

THE MENGGWA DLA LANGUAGE
OF NEW GUINEA

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Abstract

Menggwa Dla is a Papuan language spoken in Sandaun Province of Papua New Guinea and *Kabupaten Jayapura* of Papua Province, Indonesia. Menggwa Dla is a dialect of the Dla language; together with its sister language Anggor (e.g. Litteral 1980), the two languages form the Senagi language family, one of the small Papuan language families found in North-Central New Guinea.

The main text of this thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the linguistic, cultural and political landscapes of the Indonesia-Papua New Guinea border area where the Dla territory is located. Chapter 2 introduces the phonology of Menggwa Dla; described in this chapter are the phonemes, allophonic variations, phonotactics, morpho-phonological processes, stress assignment and intonation of the language. The inventory of phonemes in Menggwa is average for a Papuan language (15 consonants and 5 vowels). The vast majority of syllables come in the shape of V, CV or C_1C_2V where C_2 can be /n/ /r/ /l/ /j/ or /w/. In C_1C_2V syllables, the sonority rises from C_1 to V (§2.2.2). Nevertheless, there are a few words with word-medial consonant sequences like *ft* / ϕt /, *lk* / lk /, *lf* / $l\phi$ / or *lk* / lk / where the sonority drops from the first to the second consonant; the first consonant in these sequences is analysed as the coda of the previous syllable (§2.2.3).

Chapter 3 is an overview of the word classes in Menggwa Dla; the morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of the three major word classes (nouns, adjectives and verbs) and the minor word classes are compared in this chapter. Chapter 4 describes the properties of nouns and noun phrases; the person-number-gender categories, noun-phrasal syntax, nominal clitics and personal pronouns are outlined in this chapter. Menggwa Dla has a rich array of case, topic and focus markers which comes in the form of clitics (§4.5). Subject pronouns ('citation pronouns') only mark person (i.e. one for each of the three persons), whereas object and genitive pronouns mark person (including inclusive/exclusive first person), number, and sometimes also gender features (§4.6).

Chapter 5 introduces various morphological and syntactic issues which are common to both independent and dependent clauses: verb stems, verb classes,

cross-referencing, intraclausal syntax, syntactic transitivity and semantic valence. Cross-referencing in Menggwa Dla is complex: there are seven paradigms of subject cross-reference suffixes and four paradigms of object cross-references. Based on their cross-referencing patterns, verbs are classified into one of five verb classes (§5.2). There is often a mismatch between the number of cross-reference suffixes, the semantic valence, and the syntactic transitivity within a clause. There are verbs where the subject cross-reference suffix, or the object suffix, or both the subject and object suffixes are semantically empty ('dummy cross-reference suffixes'; §5.3.2).

Chapter 6 outlines the morphology of independent verbs and copulas. Verbal morphology differs greatly between the three statuses of realis, semi-realism and irrealis; a section is devoted to the morphology for each of the three statuses. Chapter 7 introduces the dependent clauses and verbal noun phrases. Different types of dependent verbs are deverbalised to various degrees: subordinate verbs are the least deverbalised, chain verbs are more deverbalised (but they mark switch-reference (SR), and sometimes also interclausal temporal relations), and non-finite chain verbs even more deverbalised. Further deverbalised than the non-finite chain verbs are the verbal nouns; verbal noun phrases in Menggwa Dla function somewhat like complement clauses in English.

In younger speakers' speech, the function of the chain clause SR system has diverted from the canonical SR system used by older speakers (§7.2.2). For younger speakers, coreferential chain verb forms and disjoint-reference chain verb forms only have their coreferential and disjoint-referential meaning — respectively — when the person-number-gender features of the two subject cross-reference suffixes cannot resolve the referentiality of the two subjects. Otherwise, the coreferential chain verb forms have become the unmarked SR-neutral chain verb forms.

At the end of this thesis are appendix 1, which contains four Menggwa Dla example texts, and appendix 2, which contains tables of cross-reference suffixes, pronouns, copulas and irregular verbs.

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Abbreviations and conventions

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ABL	ablative case
ABSS	abessive case ('without')
ACC	accusative case
ADS	adessive case
ALL	allative case
BEN	benefactive
CHAR	characterisation
CNTR	counterfactual
COM	comitative case
COMPL	completive aspect
COND	condition(al)
CONT	continuous aspect
COP	copula
CR	coreferential
CS	consequence/ consequential
D	'distance' (Imonda; Seiler 1985: 181)
DAT	dative case
DEP	dependent
DER	derivational (Imonda; Seiler 1985: 29-31)
DR	disjoint-referential
DU	dual number
EMPH	pragmatic emphasis
EXCL	(first person) exclusive
F	feminine gender
FOC	focus
FUT	future tense
GEN	genitive case
GER	gerund(ial)
GOAL	goal
INCL	(first person) inclusive
IND	indicative mood
INS	inessive case
INSTR	instrumental case
INTJ	interjection
IO	indirect object
IR	irrealis mood
LOC	locative case
M	masculine gender
MASS	mass undergoer (§5.1.4)
N1	non-first person
NIND	non-indicative mood
NOM	nominative case
NOML	nominalise
NPAST	non-past tense
NFUT	non-future tense

OBJ	object (case)
PART	participle/ participial
PAST	past tense
POST	posterior
POSSB	possible
PL	plural
PRED	predicative
PRES	present tense
PROG	progressive aspect
PROP	propriative case
PROM	'prominent' (Anggor <i>-mbo</i> ; Roberts 1980: 74-76)
R	realis mood
REFL	reflexive
RSUMP	(subject) resumptive pronoun (§4.6.3)
SEQ	sequential; interclausal sequentiality
SG	singular number
SIM	simultaneous; interclausal simultaneity
SMR	semi-realis mood
SR	switch-reference
STAT	stative
TOP	topic
TRNS	transitive
TRNSN	transitional aspect (inchoative or completive aspect)

In the Menggwa Dla examples, cross-reference suffixes with the gloss 'o' are object cross-reference suffixes, whereas cross-reference suffixes without the gloss 'o' are subject cross-reference suffixes. For instance, in the verb *ser-iha-hwa* (eat-1SG-PAST) 'I ate', *-iha* (1SG) is the subject cross-reference suffix; in the verb *bi-wu-a-hwa* (hold-N1MPL-3FSG:O-PAST) 'they hold it', *-wu* (-N1MPL) is the subject cross-reference suffix, and *-a* (3FSG:O) is the object cross-reference suffix. See §5.2 on cross-referencing in Menggwa Dla.