

by Patricia Wilson June, 1989

1. INTRODUCTION

Ambulas, alternatively known as Abalam, is a member of the Ndu language family, of the Middle Sepik Stock. There are approximately 44,000 speakers, who are located mainly in the Maprik District of the East Sepik Province. There are three main dialects. This paper is concerned with the Wingei Dialect (locally known as Mamu Kundi). Speakers of the Wingei Dialect are located to the east and south-east of the Maprik Dialect area, in the foothills of the Prince Alexander Mountains and extending south towards the Sepik Plains. Population is approximately 8,000. The data on which this paper is based was collected between April, 1988 and June, 1989 from Anton Kambu, of Gwarip 1 village, Andrew Kerry of Wingei 1 village, and Nix Yuanigi of Suanimbu village, who provided natural text in the form of stories for a Writers' Workshop, elicited text, and translated songs and New Testament books. Their area seems to be fairly central to the dialect. It seems that the Kalabu-Malmba-Yenigo-Waigakum area would be one significant sub-dialect, and the Bengaragum-Sagisik area would be another.

The information presented in this paper also is based upon relevant information in Workpapers in Papua New Guinea

Languages Vol. 16, Surveys in Five P.N.G. Languages, Ambulas Dialect Survey by Patricia Wilson, and Workpapers in Papua New Guinea Languages, Vol. 26, Ambulas Grammar by Patricia Wilson.

2. PHONOLOGY

The 24 phonemes, seven vowels and seventeen consonants, of the Maprik Dialect of the Ambulas Language, seem to fit the Wingei Dialect too. The vowels consist of two unrounded front vowels, i and e; three unrounded central vowels, 'e, a and aa; and two rounded back vowels, u and o. The consonants consist of four voiceless obstruents, p, t, s, and k; four voiced prenasalized obstruents, b, d, j and g; four nasals, m, n, ny, and ng; three continuants, v, l, and r; and two semi-vowels, w and y.

I note that there is a tendency to prefer ei to e in a few limited environments, as in the spelling of the village name, Wingei, and in the spelling of the word wakweik (Maprik wakwek, although many of the older people say wakwey'ek).

I also have noted that there is a greater freedom in VV combinations across the border of stem plus suffix, as in d'e <he> plus the possessive suffix -u, resulting in the word d'eu <his>, and also in ra <sit> and the present tense suffix -u, resulting in the word rau <sits>. ~~However, the VCV combination still seems necessary within the stem, e.g. gay'e <plus> and mawul'e <tingting>.~~

3. ORTHOGRAPHY

The same orthography is being used as for Maprik, with the following modifications, which are preferred by the local Tok Ples Committee and the translators, and which I am happy with. These changes are partly called for by the different literacy teaching situation. Literacy classes in the Maprik Dialect started with illiterates. Classes in the Wingei Dialect will be transfer classes, starting with those who can already read in Pidgin or English.

1. prenasalization will be written word-medially.

However, ngg will follow the Pidgin change and contract to ng.

2. when ny occurs in the word final position (very few occasions) this will be written as n, and context will provide the clue to pronunciation.

The letters used then will be: a, aa, b, ~~mb~~, d, ~~nd~~, e, ee, g, ~~ng~~, i, j, ~~nd~~, k, l, m, n, ny, ng, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, y. The possible confusion with ng, as to whether it is ng [ŋ] or n plus ng [ŋg] should become clear with the context.

4. GRAMMAR

The main areas of difference between the Maprik and Wingei Dialects as far as grammar is concerned seem to be with pronouns, verbs and their affixation, and numbers.

4.1. PRONOUNS

Personal Pronouns: The uninflected set fill the same slots as for the Maprik, the most common being the Actor-Subject slot in the clause.

	number		
person	singular	dual	plural
1st	wun'e	an'e	naan'e
2nd (m)	m'en'e	b'er'e*	gun'e*
(f)	ny'en'e		
3rd (m)	d'e	b'et/b'er'e* de	
(f)	l'e		

The asterisk indicates those that differ from the Maprik form (2nd. dual b'en'e, 2nd plural gun'e).

The supplement slot is marked by -at, with a contraction in 3rd singular. This gives the following forms:

wunat	anat	naanat
m'enat	b'erat*	gurat*
ny'enat		
dat*	b'erat	deyat*
lat*		

The asterisk indicates the forms that differ from the Maprik, although the 3rd. singular forms are also heard among Maprik speakers.

The directional or referential clitic is -ak'e ~ k'e giving the following forms:

wunak'e*	anak'e*	naanak'e*
m'enak'e*	b'erak'e*	gurak'e*
ny'enak'e*		

d'ek'e	b'etk'e	deyak'e*
l'ek'e		

The Maprik clitic is -k'e, and this gives the difference in form as shown by the asterisk.

