
 1PL.OBJ-be.afraid-NEG COP-PERM
 ‘They must not be afraid of us.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

3.5.6.2 Interrogative

Warao has an explicit interrogative marker whose use depends on the dialects. Both in Guyana and in Venezuela, polar and content questions can be left morphologically unmarked and distinguished from the indicative mood by intonation only, as in (52). In the Guyanese variety, the interrogative *-ra* may appear in polar questions, attached as a final suffix to the finite verb. In Venezuela, however, both types of questions can be explicitly marked by the interrogative *-ra*, as in (53) and (54) further below. In non-verbal clauses without an overt ancillary verb, *-ra* is attached to the question word.

- (52) *horu-tuma isa* *namina-ya?*
 pot-COLL about know-PRS
 ‘Do you know about pots?’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (53) *naba muhoko tatuma* *waba-komoni ta-e-ra?*
 river side DEM:ANPH.COLL die-NEG.POT AUX-PST-INT
 ‘Couldn’t they die on that side of the river?’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

Content questions are formed with the question words *sina* ‘who’, *bitu* ‘what’, *kasi-kaha* ‘which type’, *katukaya* ‘which kind’, *kasaba* ‘where’, *katukane* ‘how’, or *kata-mona* ‘how many’, as in (54). It is worth noting that since question words are clause-initial in Warao, questions about the subject have an SOV word order, whereas OSV is characteristic of most other clauses (Section 4.1).

- (54) *sina ma yehe-bu-te-ra?*
 who 1SG.OBJ shout-INTS-FUT-INT
 ‘Who keeps shouting at me?’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

3.5.6.3 Other suffixes that may close the verbal string

Warao has numerous other suffixes with modal and aspectual semantics that close the verbal string and call for the ancillaries. This is typically the case if the clause contains tense morphology; if it does not, it is interpreted as present tense and the ancillaries are often not required. A small selection of such suffixes is given below. The antiperfective *-moana* encodes an action that has not taken place yet. It forms a clause with a present time reference, as in (55), unless specified differently by tense suffixes on the copula.

- (55) *ubu-bu-moana*
 sleep-INTS-APFV
 ‘[They] have not slept yet.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The desiderative *-turu* is usually a closing morpheme, as in (56), and can have frustrative overtones. The suffix has an emphatic equivalent *-turuuu*, meaning ‘die for’, followed by a pause and the auxiliary *ta*, a construction typical of ideophones (Section 3.6).

- (56) *osibu ine nahoro-turu ta-te*
 morocoto 1SG.SBJ eat-DESID AUX-FUT
 ‘I want to eat *morocoto* (*Collosama macropomus*).’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

A frustrative and adversative meaning is also expressed with the suffix *-ka*, labeled “unintentional” by some authors, as in (57). Its precise meaning may vary per dialect (cf. Osborn 1967; Romero-Figueroa 1997).

- (57) *dura-ka ta-e*
 hit.TEL-FRUS AUX-PST
 ‘It nearly hit him.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The facsimile *-sita* grammaticalized from the verb *sita* ‘copy’. The suffix indicates that the subject pretends to perform the activity encoded by the verbal root, as in (58), where it follows the intensifier *-(u)bu* on the verb *hobi* ‘drink’.

- (58) *hobi-bu-sita-ya*
 drink-INTS-**FACS**-PRS
 ‘[They] are pretending to be drunk.’ (Lit. ‘pretending to be drinking a lot’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

The negative potential *-komoni* usually expresses the physical inability to perform the action, as in (59), but also moral prohibitions. The opposite potential meaning is encoded by *-komo* in Venezuela and *-kuna* in Guyana.

