The Morphology of Dobel, Aru, with special reference to Reduplication

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1 Introduction.

The Dobel1 language is spoken in the Aru islands, which are in the south-east of the Province of Maluku, Indonesia. Dobel is one of the larger languages of the Aru Islands, spoken by about 6,500 people in the language area itself. There are probably at least another 1,000 speakers outside the area, primarily in Dobo and Ambon. Dobel is spoken mainly on the eastern half of the large central island of Kobror and in some villages on neighbouring islands just across the narrow straits of Barakai to the south, and Manombai to the north.

There are three principle dialects of Dobel [see map]. The largest is the Northern dialect (2700), which is spoken in four villages in the north-east of Kobror Island, and in Karwai village, which is just across the mouth of the Manombai strait on the south-eastern tip of Wokam Island. The second is the Straits dialect (1800), spoken in the villages that border the eastern half of the Barakai Strait and the rivers that lead into it, also in one inland village, Jirlay, on the banks of a river that leads northwards to the Manombai strait. The smallest is the South-Eastern dialect (1400), spoken on the east coast of Kobror Island from Ponom, at the mouth of the Barakai Strait, northwards to Warjukur. Within these dialects there is minor variation from village to village. The South-Eastern dialect has several phonological differences from the other two, but this presents little difficulty for intelligibility.

Bordering the Dobel area to the south-east are the three villages of Koba Dangar on Baun Island, and Koba Seltimur and Koba Selfara on Fukarel Island (combined population: 600), where Koba, a language closely related to Dobel, is spoken. Although Koba has some significant

1The name of the language, Dobel [do'bel] is the name used by speakers of the South-Eastern and Straits dialects, and also by outsiders when referring to the language. In the Northern dialect it is known as Doibel [doy'bel].
phonological and lexical differences from Dobel, it is close enough to Dobel so that, in certain speech domains, speakers of the two languages can sometimes communicate with each other successfully without recourse to Malay.

![Map of Dobel Language Area](image)

**Aru Islands**
Summary of the phonology and morphophonemics

Inventory of consonants

Dobel has fourteen consonant phonemes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Apical</th>
<th>Laminal</th>
<th>Dorsal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plosives</td>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Ž^</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>labialised vl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vd.</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>Φ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td>y^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semivowels</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Dobel consonants

The /t/ tends to be dental, whereas the other Apical consonants are alveolar.

The phoneme /k/ has variants [k] preceding non-back vowels and [k] preceding back vowels, thus:

/kaka/ [ˈkaka:] small, child
/kel/ [kel] younger sibling
/rakin/ [ˈrakin] leaf

/koyar/ [ˈkoyər] dog
/kotu/ [ˈkotu] if
/Žu-'yakur/ [Ţu'yakur] I pound

The phoneme /F/\^ has variants [p] following the phoneme /m/ in word initial position, and [Φ] elsewhere, thus:

/m-'FaŽi/ [m'paŢi] you (sg) use
/m-'Fo/ [m'po] you carry
/FaFa/ [ˈFaFa] ground
/Fo/ [Fo] with

2The laminal semivowel is written as /y/, as in the Dobel orthography, rather than the IPA /j/.

3The voiceless bilabial fricative phoneme /Φ/ will hereafter be written using the symbol /f/, following the Dobel orthography.

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel
The phonetic sequence [ka] occurs rarely. In this environment [k] is best treated as a variant of /Ž/. The sequence [ka] occurs as a root-initial stressed syllable in some verbs where it is in free variation with [Ža] in the 3s form only.⁴ There are, however, a few such roots where [ka] may not be replaced by [Ža].⁵

4 Inventory of vowels

Dobel has 5 vowel phonemes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Dobel vowels

The open central vowel phoneme /a/ is realised in stressed syllables as [a] and in unstressed syllables is raised to a schwa-quality allophone (symbolised [ə]). In syllables that carry secondary stress (two syllables before the primary stressed syllable) it is realised as [a].

5 The syllable and phoneme distribution

The syllable in Dobel is defined as a rhyme with an obligatory onset, in which any consonant phoneme may occur. A geminate pair of consonants may also occur in the onset.⁶ The rhyme contains an obligatory nucleus with an optional coda. The nucleus may consist of any vowel and any member of the consonant sub-class /l m n w y/ may occur as the coda.⁷ The tree in figure 3 summarises the general features:

---

⁴Out of eleven verbs with root initial stressed /Ža/, seven were found where /Ža/ could freely vary with [ka]. In the Straits dialect, as spoken in Algardang, there are several other verbs where the [k] appears in free variation with [Ž], and not always in the 3s form nor always before [a].
⁵I have identified four such morphemes, e.g. -kaliba ’coil (rope)’.
⁶See § 43 The phonological forms of reduplication.
⁷The phoneme // may occur in the coda only following morphophonemic changes to the morpheme -u [see § 7]
The fundamental syllable patterns in Dobel are thus CVC and CV, with C\(_1\)C\(_1\)VC and C\(_1\)C\(_1\)V patterns occurring only as the stressed syllable of a phonological word, when that word carries the reduplication morpheme [See § 42 on reduplication]. There are no vowel clusters in Dobel. The above patterns undergo some restructuring effects under certain morphophonemic processes to produce the otherwise anomalous sequences:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cau} \\
\text{CVun} \\
\text{CVin}
\end{align*}
\]

involving in the first instance an unusual final - and a preceding unstressed vocoid (\(\text{U}\)), where the morpheme \(-\text{u}\) metathesises following a root final \(\text{a}\), and in the second and third instances a root-final \(\text{y}\) or \(\text{w}\) which is reinterpreted as an intrusive vocoid between syllable nucleus and coda [see § 7 for details].

Other than the geminate consonants which occur initially as a result of reduplication, initial consonant clusters occur in two circumstances. The phoneme /m/ may occur word initially before a syllable initial consonant, when the 2s Actor proclitic occurs (as it always does) before a root initial consonant, e.g. /m-bana/ ‘you go’. The phoneme /n/ also occurs word initially before a syllable initial consonant in /n'da/, the shortened form of /na\(\text{Žu'}\)da/ ‘no, not’. In these two cases the nasal sounds syllabic. Since these exceptions are restricted to the examples given above, they do not necessitate the addition of a new syllable type.
6 The Phonological Word

In Dobel the phonological word is defined as a stress group. Each phonological word is the domain of one primary stress which occurs on one syllable of the phonological word. The following is a list of phonological word types that have been found in Dobel, where 'S denotes a syllable carrying primary stress and S denotes a syllable not carrying primary stress. This list consists only of monomorphemic words:

'S /'tay/ sea water
'SS /'suwan/ naughtiness
S'S /ma'del/ wave
'SSS /lofaŽu/ leaking
S'SS /ka'lisan/ sibling (same sex)
SS'S /taa'lay/ like, similar to

Stress always occurs on the grammatical root, and may occur on any of the last three syllables of the root. In the majority of roots it occurs on the penultimate syllable, but there is a significant minority of words where stress occurs on the final syllable.8 This is a contrastive feature of the language and there are several pairs of words that contrast for stress, such as:

/da-'tabay/ they carry (on shoulder)
/da-ta'bay/ they hit
/'Žala-y/ its/his skin
/'Ža'lay/ kind of lemon
/'tamin/ house materials
/ta'nin/ genuine

However, there are some cases where final stress is to some extent predictable. Nearly all roots that have the mid vowels /e/ and /o/ in the final syllable have final stress.9 The following are some examples:

/'Žara'Že/ small sp. of bat
/'Ža'ye/ some
/'Žata'ler/ vegetable
/na-fu'rer/ he coughs

---

8In a list of 1920 Dobel polysyllabic roots, there were 388 which had final stress, that is 20%. In this paper stress is only marked when it occurs on the final syllable, or where it is relevant to the discussion.