Possession is marked by the suffix -au ~ -u, giving the following forms:

wunau*	anau*	naanau*
m'enau*	b'enau*	gurau*
ny'enau*		
d'eu*	b'eru*	deyau*
l'eu*		

As the Maprik form is -ku ~ -na, all the possessive forms differ.

Accompaniment is expressed by the word wale <with> when used with nouns. This becomes a bound form alternating with the contracted form -aule with pronouns, giving the following forms:

wunaule*	anaule*	naanaule*
m'enaule*	b'eraule*	guraule*
ny'enaule*		
d'ewale*	b'er'ewale*	deyaule*
l'ewale*	/b'etwale*	

All the above forms differ from the Maprik free forms.

Note that the bound form of the personal pronouns, which are actor suffixes on verbs, is the same as the

free form, whereas the Maprik bound form contains significant differences.

The uninflected set of personal pronouns take certain affixation when functioning within the Actor-subject slot of a clause. The suffix -mbu (after nasals), -pu (elsewhere) functions differently from the Maprik form -bu, and seems to express vivid present tense.

wun'embu	an'embu	naan'embu
m'en'embu	b'er'epu*	gur'epu*
ny'en'embu		
d'epu*	b'er'epu*	depu*
l'epu*		

The suffix -k is added to the uninflected form when filling the comment slot of equative clauses.

The suffix -k'er'ek is added to the uninflected form to express the reflexive.

e.g. gur'ek'er'ek <you yourselves>

4.2. VERBS

(c.f. Ambulas Grammar pp.58-82)

The same nine verb classes seem to apply to the Wingei Dialect.

Affixation- Inner suffixes. Examples have been observed of each of the five orders of inner suffixes as for Maprik: direction-mode, mode 1, mode 2, benefactive, and actor, with actor being the furthest from the stem of the verb. Forms are the same or similar to the Maprik, as in:

-patik frustrative Group 3 direction-mode

-taka completive suffix 3 mode 2

One notable difference from the Maprik is

-s'ek'eyak completive suffix 2 mode 1.

There are also differences in the forms of the actor-suffixes, which, unlike the Maprik, all have the same form whether bound or free.

The Wingei set is compared below with the Maprik set:

	Wingei	Maprik
singular 1st	-wun'e	-wur'e
2nd m.	-m'en'e	-m'en'e
2nd.f	-ny'en'e	-ny'en'e
3rd.m	-d'e	-d'e
3rd.f.	-l'e	-l'e

dual	1st	-an'e	-t'e
	2nd	-b'er'e	-b'en'e
	3rd	-b'er'e	-b'et
plural	1st	-nan'e	-na
	2nd	-gun'e	-gun'e
	3rd	-de	-da

I note here that were I to consider the Wingei forms alone I might be inclined to consider the actor forms as separate words and not suffixes. However, when I make the comparison with the Maprik and Wosera Dialects, the different forms give me added justification for considering them suffixes.

Two sets of verbs and suffixes are given below to demonstrate morphophonemic changes which occur in the actor suffix:

1. verb stem + actor suffix + relational different actor partially consecutive suffix.
2. verb stem + actor suffix + relational different actor future suffix.

1	2
ya-wun'e-ka <I did and>	ya-wun-u <I will do and>
ya-m'en'e-ka	ya-m'en-u
ya-ny'en'e-ka	ya-ny'en-u
ya-nd'e-ka	ya-nd-u
ya-l'e-ka	ya-l-u
ya-an'e-ka	ya-an-u
ya-mb'er'e-ka	ya-mb'er-u

ya-mb'er'e-ka

ya-mb'er-u

ya-nan'e-ka

ya-nan-u

ya-ngur'e-ka

ya-ngur-u

ya-nde-ka

ya-nde-yu

(The above sets demonstrate the morphophonemic rules of the Maprik Dialect : when a suffix is added -

mid-central vowel plus u is lost

front vowels plus u add y at border.

The set of actor suffixes differs from the uninflected set of pronouns only in the writing of the pre-nasalization word medially.)