- (59) *masi hata-komoni ta-n-ae*
 deer shoot-**NEG.POT** COP-TEL-PST
 ‘[He] could not shoot the deer.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

3.5.7 Negation

There are two standard negators, *-naha* and *-naka*, which may surface as [n] alone, and a few suffixes that encode negation as part of more complex meanings (e.g., negative potential *-komoni*, anticompletive *-moana*). Negation is also expressed by the negative existential *ekida* (Section 4.3), postposition *omi* ‘without’ (Section 3.4), and the particle *=yana* used in equative clauses (Section 4.3). The negator *-naha* appears when there is no tense morphology on the verb. It has a present tense reading, as in (60) and is the negative equivalent of the present *-ya*. It does not require an ancillary, possibly because it includes the grammaticalized copula *ha*.

- (60) *ine naru-kore ine homakaba oa-naha*
 1SG.SBJ go-COND 1SG.SBJ fish catch-**NEG.PROG**
 ‘When I go [fishing], I do not catch [any] fish.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

By contrast, the negator *-naka* appears when additional tense morphology (past or future) is present. The suffix frequently closes the verbal string, pushing further morphology to the copula or the auxiliary, as in (61), but some suffixes may appear before *-naka* (e.g., commandative *-moro*).

- (61) *ine namina-naka ta-bu-te*
 1SG.SBJ know-**NEG** AUX-INTS-FUT
 ‘I certainly do not know.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Negative imperatives are a good example of the semantic contrast between the ancillary verbs. The negator *-naka* often blocks the addition of imperative suffixes on

the main verb (Section 3.5.6.1), so that they must be carried by the copula or auxiliary, which entail subtly different meanings: an order to discontinue a state (62) or an action (63).

- (62) *obonobu-naka ha-u!*
 think-NEG COP-2SG.IMP
 ‘Do not be worried!’

- (63) *obonobu-naka ta-kotu!*
 think-NEG AUX-2PL.IMP
 ‘[You all] stop worrying!’

3.6 Ideophones

Warao speakers make extensive use of ideophones, defined as “marked words that depict sensory imagery” (Dingemanse 2011: 25). Their marked status shows, for instance, in long, stressed, word-final vowels, an atypical syllable structure in Warao. Such final vowels, written as triple, are often stretched and followed by a pause. Ideophones typically appear towards the end of the clause, followed by the auxiliary *ta*, which carries the verbal suffixes, as in (64), with *bohiii* ‘appear (unexpectedly)’ and *bareee* ‘splash’. As such, *ideophone clauses* are almost identical to *attributive clauses* (Section 4.3). Ideophones may, however, also occur by themselves as single utterances.

- (64) *hara bohiii ta-n-ae horu eku ho naho-n-ae*
 forearm IDEO.appear AUX-TEL-PST pot inside water pour.in-TEL-PST
naho-ne bareee ta-n-ae
 pour.in-CONT IDEO.splash AUX-TEL-PST
 ‘A forearm appeared, poured water into a pot, pouring [it] all out with a splash.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Ideophones are reduplicated for collectivity (65), as well as for iterativity or intensification (e.g., *hihihi* ‘move from side to side’, from *hihi* ‘move’). Collectivity is also inherent in the meaning of some ideophones (e.g., *yaaa* ‘(one) walk’ and *houaaaaw* ‘(many) walk’).

- (65) *eku-mo ibure bohi-bohiii ta-n-ae diana*
 inside-SRC white.lipped.peccary COLL~IDEO.appear AUX-TEL-PST already
tora-toraaa ta-n-ae
 COLL~IDEO.stand.still AUX-TEL-PST
 ‘The white-lipped peccaries came out one by one, and all stood still.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

While most ideophones are underived, ideophones can be derived from verbs and attributive nouns by simultaneously lengthening and stressing the root-final vowel. The ideophone *bohiii* in (64) and (65) is in fact an example of such a derivation, coined from *bohi* ‘appear (unexpectedly)’; *barobarooo* ‘thin’ is in turn an example of an ideophone derived from the attributive *baro* ‘thin’. Moreover, with some attributive nouns and verbs, changing the root-final vowel to a long stressed /i/ or sometimes /ɛ:/ results in an ideophone with an emphatic collective meaning (e.g., *anii* ‘plenty black’, from *ana* ‘black’).