9There are a very few exceptions, such as /da-'bele/ 'praise' and /'sere/ 'characteristic'.

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Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel
Stress on the antepenultimate syllable is also predictable, this occurs when the final syllable is a voiceless plosive (/t/ or /d/) followed by /u/. There follow some examples:

/ˈminaʔu/ firearm
/ˈnetaʔu/ chisel
/ʔaˈkataʔu/ he feeds
/ˈmalatu/ small adze
/na-ʔaˈzikatu/ he pinches
/ˈlofaʔu/ leaking

This sequence may then be called an extrametrical syllable, as it is not counted in the positioning of the stress. Stress is not affected by the addition of suffixes or enclitics.

It may be noted at this point that the phonological word does not in every case coincide with the grammatical word. In the word /ˈrasan-u+ti/ ‘satisfied-1sU-PERF (I’m already satisfied)’, the

10Interestingly the Dobel words ending in voiceless plosive followed by /u/ which have cognates in the West Tarangan language of southern Aru end in a voiceless plosive in West Tarangan, e.g. minak ‘firearm’, (not possible in Dobel syllable structure), and have penultimate stress. (Richard Nivens, personal communication). The one exception to this rule in Dobel, /taˈmatu/ ‘person’, is cognate with taˈmate in West Tarangan and other Aru languages; in this case the /tu/ is not an extrametrical syllable.

11The following abbreviations are used throughout this paper:

1s First person singular (also, 2s, 3s).
1p First person plural (also, 2p, 3p).
1pi First person plural inclusive.
1pe First person plural exclusive.
3sa Third person singular animate.
3sn Third person singular inanimate.
1sA First person singular Actor proclitic (also 2sA, 1peA, 3pA, etc.).
1sU First person singular Undergoer enclitic (also 3saU, 3snU, 1peU, 2pU, etc.).
1sG First person singular genitive suffix (also 3sG, 2pG, etc.).
1sPoss First person singular general possession word (also 3sPoss, etc.)
1sPr First person singular free pronoun (also 3pPr, etc.)AN Animate noun numeral prefix
CPr Contrastive Pronoun
DEM Demonstrative Pronoun
DUP Reduplication morpheme
EM Existential Marker
IMM Imminent clitic
INTENS Intensifier
NF Non-finite verb prefix
LocPr Locative Pronoun
PERF Perfective clitic

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 7
morpheme “ti” is a clitic which attaches itself to the last word of the clause. ‘I’m already very satisfied’ is therefore /'rasan-u 'yuŽu+ti/ ‘satisfied-1sU INTENS-PERF’. It can be seen that, by the principle of moveability, ti is grammatically a separate word, although not a separate phonological word since it does not carry stress. There are other clitics which behave similarly.

7 Morphophonemic Processes

All but one of the morphophonemic processes which occur in Dobel concern affixes or enclitics.12 These effects do not occur throughout the Dobel area, in fact the first, second, third and fifth, listed below, are found only in the Northern dialect.13 The majority of these processes are efforts to conform to a penultimate stress structure.

1) The morpheme -u ‘1sU’ or ‘1sG’ metathesises to -u when it follows a root final /a/,14 thus:

\[
'sama + -u \rightarrow /'sama^u/ \quad \text{my father [father-1sG]}
\]
\[
Ža-'yoka + -u \rightarrow /Ža'yoka^u/ \quad \text{he sees me [3sA-see-1sU]}
\]

The same process also occurs after root-final /a/ and (in one case) /e/, but then the resultant /u/ elides,15 thus:

\[
'muru + -u \rightarrow /'muru/ \quad \text{my back}
\]
\[
Že + -u \rightarrow /Že/ \quad \text{my desire}
\]

2) The suffix -ni ‘3saU’ metathesises to -in following the verb nal16 ‘take’.

\[
nal + -ni \rightarrow /'natal/ \quad \text{he takes it (animate)}
\]

Qmk  Question marker
REL  Relative Pronoun
TagQ  Tag question
VR  Valency Reducing prefix

12Throughout this paper suffixes and enclitics are written morphophonemically with the exception of -m, which is not written when it elides following a root-final consonant.

13In the Straits dialect there is a further morphophonemic process, not found in the Northern dialect, which is that the 2s Actor proclitic, -m-, undergoes homorganic nasal substitution before the initial consonants of all verb roots: m-bana ‘you go/leave’, n-ten ‘you cry’, -koy ‘you die’ etc.

14Morphophonemic changes to this morpheme cause two phenomena rare in the language, these are the occurrence of the sequence a^n, and the only occurrence (in the Northern dialect) of word final //.

15There is no change to -u after root-final /l/, e.g. /kalilu/, and there have been no examples of -u following final /o/.

16The process does not occur with other verbs ending in /l/, e.g. dasolni ‘they ask him’. (For the paradigm of nal see § 26)
3) The suffix -ni ‘3saU’ often drops its final vowel and becomes -n following a root final vowel, /y/ or /w/. There is thus resyllabification, causing the semivowels /y/ and /w/ to be reinterpreted as unstressed vocoids within the syllable [see § 5 above]. This process is optional, but, in the Northern dialect, usually occurs.

\[
\begin{align*}
Žu-'yoka + -ni & \quad \rightarrow /Žu'yokan/ \quad \text{I see him.} \\
bu'lay + -ni & \quad \rightarrow /bu'la^i\text{n}/ \quad \text{he is hungry} \\
saw + -ni & \quad \rightarrow /sa^h\text{n}/ \quad \text{onto him}
\end{align*}
\]

4) The suffix -ye ‘3pU’ when it follows root final /a/, merges with the root resulting in the root final vowel becoming /e/; some speakers retain the /a/, simply dropping the /y/. This rule is optional. Thus:

\[
'sina + -ye \rightarrow /'\text{sine}/, /'\text{sinae}/ \text{ or } /'\text{sinaye}/ \quad \text{they are big}
\]

5) The suffix -m ‘2sG’ is deleted after root final /l rm n/\(^{18}\). This is true for all three dialects of Dobel. Thus:

\[
taŽar + -m \quad \rightarrow \ \text{taŽar} \quad \text{your ears}
\]

6) When the phoneme /y/ follows a syllable-final consonant, the consonant is doubled and the /y/ elides. This rule applies across morpheme boundaries and across word boundaries. Thus:

\[
Ža-'luun + -ye \rightarrow /Ža'luunne/ \quad \text{he hides them}
\]

\[
'\text{kalar} + '\text{yabil} \rightarrow /'\text{kalar} '\text{rabil}/ \quad \text{inside the house}
\]

\[
\text{Compare:} \quad /'\text{mola} '\text{yabil}/ \quad \text{inside the hut}
\]

7) The prefix, Žin-, which derives nouns from active verbs [see § 25], has been found only with verbs whose roots begin with /t/, and in this case the /t/ elides, as in:

\[
Žin- + talar \quad \text{(sit)} \quad \rightarrow Ži'nalar \quad \text{the act of sitting}
\]

\[
Žin- + toran \quad \text{(agree)} \quad \rightarrow Ži'noran \quad \text{affirmation}
\]

\[
Žin- + ten \quad \text{(cry)} \quad \rightarrow Ži'nen \quad \text{crying (Adj.)}
\]

---

17This process can result in vowel clusters across morpheme boundaries, the only way vowel clusters can occur in Dobel.