Affixation- Outer suffixes (c.f. p.68 Ambulas Grammar)

Like the Maprik, there are two orders of outer suffixes, both indicating tense-aspect. However, there are some noticeable differences.(asterisked)

Outer suffixes	
Tense-aspect	
1	2
<u>Independent</u>	
-o/ -u	present
stem + pronoun + yo*	present
-kwa	vivid present
-ek	past
<u>Independent negative</u>	
-kwe*	negative 1
-mukwe*	negative 2

-mbak negative 3

Dependent

Aspectual

-karik hypothetical

-mar'ek negative 4

Intentive same actor

-k'e intentive

-muk'e negative intentive

Relational same actor

-e partially consecutive

-take consecutive

-te simultaneous

Relational different actor

-ak* consecutive

-ka partially consecutive

-u future

Conditional

-ara

Accessory

-kwa accessory present

-ak* accessory past

-ara accessory future

-karik hypothetical

Examples of verbs and outer suffixes: (Note that the morphophonemic rules for Maprik seem to apply for Wingei whenever the suffix starts with a vowel)

Examples are given as far as possible with

k'eraa <get>

1. Present tense

-o occurs following -aa and with some -a stems

-u occurs elsewhere

ya + o = yo <do> mid-central vowel plus o
is lost)

k'eraa + o = k'erao <get>

v'eknu + u = v'eknu <hear> (u plus u is lost)

raap + u = raapmu <get up> (stem final p adds m
before suffix)

bul + u = bulu <talk>

It is to be noted that the -o suffix is not very
common in Wingei and in two cases the -au ending is
preferred. (a + u = au ?)

e.g. ra + suffix = rau <sit> (ro Maprik)

ka + suffix = kau <eat> (ko Maprik)

This may indicate a different pattern in Wingei,
with perhaps the deletion of the -o suffix.

An alternate form of the present tense, heard so
far only with two verbs is:

kwaa d'e yo <he lies>

ra d'e yo <he sits>

2. Vivid present tense.

So far this has only been found in greetings.

e.g. ny'en'e wa rakwa <you are sitting>

The equivalent for the Maprik -

d'ewa yaakwa <here he comes> is

d'epu yao

3. Past tense suffix -'ek is used to express an action in the past. Morphophonemic rules apply

ya + 'ek = yak <did>

k'eraa + 'ek = k'eraak <got> (a + 'e loses 'e)

v'eknwu + 'ek = v'eknwuk <heard> (u + 'e loses 'e)

raap + 'ek = raapm'ek <got up> (adds m after p)

bul + 'ek = bul'ek <talked>

Negative Independent

-kwe negative 1 suffix. Verb expounds Predicate slot of a Denial Clause.

yambe k'eraa-nd'e-kwe <he did not get>

-mukwe negative 2 suffix. Verb expounds the Negative slot of a Negative Imperative Clause.

k'eraa-mukwe <you must not get!>

-mbak negative 3 suffix. Verb expounds the Negative slot of a Negative Imperative Clause.

k'eraa-mbak <do not get!>

Dependent

Aspectual

* Hypothetical verb expounds the Predicate slot of the Subjunctive Aspectual Clause, which is different in form from the Maprik clause.

k'eraa-karik d'ek <he would have got>

The suffix -karik can also move to second-tense aspect order following accessory past, as shown on the above chart.

k'eraa-nd-ak-karik <he would have got>

2. Negative suffix -mar'ek with the verb stem expounds the Predicate slot of the Negative Aspectual Clause.

k'eraa-mar'ek yate <does not get>

However, it is seldom used and an alternative form, using a negative word, is usually preferred.

The Maprik form -kaapuk is not used.

Intensive same actor suffix -k'e is used to express purpose and also to form the future tense with yo/-o.

k'eraa-k'e <in order to get>

k'eraa-k'e de yo <they will get>

It is to be noted that in all except the 3rd person plural form, an alternative way to express the future tense is a contracted form with the pronoun, k'eraa-k'e gur-o <you will get>

It seems that both forms are used but that the contracted form is the preferred form.

Another variation in the future tense is that if it is used in hortatory discourse to express a command, the order of pronoun and verb is reversed and the form ya not yo is used.

m'en'e k'eraa-k'e ya <you must get>

Negative intensive suffix -muk'e is used following certain negative connotation verbs

de kaak de yo y'e-muk'e <they do not want to go>

d'e wup d'e yo waka ya-muk'e he is afraid to do that

Relational same actor suffixes seem to function as

for Maprik:

partially consecutive suffix -e expresses a type of overlapping relationship, when the first action is more or less completed before the second.

k'era-e y'ek <got and went>

consecutive suffix -take expresses the completion of the action before the action of the independent verb

k'eraa-take y'ek <got and then went>

simultaneous suffix -te expresses the idea that this action is going on at the same time as the action of the independent verb.

Relational different actor suffixes seem to function as for Maprik:

consecutive suffix -ak expresses the completion of the action before the action of the independent verb occurs.

k'eraa-l-ak d'e y'ek <she got and then he went>

partially consecutive suffix -ka expresses a type of overlapping relationship when the first action is more or less completed before the action of the independent verb, which is in present or past tense.

k'eraa-l'e-ka d'e y'ek <she was getting and he went>

future suffix -u is the form used when the independent verb is an imperative or expressing future tense. (The Maprik dialect also has an -o form for certain persons.)

k'eraa-l-u y'ek'e do <she will get and he will go>

conditional suffix -ara (Maprik -ran) expresses a straight condition:

k'eraa-l-ara <if she gets>

Accessory suffixes also seem to function as for Maprik:

-kwa present k'eraa-l'e-kwa <she gets>

-ak past k'eraa-l-ak <she got>

-ara future k'eraa-l-ara <she will get>

As for Maprik, accessory verbs frequently function as Included Clauses, which fill phrase level slots.