3.7 Adverbs

Adverbs are a heterogeneous class. Defined as terms that modify the predicate or the clause, Warao adverbs include a number of simplex forms as well as potentially unlimited expressions with verbs, nouns, and ideophones. Simplex forms include temporal (e.g., *ama* ‘now’, *hake* ‘tomorrow’, and *atehe* ‘long time ago’), spatial (e.g., *kwai* ‘high’, *ito* ‘far’), and other adverbs (e.g., *atae* ‘again’, *kuwana* ‘hard (with effort)’, *nome* ‘really’). There are also several sentence adverbs, most of which are lexicalized combinations of the auxiliary *ta* and one of the verbal subordinating suffixes (e.g., *taitane* ‘then’, *takore* ‘when, but, yet’, *tiarone* ‘however’, *tane* ‘then’, *tiane* ‘therefore’, see Section 4.5). Adverbs usually precede the predicate, as in (66), with *takore*, which often expresses counter-expectation vis-à-vis the discourse, and *ama* ‘now’.

- (66) *takore ama diana ine nona-komuni*
 yet now already 1SG.SBJ make-NEG.POT
 ‘Yet now I cannot make [hammocks] anymore.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Subordinate verb forms with the continuative *-ne* also often modify the predicate (Section 4.5). The continuative is exploited to form minimal subordinate clauses of manner, as in (67), with *dihisane* ‘secretly’. Such subordinate forms can bear some of the verbal suffixes, such as the negative *-naka*, in which case they are followed by *tane*, the auxiliary *ta*, required by *-naka*, suffixed with the continuative (e.g., *maretanaka tane* ‘seriously’, from *mareta* ‘joke’).

- (67) *dihisa-ne ya-nabaka-n-ae*
 hide-CONT APPL-arrive-TEL-PST
 ‘[I] met up with [her] secretly.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

In Venezuelan Warao, nouns form such minimal clauses of manner as well. The noun *waku* ‘turtle’, for instance, may be the complement of the auxiliary *ta* marked

with the continuative *-ne*, as in *waku tane* ‘slowly (i.e., like turtle)’. Some such expressions, including those with content verbs instead of the auxiliary *ta*, have become lexicalized (e.g., *burakabane* ‘slowly’, from *buraka* ‘two-toed sloth’ and *aba* ‘put’). In Guyanese Warao, speakers use the postposition *monika* ‘like’ in such expressions instead. Related to these forms is the non-transparent adverb *tuatane* ‘like this’, which stands for a previous demonstration or description of manner; accompanying an actual demonstration is simply *tane*, as in (68).

- (68) *ta-ne* *ihi* *esinabu-ya*
 AUX-CONT 2SG.SBJ sift-PRS
 ‘Like this you sift.’ (*esinabu* is an idiolectal variant of *esinamu* ‘sift’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

Ideophones also commonly modify the predicate. However, in the ideophone clause (Section 3.6), the ideophone is technically subordinate to the auxiliary *ta*, not a modifier of the content verb. The clause can be extended to the inclusion of a content verb marked by the continuative *-ne* preceding the ideophone, as in (69). As such, the content verb is subordinate to the auxiliary.

- (69) *hiwara-ne* *sodoow* *ta-n-ae*
 pull.out-CONT IDEO.come.out.with.effort AUX-TEL-PST
 ‘[She] pulled it out with an effort.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

4 Clause structure

The discussion of clause structure focuses first on simplex clauses, addressing in particular basic word order (Section 4.1), strategies for disambiguating third-person core arguments in (di)transitive clauses (Section 4.2), and several types of copular clauses with non-verbal predicates (Section 4.3). Subsequently, three types of complex clauses are discussed, namely relative clauses, subordinate clauses, and reported speech (Sections 4.4–4.6). Complementation strategies are not covered in this chapter under a separate section. The Warao equivalents of the more common complement-taking predicates are expressed either as suffixes (e.g., desiderative, Section 3.5.6.3), as verbs which take a nominal complement modified by a relative clause (e.g., *namina* ‘know’, *mi* ‘see’, Section 4.4), or as verbs that take a whole clause as a complement, as is the case with verbs of speech (Section 4.6).