18The word /larm/ ‘your voice’ is an exception to this rule.
8 Morphology

9 Nouns and pronominals

Nouns and pronominals, in contrasts to verbs, are not morphologically complex. Here we discuss them as the heads of noun phrases.

10 Noun classes

All nouns in Dobel belong to one of two noun classes, animate and inanimate, distinguished by the following:

a) different Undergoer enclitics that substitute for them,
b) numeral agreement, and
c) the use of different sets of demonstratives.

In each of the above mentioned phenomena, with the exception of numeral agreement, it is, however, only in the third person singular forms that the animate and inanimate distinction is made. The plural Undergoer enclitics and demonstratives are the same for both noun classes.

The noun classes are given the names animate and inanimate because all nouns that refer to living things, both (whole) plants and (whole) animals, are in the animate class (body parts and plant parts are usually inanimate). Besides these nouns, there are many nouns that refer to semantically inanimate things, but which are nevertheless classified in the Dobel system as animate. The animate class is further subdivided into human and non-human on the basis of different numeral affixation.

Full descriptions of the agreement systems for undergoer enclitics, numerals and deictics are given under their respective sections. However, at this point, the following examples are sufficient to illustrate the agreement patterns for animate and inanimate nouns:
Undergoer enclitics:

(3) **tamatu ne ssoba-ni**
    person DEM good-3saU
That person is good.

(4) **kalar ne ssoba-ø**
    house DEM good-3snU
That house is good.

Numerals:

(5) **kalar Žawa**
    house four
four houses

(6) **tamatu Žawa-ye**
    person four-3pU
four people

(7) **koyar Žay-Žawa**
    dog AN-four
four dogs

The deictic system is complicated and is beyond the scope of this present paper. However it is worth noting, while discussing noun classes, that when demonstratives occur following a certain specialised marker (the existential marker) the class of the noun referred to by the pronoun determines the choice of demonstrative. If the noun is *animate* the demonstrative is chosen from the following set:

- **nay** (near speaker)
- **ne** (mid distance or near addressee)
- **nno** (far away)
- **niŽa** (in focus but not visible)

If the noun is *inanimate* then the demonstrative is chosen from the set:

- **wa** (near speaker)
- **re** (mid distance or near addressee)
- **nno** (far away)
- **riŽa** (in focus but not visible)
Dobel has several pronominal systems, which are discussed in turn below. The following table summarises them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free Pronouns</th>
<th>Actor Proclitics</th>
<th>Undergoer Enclitics</th>
<th>Genitive Suffixes</th>
<th>General Possession</th>
<th>Numeral agree. (human)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s saŽu</td>
<td>Žu Žo-</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>Žana</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2s Ža</td>
<td>m- mo-</td>
<td>-Ža</td>
<td>-m / ø</td>
<td>Žamu</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sa DEM</td>
<td>Ža- na-</td>
<td>-ni</td>
<td>-y / V# → i</td>
<td>Žani</td>
<td>-ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sn DEM</td>
<td>Ža- na-</td>
<td>-ø / V# → i</td>
<td>-y / V# → i²</td>
<td>Žani</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1p Žama</td>
<td>ma- ma-</td>
<td>-Žama</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>Žama</td>
<td>-Žama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pi Žita</td>
<td>ta- ta-</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>Žita Žada</td>
<td>-da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2p Žemi</td>
<td>mi- mina-</td>
<td>-Žami</td>
<td>-mi</td>
<td>Žami</td>
<td>-Žami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3p Žiri</td>
<td>da- da-</td>
<td>-ye / -ði²</td>
<td>-di</td>
<td>Žada</td>
<td>-ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Dobel Pronominal Systems

12 Free pronouns

There is a set of free pronouns which may occur as subjects or objects. In both positions their presence brings the subject or object into higher prominence, the unmarked forms being (a) the absence of a free pronoun as subject – person and number are indicated by the Actor proclitics – and (b) the use of Undergoer enclitics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>saŽu</td>
<td>Ža</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Žama</td>
<td>Žita</td>
<td>Žemi</td>
<td>Žiri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Free pronouns

It will be noted that there is no 3s free pronoun. This is because demonstratives are used in lieu of 3s pronouns. The plural demonstratives may be used optionally instead of the 3p free pronoun Žiri. Note that the forms wa and re are used only for non-count (mass) nouns, whereas nay and ne are used for count nouns.

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19The first set occurs with roots that take stress on the initial syllable, and on which the valency reducing prefix r- does not occur. The second set occurs with roots that have non-initial stress or before the prefix r-.

20On roots that end in /l r m n/.

21Also some root changes, such as mata- ‘eye’ → may ‘eye-3sG’, yaka- ‘spouse’ → yasi ‘spouse-3sG’.

22The Undergoer of non-active verbs is never encoded by -di in the Northern dialect.
3 Actor proclitics\textsuperscript{23}

The syntactic subject of active verbs is marked by an Actor proclitic on the verb, which occurs obligatorily on finite verb forms of all active verbs except those which follow another verb in serial constructions. The Actor proclitic marks the person and number of the syntactic subject. It has the following forms which occur when the verb root has initial stress and the valency reducing prefix $r$- [see § 20] does not occur:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Person: & First & Second & Third \\
\hline
Singular: & Žu- & m- & Ža- \\
Plural: & ma- (ex) & mi- & da- \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Figure 8: Actor proclitics, first allomorph set

There is an allomorph set as follows whose members occur with verb roots with non-initial stress, or before the prefix $r$-:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Person: & First & Second & Third \\
\hline
Singular: & Žo- & mo- & na- \\
Plural: & ma- (ex) & mina- & da- \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Figure 9: Actor proclitics, second allomorph set

The following are examples of the different allomorphs:

\begin{itemize}
\item[(8)] Ža-’bana \hspace{1cm} he leaves \hspace{1cm} 3sA-leave
\item[(9)] na-ba’Žarum \hspace{1cm} he sinks \hspace{1cm} 3sA-sink
\item[(10)] na-r-’boy \hspace{1cm} he is tired \hspace{1cm} 3sA-VR-be.tired
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{23}The form of these pronominals is reported here, their function is dealt with under section 18, Verbs.
The undergoer of an action is encoded in the surface structure in Dobel. The undergoer is marked by an *undergoer enclitic* which attaches to the verb phrase. Figure 10 shows the paradigm for Undergoer enclitics. The third singular animate (3sa) and inanimate (3sn) forms are shown separately:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3sa</th>
<th>3sn</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-ža</td>
<td>-ni</td>
<td>-ø</td>
<td>-žama</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-žami</td>
<td>-ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Either 3p form may be used to encode the object (o)\(^4\) of active verbs, although -ye is preferred in the Northern dialect, whereas the subject (s\(_o\)) of non-active verbs may only be encoded by -ye.