It is to be noted that intensive different actor verbs are formed differently from the Maprik, in that the suffix -k'e is a first order outer suffix, not a second order.

k'eraa-l'e-k'e <in order`that she get>

4.3 NUMBERS

Wingei numbers work in sets of three, as opposed to the Maprik sets of five. As some of the words are the same, this leads to numerical misunderstanding between the dialects.

	Wingei	Maprik
1	nawurak	nakurak
2	v'etik	v'etik
3	kupuk	kupuk
4	kupukiva	nakwasa
5	kupuk'etik	nak taaba
6	taabak	
7	taabak kay'ek	
8	taabak kay'ek v'etik	
9	taabak kay'ek kupuk	
10	v'etik taaba v'etik	taaba v'etik
11	nawurak taaba v'etik	
12	taaba v'etik	
24	nawura mi	

The Maprik numbers get very lengthy after 5 (one hand) and 10 (two hands), after which one starts counting on the feet. The Wingei numbers see the hand as having six features and so two hands for Wingei = 12, whereas two hands for Maprik = 10. It

seems that, for Wingei people, as for Maprik, only the older people know the complicated numbers. All the young people know are the Pidgin or English forms, which are much less complicated.

4.4 MISCELLANEA

It seems that the broad outline of Ambulas grammar in the Maprik Dialect, as far as clauses and sentences are concerned, will apply to the Wingei Dialect also. Similar types of merged, complex and compound sentences have been observed. Some similar paragraphs have been observed, within the same types of discourse. However, where there are significant differences on the word level, these differences will also be reflected in higher levels. e.g. No equivalent has been found for the Maprik Dialect reason marker bege <because>. It seems that cause and effect need to be expressed by a sequence sentence, with the cause expressed first, and that there is no reason sentence.

Other points of note:

In the Maprik dialect when a suffix starting with k is added to a stem ending with k the combination of k + k becomes kg. In the Wingei dialect k + k = kk. e.g. baak + k'e = baakk'e (Maprik baakq'e)

<in order to steam cook>.

The verb naate <was talking and> is not used as a speech closure marker in Wingei. The verb wate or the demonstrative waka <thus> are used instead.

The word akwi is used to mean 'all' (as in Maprik), and also to mean <several> (a different word in Maprik. This is a potential problem in translation. A common form of discourse closure in Wingei is wani d'ek, different from the Maprik wan wan male.

5. LEXICON

Some of the most commonly used vocabulary differences are listed below, in comparison with the Maprik term.

Maprik	English	Wingei
kaapuk	not	yambe, yakatnye
k'ega	like this	k'eka
waga	like that	waka
apa	strong	apat'ek'et
baadi	children	mang'elara
bari	quickly	pari
garabu	late afternoon	g'eraambu
giyaa	come down	gaaya
gwalepa	old	pat'e
gwaamale	returning	maale
kev'er'ek	lift up	k'eraasawu
ke'lik	dislike	kaak
k'epmawaara	ancestor	waaranga
kutkal'e ya	do good to	y'ekn'en ya
kulakny'eny	leave (place)	yay'ekitaka

kulaa	bush knife	baang'e
las	some	naambi
makwal	small	alek, kalek, mang'el
mawulat kap'ere ya	love	mawul'e k'er'ek ya
mit'ek	well	y'ekn'en
n'emaadu	older brother	nyamuna
pulak	like	p'elak
ras''eg'e	wait	rasaknwa
r'ekar'eka ya	be angry	gaaruwe ya
samu	what?	mamu
samuk'e	why?	mamuk'e
s'ekal	look for	waak, p'er'e
taal'e	place	kaapa
tiyaa	give to me	kway'e
waata	ask	wataaku
wid'e kwaa	sleep	yendu- yendu kwaa
wuraanyan	spirit, soul	kwamin ^{an}
yaal'ebaan	harm	kwalaki
yagap	how many?	karik
y'e	name	s'e
y'eknwun	good	y'ekn'en

From this list it will be seen that there does not seem to be any phonemic pattern in these differences. The distinguishing feature of the dialect, the word for <what>, mamu, does not reflect any particular pattern.

It should be noted again, with reference to the above list, that the Maprik orthography does not write in pre-nasalization, whereas the Wingei orthography puts this in word medially.