4.1 Word order

As illustrated with numerous clauses above and in (70) below, the basic constituent order in Warao is OSV in transitive and SV in intransitive clauses, including copular

clauses and polar questions. In Guyana, SOV order is also common, likely a structural influence of contact languages. Adjuncts typically appear before the OSV complex but may also appear after it or interrupt it.

- (70) *tai a-idamo yakera-era ine mi-ae*
 DEM:ANPH POSS-elderly good-AUG 1SG.SBJ see-PST
 ‘I saw that very good chief.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

OSV word order is violated in content questions and focus constructions involving the subject of (di)transitive clauses. Since question words are clause-initial in Warao, questions about the subject have an SOV word order (Section 3.5.6.2). Bringing a constituent into focus involves fronting it, which also runs against the OSV word order, as in (71). Note that if the object is in contrastive focus and it is expressed with a pronoun, it is the subject pronouns that are used, as in (72).

- (71) *tai atono saba yasi yak-era nisa-te*
 DEM:ANPH antonio BEN hat good-AUG take-FUT
 ‘It is he (who) will get a better hat for Antonio.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1985: 124)

- (72) *ine ma-basi-n-ae*
 1SG.SBJ 1SG.OBJ-bite-TEL-PST
 ‘[The dog] bit me [not you].’
 (Rybka, 2018)

4.2 Third-person argument marking

As a general rule, core arguments and the indirect object are morphologically unmarked (i.e., there are no obligatory case suffixes) while most other arguments are introduced by postpositions. Since Warao predicates are intransitive and (di)transitive, theoretically there may be up to three unmarked arguments in a clause. Any number of arguments may also be left out. Both the lack of case-marking and the possibility of eliding arguments create the potential for ambiguity in transitive and ditransitive clauses. Two mechanisms serve to counteract this problem. First, first-person and second-person singular core arguments can be unequivocally marked on the verb with object prefixes and subject suffixes (Section 3.1). Second, third-person arguments are disambiguated with a dedicated non-subject suffix. The suffix, which has at least two allomorphs, *-ma* and *-si*, attaches to the anaphoric demonstrative *tai* and nouns. The suffix is only felicitous in (di)transitive clauses, as in (73), the only scenarios when ambiguity of third-person constituents may arise. The suffix disambiguates the third-person human constituents by marking one as

non-subject, as is illustrated in (73); if *atida* ‘his wife’ appeared without the non-subject suffix, it could be interpreted as the subject of the clause in focus.

- (73) *tane diana a-tida-si neburatu na-e*
 then already POSS-woman-**NSBJ** young.man kill.one-PST
 ‘Then the young man killed his wife.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

4.3 Copular clauses with non-verbal content predicates

Several types of clauses require ancillary verbs. Apart from clauses with verbal content predicates that require auxiliaries because of suffixes that block further suffixation (see Section 3.5.6.3), clauses with non-verbal predicates, which cannot carry verbal morphology, require copulas. Both the auxiliary *ta* and copula *ha* can function as copulas. The fact that the copula is a stative verb that functions as the predicate (uninflected in the present tense) and that the auxiliary is an active verb that must be inflected has repercussions for the form and function of different clause types. The copula is the default in equative, existential, possessive, and locative clauses and yields a stative predicate, usually unmarked for tense and aspect. The auxiliary *ta* is employed in attributive and ideophone clauses, in which the concepts encoded by attributive nouns and ideophones become part of an active predicate, which must be tense-marked.

In clauses with the copula *ha*, the subject is followed by the nominal or postpositional complement of the clause-final copula. Equative clauses, in which the complement is a noun, differ from existential, possessive, and locative clauses in three ways. First, in equative clauses, the copula *ha* is often elided, as in the second equative clause of (74). Second, in negative polarity contexts, the copula is replaced by the negative particle =*yana* (or *wana* if the preceding word ends in /o/), as in (75). Third such clauses express a state with a present time-reference since they are unmarked for tense. If the clause requires tense morphology, the auxiliary *ta* may be used instead. If negated, *ta* requires the negator *-naka* (Section 3.5.7), which, in its turn, calls for another auxiliary *ta* to bear tense marking, as in (76), in which the speaker discusses the design of the house he is building.