The undergoer may be the syntactic object of an active verb, as in (11), or the syntactic subject of a non-active verb, as in (12) [See § 18 below for a full discussion]. The Undergoer enclitic attaches to the verb phrase. Such a verb phrase may function as the predicate in a main or subordinate clause.

\[(13)\] Žani koyar nay ne, m-yoka-ni?  
3sPoss dog EM DEM 2sA-see-3saU  
That’s his dog, do you see it?

\[(14)\] Žani koyar nay ne, ložar-ni, ni?  
3sPoss dog EM DEM beautiful-3saU TagQ  
That’s his dog, it’s beautiful, isn’t it?

The following evidence is presented for the Undergoer enclitic’s status as a clitic:

(a) When the Undergoer enclitic is the object of a transitive verb it cannot co-occur with a full object noun phrase or a free pronoun as object. This is shown in the following examples:

\[(15)\] ta-wata lli nay.  
lpiA-fold leaf.blanket DEM  
Let’s fold this leaf blanket.

---

\(24\)The designations O and S\(_O\) are discussed in section 18
Let’s fold it.

Note that in (17) there is no enclitic, because there is a full NP, whereas in (18) the object is referred to only by the Undergoer enclitic.

(b) A verb may be intensified with the intensifier yuŽu, which follows the verb. When yuŽu is present the undergoer enclitic cliticises to it, rather than to the verb itself. The following examples illustrate this:

(19)    da-dayar-ni.  
        3pA-hit-3saU  
(20)    da-dayar yuŽu-ni.  
        3pA-hit INTENS-3saU  
(21)    Tamatu ne soba-ni.  
        person DEM good-3saU  
(22)    Tamatu ne soba yuŽu-ni.  
        person DEM good INTENS-3saU  

For an active verb which is reflexive or reciprocal, the Undergoer enclitic is coreferential with the Actor proclitic [see § 22].

If the verb is non-active, the verb phrase may function as a qualifier of the noun head within the noun phrase, (and the verb root is then reduplicated [see § 53]). In this case the undergoer enclitic is obligatorily present, as in the following example.

(23)    tamatu ssoba-ni ne Ža-koy ti.  
        person DUP-good-3saU DEM 3sA-die PERF  
That good person has died.

The Undergoer may also be governed by a preposition, in which case the enclitic attaches to the preposition, as in (24).

(25)    mol beda ne yaŽa-u da.  
        (2sA)give bush.knife DEM to-1sU IMM  
Please give that bush knife to me.
To refer to 3s animate nouns, the form -ni (3saU) is used as in examples (26) and (27) above. The following examples serve to illustrate the variations in how the undergoer is marked for third person singular \textit{inanimate} nouns (3snU) (see figure 12, above). For the undergoer of active verbs and that of many non-active verbs there is no enclitic (marked -ø), as in (28) and (29) respectively. However, for some non-active verbs, the final vowel of the root (usually a) mutates to i, as in (30) [cf. (31) above].

(32) Žani kalar nay re, m-yoka-ø?
   3sPoss house EM DEM 2sA-see-3snU
   That’s his house, do you see it?

(33) Žani kalar nay re, kaay-ø, ni?
   3sPoss house EM DEM bad-3snU TagQ
   That’s his house, it’s awful, isn’t it?

(34) Žani kalar nay re, ložir, ni?
   3sPoss house EM DEM beautiful(3snU) TagQ
   That’s his house, it’s beautiful, isn’t it?

15 Genitive constructions

16 Genitive suffixes

There is a closed subset of nouns which must occur with a suffix that agrees with the possessor.\textsuperscript{25} These inalienably possessed nouns include most body parts, most kinship terms, and many locational nouns, such as \textit{yisan-di} ‘underneath-3pG’, \textit{ffan-di} ‘top-3pG’, \textit{yabal-di} ‘inside-3pG’, etc. The most common paradigm of genitive suffixes is as follows:

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
1s & 2s & 3s & 1pe & 1pi & 2p & 3p \\
\hline
-u & -m & -i & -ma & -da & -mi & -di \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textbf{Figure 13: Genitive suffixes}

\textsuperscript{25}Occasionally some speakers use the 3s form of some of these nouns as a root which they then possess with the general possession word [see § ]. I attribute this to language change; some of the nouns that take genitive suffixes are beginning to be used with possession words, and the 3s form as the most common then takes the role of noun root. None of these nouns has been found to occur with the root alone, except in some cases where there is noun incorporation in a verb, such as \textit{na-r-loy lima} [3sA-VR-hang hand] ‘be empty handed’ (cf. \textit{lima-m} ‘your hand’). Note that the verb is marked as having no object, by the r-.
The following are some examples of the use of Genitive suffixes:

(35) lima-u  
    hand-1sG  
    my hand

(36) sabu-m  
    grandparent-2sG  
    your grandparent

(37) tažar-ma  
    ear-1peG  
    our ears

These suffixes undergo several morphophonemic changes which vary from dialect to dialect [see § 7].

There are several variations in the third person singular, the most common of which is a change of the final root vowel (usually a) to i, thus: sami ‘his father’, or sanin ‘his father-in-law’ are formed from the roots sama and sanan respectively. Another fairly common 3s form is the suffix -y, which occurs after some (not all) root final vowels (in the data this has always been the vowel a), e.g. yaba-y ‘his leg’. There are a number of nouns that have irregular 3s possessed forms, for which see the paradigms in Figure 14 below.

The following are some examples of nouns that are inalienably possessed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>sama-u</td>
<td>sama-m</td>
<td>sami</td>
<td>sama-ma</td>
<td>sama-da</td>
<td>sama-mi</td>
<td>sama-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand</td>
<td>lima-u</td>
<td>lima-m</td>
<td>limi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elder sibling</td>
<td>Žaža-u</td>
<td>Žaža-m</td>
<td>Žaži</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-law</td>
<td>sanan-u</td>
<td>sanan</td>
<td>sanin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ear</td>
<td>tažar-u</td>
<td>tažar</td>
<td>tažir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tooth</td>
<td>eyan-u</td>
<td>eyan</td>
<td>eyin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leg</td>
<td>yaba-u</td>
<td>yaba-m</td>
<td>yaba-y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skin</td>
<td>Žala-u</td>
<td>Žala-m</td>
<td>Žala-y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular 3s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>younger sibling</td>
<td>kali-u</td>
<td>kali-m</td>
<td>kel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td>mata-u</td>
<td>mata-m</td>
<td>may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice</td>
<td>lar-u</td>
<td>lar-m</td>
<td>ler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spouse</td>
<td>yaka-u</td>
<td>yaka-m</td>
<td>yasi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular 2s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>child</td>
<td>yana-u</td>
<td>yana-w/-Žu</td>
<td>yana-y</td>
<td>yana-ma</td>
<td>yana-da</td>
<td>yana-mi</td>
<td>yana-di</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The plurals are followed by kakay, a plural classifier used for relationship terms.)

Figure 15: Paradigms of inalienably possessed nouns

Most of the variation in 3s forms is explicable:

(i) The 3s suffix is -i.
(ii) If the root is consonant-final, the suffix metathesises with the final consonant.
(iii) a elides before i.
(iv) Certain nouns, such as yaba- are lexical exceptions to (iii).
(v) In these cases, i resyllabifies to y following a root-final vowel.
(vi) Forms such as kel (root: kali) and ler (root: lar) are explicable in that, historically *CaSi# (where S is a sonorant, l,r,m,n) became CeS# in Dobel.26

Forms such as may and yasi are still unaccounted for.