- (74) *ine Warao ha yatu hotarao*
 1SG.SBJ Warao **COP** 2PL.SBJ non.Warao
 ‘I am Warao and you (are) a non-Warao.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (75) *tamaha m-a-rani=yana*
 DEM:PROX 1SG-POSS-mother=**NEG**
 ‘This is not my mother.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (76) *tamaha isaba-noko ta-naka ta-te*
 DEM:PROX cook-place **AUX-NEG** **AUX-FUT**
 ‘This will not be the kitchen.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Existential, possessive, and locative clauses also employ the copula in positive polarity contexts. In contrast to equative clauses, the copula is retained in other tenses and is rarely deleted. Moreover, in cases of negative polarity, the copula is replaced by the negative existential *ekida*. The positive and negative polarity existential clauses are shown in (77) and (78), respectively.

- (77) *a-nibora ha a-tida ha*
 POSS-husband **COP** POSS-woman **COP**
 ‘There was a husband and there was a wife.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (78) *hokohi ekida-kore temuku-bu-ya*
 sunshine **NEG.EXIST-COND** become.tangled-INTS-PRS
 ‘When there is no sunshine, [the thread] will become tangled up.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The morphosyntactic rules described for existential clauses apply to possessive clauses, which have some additional features. In such clauses, the subject encodes the possessor while the nominal complement encodes the possessed, which must cross-reference the possessor with a person prefix. The subject noun phrase is, however, often elided, as in (79) and (80).

- (79) *m-a-beroro ha*
 1SG-POSS-dog **COP**
 ‘I have a dog.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (80) *a-noboto-mo=hakotai a-hiyaka ekida*
 POSS-child-COLL.DEF=REL:DEF POSS-clothes **NEG.EXIST**
 ‘[There are] children who have no clothes (of their own).’
 (Rybka, 2018)

In locative clauses, which are also used to locate entities in time, the subject encodes the entity to be located, while the entity with respect to which it is located and the spatial relation between them are encoded by a postpositional phrase, as in (81), or a locative adverb.

- (81) *yaburu-koina noika mesi ha*
 climb-INS.NMLZ under cat **COP**
 ‘The cat is under (the bridge from the river to the house).’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

By contrast, attributive and ideophone clauses require the auxiliary *ta* (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.6). The only difference between the two is the approximative *-u* on attributive nouns in the former type and the presence of a pause after ideophones in the latter. It is worth drawing attention to the fact that the auxiliary is always inflected. The concepts encoded by attributive nouns and ideophones are therefore expressed as part of a predicate marked for verbal categories, as in (82). This contrasts with clauses with the copula, which are usually unmarked.

- (82) *a-hiyaka simo-u tia*
 POSS-dress red-APRX **AUX.PROG**
 ‘Her dress is red.’ (i.e., ‘She is wearing a red dress now’).
 (Rybka, 2018)

While clauses such as (82) are common, attributive nouns can avoid the temporal implications of *ta* by forming compounds with the head noun or functioning as a nominal predicate in equative clauses, a possibility limited to some attributive nouns (Section 3.2.1). Alternatively, both attributive and ideophone clauses can be subordinated with the continuative *-ne* to the copula *ha*, as in (83). Finally, as mentioned earlier, ideophones can also occur by themselves as single utterances. In (84), two ideophones, *bohiii* ‘appear (unexpectedly)’ and *hoaaa* ‘make hair stand on end as if the skin of your head is coming off’, each occur by themselves as single utterances.³

- (83) *a-hiyaka simo-u ta-ne ha*
 POSS-dress red-APRX **AUX-CONT COP**
 ‘Her dress continues to be red.’ (i.e., ‘Her dress has a stain that does not go away.’)
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (84) *tobe bohiii*
 jaguar **IDEO.appear**
m-a-kwa a-horo hoaaa
 1SG-POSS-head POSS-skin **IDEO.hair.stand.on.end**
 ‘[When] the jaguar suddenly appeared, my hair stood on end.’
 (Barral 1979: 205)

³ Example (84), taken from Barral (1979) who marks the stressed and long vowels of ideophones rather inconsistently (using several diacritics and vowel strings of different length), was standard-

4.4 Relative clauses

Warao has three relativizers, the most common being the indefinite *-ha*, as in (84) and the definite *-hakotai*, as in (85). The former is historically equivalent to the copula, the latter, often still treated as *-ha kotai*, is a combination of the copula with the definite *kotai*. As a free form, *hakotai* is a definite article (Section 3.3). The relativizers may lose the /h/, fusing with the verb resulting in long vowels. The definite *-hakotai* may be replaced by *-hametai*, but the difference between the two is unclear. Warao relative clauses are internally headed. As shown in (86), in Venezuelan Warao the definite relativizer may be reduced to *-kotai* (in keeping with the general trend to lose *hV* syllables in the variety); no such process occurs in Guyanese Warao.

- (85) *noko-kore hanoko eku diana esemoi koita-ya-ha tia=yama*
 hear-COND house inside already music play-PRS-**REL:INDF** AUX.PRS=HRS
 ‘[...] when [they] heard music that was playing in the house, it is said.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (86) *warao-tuma nabaka-ya-hakotai mi-ae*
 warao-COLL arrive-PRS-**REL:DEF** see-PST
 ‘They saw the people who were arriving.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

- (87) *ima-ya domu nari-te-kotai mi-kitane noa-kotu*
 night-DISTR bird fly-FUT-**REL:DEF** see-INF come-2PL.IMP
 ‘Come see the bird that flies at night!’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)

Instead of relative clauses, singular and plural agent nominalizations, *-tu* and *-mo*, respectively, can be used to modify a noun. Nominalizations of transitive verbs can include possessive morphology, as in (88). The nominalization strategy has, however, the semantic implication of an actor performing the activity habitually or as a profession.

- (88) *m-a-raisa murako a-nahoro-tu nao-ya*
 1SG-POSS-partner avocado POSS-eat-**AG.NMLZ.SG** come-PRS
 ‘My friend who eats avocados is coming.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

ized to the orthography used in this chapter and parsed in keeping with the analysis presented therein. The original reads *tobe bojí; ma kua a joro joáa* translated by Barral into Spanish as ‘se presenta el tigre, y los cabellos se me pusieron de punta y sentía como si se me fuera el cuero de la cabeza.’

4.5 Adverbial clauses

Subordinate clauses of the temporal, manner, concession, purpose, and cause types are marked by suffixes, a selection of which is given below. Temporal subordinators include several suffixes. The conditional *-kore* covers anterior, simultaneous, posterior, and conditional clauses, depending on the context. A more specific temporal subordinator is the anterior *-itane*. The conjunctive *-ne* appears related to the anterior *-itane* and infinitive *-kitane*, and clauses in which it appears are often followed by a temporally posterior main clause, which suggests it has a subordinating function. However, given the syntactic freedom of clauses with *-ne*, which appear to be able to function as main clauses, the suffix is treated here as a conjunctive device that joins two main clauses and has the meaning ‘and then’. All three suffixes are illustrated in the passage in (89).

- (89) *tai mi-tane diana atae=hese nona-e nona-ne tane*
 DEM:ANPH see-**PRIOR** already again=EXACTLY make-PST make-CONJ then
e-buta-ne ta-kore diana yak-era aniako hokona
 CAUS-float.TEL-CONJ AUX-**COND** already good-AUG early.morning dawn
ha diana butu-ne
 COP already float-**CONJ**
 ‘After finding this [clay], he made [a boat] again the same way; he made it, he launched it, then it was, early in the morning, at dawn, it was floating already.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

The progressive *-i* marks simultaneous temporal clauses specifically, as in (90), which may sometimes be quite similar to manner clauses. Manner clauses are formed with the continuative *-ne*, discussed in Section 3.7 on adverbs, many of which are minimal subordinate clauses with the continuative. The meaning of the continuative is contrasted with that of the progressive *-i* in (90), where the subordinate clause with the progressive foregrounds simultaneity, while that with the continuative expresses manner (notice that when *-i* is suffixed to an *i*-final *esemoi* it merely shifts the stress).