There are many nouns which occur almost exclusively in the third person, as they are possessed only by non-humans; most of these occur both in the singular and the plural. Some of these nouns are semantically equivalent to locative prepositions in English, such as yabil ‘inside’, literally ‘the interior of’. The following are some examples of these and other nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tail</td>
<td>suŽir</td>
<td>suŽar-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hind leg</td>
<td>Žukil</td>
<td>Žukal-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>top</td>
<td>fifin/fufun</td>
<td>fifan-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inside</td>
<td>yabil</td>
<td>yabal-di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underneath</td>
<td>yisin</td>
<td>yisan-di</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16: Inalienably possessed nouns occurring only in the third person

Thus the phrase ‘in the house’ is kalar yabil, literally ‘the house’s interior’.

26The *CaSi# forms are still preserved in the Manombai language of East Central Aru. Compare ku’dari the Manombai word for ‘cassowary’ with the Dobel word: Žu’der ‘cassowary’.
17 General possession word

The majority of nouns, unlike those in section 16, may occur without a possessive or genitive construction, and do not take genitive suffixes. Possession of such nouns is marked, rather, by general possession words. The resultant words are unstressed when they precede a noun, but can stand alone as free possessive pronouns, functioning as predicates, with the meaning of ‘mine’, ‘yours’, ‘his’, etc., in which case they are stressed on the final syllable of the root. The following is a paradigm of the possession words.\(^27\)

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
1s & 2s & 3s & 1pe & 1pi & 2p & 3p \\
Žana & Žamu & Žani & Žama & Žada & Žami & Žada \\
\end{array}
\]

**Figure 17: General possession words**

The 1pi form additionally requires the free pronoun Žita to disambiguate it from the homophonous 3p form, which also often, but not always, takes the 3p free pronoun Žiri.

The following possessed forms are illustrative:

(38) Žana kalar
    1sPoss house

(39) Žami letay
    2pPoss trad.boat

(40) Ža Žamu turaŽu
    2sPr 2sPoss knife

When the possession words function as predicates they act like non-active verbs and take the appropriate undergoer enclitics, the undergoer being the possessed noun, as may be seen in the following examples:

(41) kalar nay sažu a’na-ø
    house DEM 1sPr 3sPoss-3snU
    This house is mine.

(42) koyar nay ita Ža’da-ni
    dog DEM 1piPr 1piPoss-3saU
    This dog is ours.

(43) kaka ne Eka Ža’ni-ni
    child DEM Eka 3sPoss-3saU
    That child is Eka’s.

(44) nor wadi Ža’ni-ye
    coconut.tree DEM 3sPoss-3pU
    These coconut trees are his.

\(^27\)Historically, the underlying root was probably yaŽa, the preposition ‘to’. Thus Žani ‘his (3sPoss)ʼ very likely derived from yaŽa-ni ‘to him’. The only anomaly is Žana ‘my (1sPoss)’, as one would expect *Žau which does not occur.
The possession words may also take undergoer enclitics when they do not function as predicates if the possessed thing is old information in the discourse. In the following sentence the -ye ‘3pU’ refers to ancestor spirits that have been mentioned earlier in the discourse:

(47) ta-faži Žaye fužu Žada-ye tu.
1piA-use Quant other 3pPoss-3pU also
We use other people’s ones too.

18 Verbs

Verbs in Dobel may be divided into two major categories, active verbs and non-active verbs. This dichotomy is best described in terms of $A$, $s$ and $o$ (Dixon 1979, pp.61ff; Andrews 1985, pp.98ff), where $A$ is a NP in a transitive sentence receiving treatment normally accorded to the Actor of a Transitive Verb, $o$ is a NP in a transitive sentence receiving treatment normally accorded to the Undergoer of a Transitive Verb and $s$ is the argument of a one-argument (intransitive) verb. In Dobel $A$ is encoded by the Actor proclitics preceding the verb and $o$ by the Undergoer enclitics following the verb. $s$ when it is the semantic Actor ($s_A$) is encoded by the Actor proclitics, but when it is the semantic Undergoer ($s_o$) it is encoded by the Undergoer enclitics.28 This is an example of a “split $s$ phenomenon” (Dixon 1979, p.71, pp.79ff; Andrews 1985, pp.147-150) where $s_A$ is encoded in the same way as $A$, and $s_o$ in the same way as $o$.29

28The clitic which encodes the syntactic subject must be present whether it is an Actor proclitic or an undergoer enclitic, whereas the Undergoer enclitic which encodes the syntactic object is only present when there is no NP $o$.

29This is in contrast both to a nominative-accusative system, where $s$ and $A$ are encoded in the same way and $o$ differently, and to an ergative-absolutive system, where $s$ and $o$ are encoded in the same way and $A$ differently.
The situation may be represented as in Figure 18 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Intransitive:</th>
<th>Actor Proclitic</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Undergoer enclitic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Transitive:</td>
<td>Sₐ</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-active Intransitive:</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-active</td>
<td>S₀</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19: Split-S in Dobel

Figure 20 is laid out with the transitive clause in the middle so that it may be seen that the subject of an active intransitive clause is marked the same as the subject of a transitive clause, and that the subject of non-active intransitive clause is marked the same as the object of a transitive clause. The resultant three-way distinction is exemplified in sentence (48) for an active intransitive clause, in (49) for a transitive clause, and for (50) for non-active intransitive one:

(51) ŽA-bana ti.  
\[3sA-leave\, PERF\]  
\[ₐ\]  
He has left.

(52) ŽA-yoka-ni.  
\[1sA-see\, 3saU\]  
\[ₐ\, O\]  
He sees it.

(53) ean-ni.  
\[heavy\, 3saU\]  
\[ₐ\, O\]  
He is heavy.

Thus, active verbs in Dobel comprise all two-argument (i.e. transitive) verbs and all one-argument (intransitive) verbs where s involves an Actor, as in (54) and (55) above. Non-active verbs are one-argument forms where s is an Undergoer, as in (56) above.

### 19 Active verbs

As can be seen from the above, active verbs have an obligatory Actor proclitic (unless they follow another active verb in a serial construction). The actor proclitic is obligatorily absent for non-active verbs.
20 The prefix r-.

In some circumstances a prefix r- occurs immediately before the verb root of an active verb and after the Actor proclitic (which is then taken from the second allomorph set [see figure 21, § 13 above]). This occurs in three different circumstances, all of which involve reduced or low transitivity in the sense of Hopper and Thompson (1980). I shall label the r- function here Valency Reduction (VR).

21 Transitive verbs with r-: object deletion.

A transitive verb may have the object deleted in order to shift the focus from the object to the activity to which the verb refers. When this happens the prefix r- is obligatory. This use may be illustrated by the following two sentences. In the first the focus is on the fact that the dog bites people, as opposed to, for example, other dogs. In the second sentence the focus is on the action of biting, so the object is deleted and the r- is inserted:

(57) koyar ne Ža-Žara tamatu. That dog bites people.
    dog that 3sA-bite people

(58) koyar ne na-r-Žara. That dog bites.
    dog that 3sA-VR-bite

Consider also the following conversation which I overheard:

(59)   a. m-dem ya?      What are you doing?
       2sA-do what

       b. Žo-r-tutu.       I am pounding.
       1sA-VR-pound

       c. m-tutu ya?      What are you pounding?
       2sA-pound what

       d. Žu-tutu waway.   I’m pounding rice.
       1sA-pound rice

In this conversation the verb root -tutu ‘pound’ occurs with r- and without it. In (60b) it is the activity ‘pounding’ that is being asserted so r- is present, whereas in (61c) and (62d) it is the grammatical object that is in focus.
22 Transitive verbs with \( r \)-: coreferential objects.

When the object (Undergoer) governed by a transitive verb is coreferential with the subject (Actor), that is a reflexive or a reciprocal meaning, the object is represented by an Undergoer enclitic, and the prefix \( r \)- is inserted. The verb root is also reduplicated. See the difference of meaning in the following three examples:

(63) \( \text{ža-dayar-ni} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-hit-3saU} \)
    He hit him (someone else).

(64) \( \text{na-r-ddayar-ni} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-DUP-hit-3saU} \)
    He hit himself.

(65) \( \text{da-r-ddayar-ye} \)
    \( 3\text{pA-VR-DUP-hit-3pU} \)
    They hit each other/themselves.

What these two functions of \( r \)- seem to have in common is that they reduce the valency of the verb, either by deletion of the direct object, or by the direct object becoming coreferential with the subject.\(^{30}\)

23 When \( r \)- is determined by the lexicon.

The third occurrence of the prefix \( r \)-, is a more or less non-productive one, in which the lexicon requires that certain active verbs always have \( r \)-. Most such verbs are intransitive, for example:

(66) \( \text{na-r-laža} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-know} \)
    he knows

(67) \( \text{na-r-boy} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-be.tired} \)
    he is tired

(68) \( \text{na-r-kōžu} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-harbour} \)
    he makes harbour

(69) \( \text{na-r-tora} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-throb} \)
    it throbs with pain

(70) \( \text{na-r-tir} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-bathe} \)
    he bathes

but there are two examples of transitive verbs:

(71) \( \text{na-r-naw-ža} \)
    \( 3\text{sA-VR-teach-2sU} \)
    he teaches you

\(^{30}\)For a relevant discussion of this see Bernard Comrie (1985) pp319-330.
(72) **na-r-silay-Ža**  
3sA-VR-pity-2sU  
he pities you

A small number of these verbs are verbs formed from noun roots such as:

(73) **na-r-sabu**  
3sA-VR-grandchild  
he has grandchildren  
cf. **sabu-m**  
your grandfather

(74) **na-r-fusi**  
3sA-VR-fruit  
it bears fruit  
cf. **fusi**  
its fruit

(75) **na-r-tubur**  
3sA-VR-stomach  
she is pregnant  
cf. **tubur**  
his stomach

24 The prefix **ser**-

Active verb roots may also take the prefix **ser**-. The use of **ser**- results in a form analysable as a non-finite verb, that is a verb form which does not function as the predicate and does not carry person and number information.  

If this form is used to modify a noun, then the root is reduplicated [see § 54]. The noun thus modified is often the word that would be the object governed by the verb in its finite form. However the precise relationship between the verb and the noun varies from occurrence to occurrence. Thus, Žay **ser-wwaw** ‘firewood’ is formed from the root **-waw** ‘burn, bake’, literally meaning ‘wood for burning’. However formed from the same verb is siŽa **ser-wwaw** ‘baked fish’ meaning ‘fish which has been baked’. Other examples are:

(76) **Žu-bana ser-num**  
1sA-go NF-dive  
I’m going diving  
cf. **Ža-num**  
3sA-dive  
he dives

(77) **Žuder ser-llesi**  
cassowary NF-DUP-raise  
domesticated cassowary  
cf. **Ža-lesi**  
3sA-raise  
he raises

---

31 Occasionally the resulting form may be used as a noun, as in **ser-sifar** ‘language’ from the verb **na-r-sifar** ‘speak’.
25 The prefix Žin-

Some active verb roots take the prefix Žin-. The prefix Žin- only occurs on verbs with a root initial 't' which then elides. Thus Žin- + toran → Žinoran. The functions of ser- and Žin- are very similar.

The prefix Žin- occurs rarely, and therefore it is difficult to pin down its functions. The following are some of the ways it is used.

1. It is used to form nouns from active verbs:

| Žin-ama’rer | platform to stand on | cf. Žin- + (nar-)tama’rer | stand |
| Žin-oran | means of showing agreement (i.e. head-nodding, grunt, raising eyebrows) | cf. Žin- + (a-)toran | agree |
| Žin-ora | pain | cf. Žin- + (nar-)tora | throb with pain |
| Žin-alar | act of sitting | cf. Žin- + (a-)talar | sit |
| Žin-en | act of mourning | cf. Žin- + (a-)ten | cry |

2. It is used to form non-finite verbs from active verbs:

(78) kaka nay na-diylala Žin-en
child DEM 3sA-stop NF-cry
The child has stopped crying.

(79) Žo-r-boy Žin-alar
1sA-VR-tired NF-sit
I’m tired of sitting.

3. The resulting non-finite verb may be used as a modifier within the noun phrase, in which case the root is reduplicated.35

(80) yaba Žin-nen
song NF-DUP-cry
mourning song

32 Used in the compound phrase sara si Žinora ‘suffering’, lit. ‘illness and pain’.
33 As in Žadem Žínalar salafafi ‘he is sitting crosslegged’.
34 As in inen tay ‘name of a traditional type of song’ (lit. ‘mourning of the sea’).
35 Since the t has elided, the reduplication is realised by a lengthening of the n.

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 25
26 Irregular verbs - portmanteau affixation

Certain high-frequency active verbs in Dobel act in an irregular manner, in that the Actor proclitic merges with the root, resulting in a one- or two-syllable word which incorporates both the prefix and the root. These verbs appear to have been formed from roots and na- type prefixes [see § 19 above], even though the surface forms all have initial stress, except in the 2p form which has a two syllable underlying prefix.  

There are seven verbs of this type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drink</td>
<td>Žon</td>
<td>mon</td>
<td>nan</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>tan</td>
<td>minan</td>
<td>dan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleep</td>
<td>Žon</td>
<td>mon</td>
<td>nen</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>minen</td>
<td>den</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause/do</td>
<td>Žom</td>
<td>mom</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>mam</td>
<td>tam</td>
<td>minam</td>
<td>dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take/give</td>
<td>Žol</td>
<td>mol</td>
<td>nal</td>
<td>mal</td>
<td>tal</td>
<td>minal</td>
<td>dal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complement”</td>
<td>Žoay</td>
<td>moay</td>
<td>naay</td>
<td>maay</td>
<td>taay</td>
<td>minaay</td>
<td>daay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hold</td>
<td>Žodi</td>
<td>modi</td>
<td>nadi</td>
<td>madi</td>
<td>tadi</td>
<td>minadi</td>
<td>dadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>ŽoŽu</td>
<td>moŽu</td>
<td>naŽu</td>
<td>maŽu</td>
<td>taŽu</td>
<td>minaŽu</td>
<td>daŽu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22: Irregular verbs with portmanteau actor proclitics