- (90) *hanoko=wata nabaka-kore diana neburatu ha mi-ae ha*
 house=LOC arrive-COND already young.man REL:INDF see-PST hammock
eku hewere-bu-i diana esemoi diana yai-ne
 inside rock-INTS-**PROG** already play.music.PROG already lie.down-**CONT**
 ‘When [the girls] arrived home, [they] saw a man in the hammock, who was lying down while swinging and playing music.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

Finally, concessive clauses are marked by the suffix *-rone*, illustrated in (91). Purposive clauses are marked by the infinitive suffix *-kitane*, as in (92), though there

are also other suffixes with similar functions (e.g., resultative *-moroi*). Clauses of reason or cause are in turn marked by the suffix *-me*, as in (93), where it is attached to the copula of a complex predicate and where a borrowed coordinator *bikad* (from English *because*) appears as well.

- (91) *deta-e-rone* *diana* *nanaka-n-ae*
 be.afraid-PST-**CONC** already come.down-TEL-PST
 ‘Although he was afraid, he came down [from the treetop].’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (92) *kono* *nao-ae=yama* *a-raisa* *isiko uba-kitane*
 crested.oropendola come-PST-HRS POSS-partner with sleep-**INF**
 ‘Crested oropendola came to sleep with his friend, they say.’
 (Rybka, 2018)
- (93) *bikad* *ine* *diana* *yaota-komuni* *ha-me* *kuhu-ya*
 because 1SG.SBJ already work-NEG.POT COP-**REAS** walk-PRS
 ‘Because I cannot, I walk [about visiting friends]’
 (Rybka, 2018)

4.6 Reported speech

There is no indirect speech in Warao, and speech events are therefore reported *verbatim*. The complement is presented first, followed by the verb of speech or the auxiliary *ta*, in keeping with the OSV basic word order, as in (94). If the quote is reported from hearsay, the hearsay enclitic *=yama* can be attached to the *verbum dicendi*, as in (94), which is an utterance from a story about the culture hero *Haburi*. The hearsay marker is, however, not obligatory, as in (95) from the story about the origin of the Waramuri village. The hearsay marker can attach to other verbs as well to indicate the nature of evidence for a given statement; it remains unclear what other categories of evidentiality are distinguished in Warao.

- (94) *dani* *Haburi k-omi* *nari-ya tia=yama*
 mother Haburi 1PL-without go-PRS AUX.PRS=**HRS**
 ‘“Mother, Haburi (culture hero) is going without us,” (the parrot) said, they say.’
 (Romero-Figueroa, 1997)
- (95) *diko-naka* *eha-kotu* *tia* *tai* *Warao nibora=hakotai*
 shake-NEG COLL.COP-2PL.IMP AUX.PRS DEM:ANPH Warao man=REL:DEF
 ‘“All of you don’t move,” said the man who was Warao.’
 (Rybka, 2018)

5 Summary

Warao is an understudied language isolate of Venezuela and Guyana, spoken by the traditionally riverine and seafaring indigenous people of the Orinoco delta and the surrounding area, whose material and immaterial culture is relatively well described. The language is remarkable for its morphological complexity, the frequent composite predicates, a multiplex system of tense, aspect, and telicity, omnipresent ideophones, and the typologically rare OSV basic word order. There remain, however, numerous grammatical domains that require further study, as occasionally indicated in the chapter. Little is also known about the structure of the lexicon. In particular, there is hardly any linguistic work on cross-linguistically well-studied semantic domains such space, kinship, colors, fauna, flora, or emotions.

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