I suggest that an underlying root-initial vowel has merged with the prefix, and that this vowel deletes the vowel of the prefix in the surface form, except in the first and second persons singular where the o of the prefix deletes the root initial vowel. This is shown by the verb nen ‘he sleeps’, which is the only one not to have the vowel /a/ in the initial syllable. If it were not for nen we could say that the prefix retained its vowel in the portmanteau prefix throughout. Nen could of course be explained as an exception to contrast with nan ‘he drinks’, but then you might expect them to contrast in the first and second persons also, which they don’t. This vowel deletion is explicable in that Dobel does not allow vowel clusters. This might be formalised in the following rules:

\[
\begin{align*}
a & \rightarrow \emptyset /_V \\
V & \rightarrow \emptyset /o_-
\end{align*}
\]

36Thus mi’naŽu ‘2pA-take’ [underlying form: mina-aŽu] contrasts with ‘minaŽu ‘firearm’.
37The verb naay can be used to mark the complement either following a speech verb or certain other verbs which require a complement.
So the following is my analysis of the underlying forms of these verbs, showing only 1s and 3s forms, as the other forms are predictable from these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Underlying</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Žon</td>
<td>Žo- +an</td>
<td>I drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nan</td>
<td>na- +an</td>
<td>he drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žon</td>
<td>Žo- +en</td>
<td>I sleep/marry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nen</td>
<td>na- +en</td>
<td>he sleeps/marries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žoay</td>
<td>Žo- +aay</td>
<td>I say/do next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naay</td>
<td>na- +aay</td>
<td>he says/does next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žom</td>
<td>Žo- +am</td>
<td>I cause/do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nam</td>
<td>na- +am</td>
<td>he causes/does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žol</td>
<td>Žo- +al</td>
<td>I take/give</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nal</td>
<td>na- +al</td>
<td>he takes/gives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žodi</td>
<td>Žo- +adi</td>
<td>I hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nadi</td>
<td>na- +adi</td>
<td>he holds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žožu</td>
<td>Žo- +ažu</td>
<td>I take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nažu</td>
<td>na- +ažu</td>
<td>he takes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a verb root is required onto which can be added the prefix ser- [see § 24 above], then the 3s form is used as a root. Thus from the verb nan ‘he drinks’, the non-finite form ser-nnan may be formed.

27 Non-active verbs

The difference between non-active and active verbs is explained in section 18 above. Non-active verbs are verbs where the semantic Undergoer is the syntactic subject. In Dobel Undergoer is not only a semantic but also a syntactic category, which is marked in the language by the Undergoer enclitic. Non-active verbs in Dobel are intransitive verbs where the subject (s) is also the semantic Undergoer. These verbs take no Actor proclitics, and obligatorily take a Undergoer enclitic.\(^38\) The subject may also be encoded by an optional NP\(_s\) with a noun or pronoun head which precedes the verb.

---

\(^38\)Except that, as was noted above, when the Undergoer is a 3s inanimate noun it is marked by zero.
The majority of non-active verbs encode semantic States, whereas active verbs encode Events. There are however some non-active verbs that encode semantic Events, such as doalužu-ni ‘appear-3sau’ and koy’tul-ni ‘dive-3sau’. This is presumably because Dobel considers the subjects of these verbs to be undergoers rather than actors. Syntactically the non-active verbs that encode Events are distinguished in that they cannot occur as modifiers in the NP, whereas non-active verbs that encode States can. This can be seen in the following examples where (81) is illegal:

(82)  koyar ne aar-ni.
dog DEM vicious-3sau
That dog is vicious.

(83)  koyar aar-ni ne Ža-kara sažu!
dog DUP-vicious-3sau DEM 3sA-bite 1sPr
That vicious dog bit me!

(84)  koyar ne doalužu-ni.
dog DEM appear-3sau
That dog appeared.

(85)  *koyar doalužu-ni ne Ža-kara sažu.
dog DUP-appear-3sau DEM 3sA-bite 1sPr
That appearing dog bit me.

28 Roots that occur as nouns and verbs

29 Active verb roots that also occur as nouns

A number of active verbs when stripped of their affixation are nouns; usually these nouns are semantically very closely related to the verb. These roots are not reduplicated. The following are some examples:

(86) Ža-tabay carry on shoulder
    tabay pole for carrying
(87) Ža-fola suckle
    fola breast
(88) Ža-fir dream (verb)
    fir dream (noun)
(89) Ža-lar sail (verb)
    lar sail (noun)
30 Non-active verbs formed with verb-forming suffix -y

Non-active verbs may be formed from certain noun roots by the addition of the verb-forming suffix -y. The resulting forms act the same as all non-active verb roots. Some examples follow:

(92) | bbasa | mud | basa-y | muddy |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kkura</td>
<td>anger</td>
<td>kura-y</td>
<td>angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lura</td>
<td>oil</td>
<td>lura-y</td>
<td>smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mila</td>
<td>fat (n.)</td>
<td>mila-y</td>
<td>fatty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sara</td>
<td>illness</td>
<td>sara-y</td>
<td>sore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 Numerals

The unaffixed form of numerals are used for counting and are as follows:

1. Že'tu, ye 10. Že'tu ye na wur na lima
2. ro 11. wur na ye
3. lay 12. wur na ro
4. Žawa 13. wur na lay
5. lima 14. Ža'ro
6. dubu 15. Ža'ro na wur na lima
7. dubu'jam 16. Ža'ro na Žurafi dubu na dubu'jam
8. Ža'ro 17. Ža'ro na Žurafi yera na yera
9. Žurafi ro 18. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
10. Žurafi ro 19. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
11. Žurafi ro na ye 20. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na ye
12. Žurafi ro na ro 21. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na ye
13. Žurafi ro na lay 22. Žurafi ro na ro
14. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na ro
15. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
16. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
17. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
18. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
19. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
20. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
21. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
22. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
23. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
24. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
25. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
26. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
27. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
28. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
29. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
30. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
31. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
32. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
33. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
34. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
35. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
36. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
37. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
38. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
39. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
40. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
41. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
42. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
43. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
44. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
45. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
46. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
47. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
48. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
49. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
50. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
51. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
52. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
53. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
54. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
55. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
56. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
57. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
58. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
59. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
60. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
61. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
62. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
63. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
64. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
65. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
66. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
67. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
68. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
69. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
70. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
71. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
72. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
73. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
74. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
75. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
76. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
77. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
78. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
79. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
80. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
81. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
82. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
83. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
84. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
85. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
86. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
87. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
88. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
89. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
90. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
91. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
92. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
93. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
94. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
95. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
96. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
97. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
98. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
99. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro
100. Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro na Žurafi ro

The unaffixed form of the numerals uses wur for ten in all combinations between ten and nineteen.

For twenty, thirty, etc., right up to ninety, Žurafi is used.

---

Rifin was given in answer to elicitation of the word ‘thousand’, but in text I have always heard ribu, a Malay borrowing which has probably all but replaced the original rifin.
32 Numeral agreement

Numerals, when they are used to count nouns, agree with those nouns. They agree firstly according to three categories, inanimate, animate (non-human), and animate (human), then, secondly, in the case of human nouns they take Undergoer enclitics which agree for person and number. Numeral agreement is the only instance in Dobel where there is a distinction between animate human and animate non-human. The numerals agree with the nouns they count as follows:

(a) When numerals enumerate *inanimate* nouns they take the unaffixed form which is also used for counting (see above).

(93) kalar dubu
    house six

(94) turažu wur na yera
    knife ten and nine

(b) When numerals enumerate *animate non-human* nouns the numerals ‘two’ to ‘seven’ take a prefix Žay-, and Ža’ro ‘eight’ and yera ‘nine’ take Ža-. These prefixes are applied whenever the numeral word stands alone, or in a compound numeral when it follows the connector na. Ro, ‘two’, becomes -roy, when prefixed with Žay-. Ye-ni ‘one’ and Žurafi ‘ten’ are used for all animate nouns, human or non-human.

(95) koyar Žay-dubu
    dog AN-six

(96) yiram Žurafi na Ža-yera
    axe ten and AN-nine

The numerals as used with animate non-human nouns are thus as follows:

1. Že'tu-ni, ye-ni 30. Žurafi lay
2. Žay-roy 70. Žurafi dubu'ям
3. Žay-lay 90. Žurafi yera
4. Žay-Žawa 99. Žurafi yera na Ža-yera
5. Žay-lima 100. ratu ye
6. Žay-dubu 109. ratu ye na Ža-yera
7. Žay-dubu'ям 115. ratu ye na Žurafi na Žay-lima
8. Ža-Ža'ro 120. ratu ye na Žurafi ro
9. Ža-yera 167. ratu ye na Žurafi dubu na Žay-dubu'ям
10. Žurafi 200. ratu ro
11. Žurafi na ye-ni 999. ratu yera na Žurafi yera na Ža-yera
12. Žurafi na Žay-roy 1000. ribu ye/ rifin ye
13. Žurafi na Žay-lay
(c) When numerals enumerate human nouns the numerals which stand alone, or follow na take an Undergoer enclitic, which agrees with the noun for person and number. With human nouns as with animate non-human nouns the root ro ‘two’ becomes roy. The Undergoer enclitics used with numerals are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1s</th>
<th>2s</th>
<th>3s</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-ni</td>
<td>-Žama</td>
<td>-da</td>
<td>-Žami</td>
<td>-ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table shows the forms of the numerals ‘two’ to ‘nine’ for all persons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1pi</th>
<th>1pe</th>
<th>2p</th>
<th>3p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>roy-da</td>
<td>roy-Žama</td>
<td>roy-Žami</td>
<td>roy-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>lay-da</td>
<td>lay-Žama</td>
<td>lay-Žami</td>
<td>lay-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Žawa-da</td>
<td>Žawa-Žama</td>
<td>Žawa-Žami</td>
<td>Žawa-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>lima-da</td>
<td>lima-Žama</td>
<td>lima-Žami</td>
<td>lima-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>dubu-da</td>
<td>dubu-Žama</td>
<td>dubu-Žami</td>
<td>dubu-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>dubu'ям-da</td>
<td>dubu'ям-Žama</td>
<td>dubu'ям-Žami</td>
<td>dubu'ям-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Žа'ro-da</td>
<td>Žа'ro-Žama</td>
<td>Žа'ro-Žami</td>
<td>Žа'ro-ye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>yera-da</td>
<td>yera-Žama</td>
<td>yera-Žami</td>
<td>yera-ye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare the following examples with those above:

(97) Žodar dubu-ye
     woman six

(98) tamatu Žurafi na yera-ye
     person ten and nine

It is nearly possible to analyse numerals as non-active verbs of which the noun enumerated is the syntactic subject (Undergoer). The numerals that enumerate human nouns act in the same way as non-active verbs in that they obligatorily take the Undergoer enclitics. Those that enumerate inanimate nouns might also be analysed as non-active verbs, in that if the Undergoer of a non-active verb is 3s inanimate there is no Undergoer enclitic. However of course, except for ye ‘one’, the Undergoer with numerals would always be plural, and 3p inanimate Undergoers are marked

---

40Of course, only the numeral ye, ‘one’, takes a singular Undergoer enclitic. Ye-ni is the 3s form. I have never heard ye with a 1s or 2s enclitic. (The word ye ‘one’ is homophonous with -ye ‘3pU’, but there is no semantic connection.)
with an enclitic with non-active verbs. The category of animate non-human nouns does not fit into the morphological structure of non-active verbs. So while recognising that there are clear similarities between the morphology and syntax of non-active verbs and numerals, numerals have to be maintained as a separate word class.

33 Classifiers

As in many Austronesian languages, numerals often do not occur by themselves but with classifiers. Certain nouns require the presence of classifiers if they are to occur with numerals, and some nouns may occur with or without a classifier. Classifiers may be divided into two types, those that refer to the whole object and classify them into groups of objects, and those that refer to a part of an object or a group of objects. The form of the classifiers is that of inalienably possessed inanimate nouns. Figure 23 shows some of the classifiers that refer to whole objects. The meanings in brackets are their meanings when they occur as ordinary nouns and not classifiers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classifier</th>
<th>Type of objects</th>
<th>Examples of nouns classified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kasir</td>
<td>boats and villages</td>
<td>Žalay boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>letay sailing boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fa'no village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rakin (leaf)</td>
<td>thin flat</td>
<td>ller young leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fasir cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faŽil</td>
<td>thicker flat</td>
<td>rinatu sago filter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Žay ffìn plank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fusi (fruit)</td>
<td>fruits, other</td>
<td>Ža’llay sp. lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nor coconut fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ler shouts, barks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatin (body)</td>
<td>people, trees</td>
<td>tamatu person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nor coconut tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yafir (shaft)</td>
<td>long, pole-shaped</td>
<td>ada trousers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 24: Classifiers for whole objects

The following examples illustrate the use of the classifiers above:

(99) fa'no kasir lay three villages

41Although in West Tarangan, and probably other Aru languages, the enclitic for inanimate nouns for both 3s and 3p is zero (Richard Nivens, personal communication).
The following classifiers refer to part of an object or groups of object:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classifier</th>
<th>Type of objects</th>
<th>Examples of nouns classified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fin</td>
<td>one side of something</td>
<td>lima- hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wažuy</td>
<td>bunch (bananas)</td>
<td>mužu banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žayi</td>
<td>head of grain</td>
<td>Žoytela maize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sali</td>
<td>container full</td>
<td>sur spoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamin</td>
<td>parallel part of a thing</td>
<td>yel comb (tooth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>koba basket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>buražu palm floor (plank)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 25: Classifiers for parts of or groups of objects**

The following are some examples of the above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(105)</th>
<th>tažir fin ye</th>
<th>one ear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ear CLAS one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(106)</td>
<td>mužu wažuy ro</td>
<td>two bunches of bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>banana CLAS two</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(107)</td>
<td>Žoytela Žayi ye</td>
<td>one corn on the cob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maize CLAS one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(108)</td>
<td>sur sali lay</td>
<td>three spoonfuls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spoon CLAS three</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(109)</td>
<td>buražu tamin ye</td>
<td>a plank of palm-wood flooring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>palm-wood CLAS one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the above classifiers may also occur without numerals, but if that is the case the numeral will be replaced by a quantifier, a demonstrative or another modifier as in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(110)</th>
<th>rinatu fažil nay</th>
<th>this sago filter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sago-filter CLAS DEM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(111)</td>
<td>Mariri fin wumur</td>
<td>the east side of Mariri (Island)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mariri CLAS east</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 33
The word *rasa*, meaning ‘crowd/large group’, is a classifier which is used in this way with the noun *tamatu* ‘person’, or other nouns with humans as referents. It seems that this classifier is only used with demonstratives, and never with numerals:

(112) tamatu rasa nay  
    person CLAS DEM  
    all these many people

(113) Oysabi Yay rasa ne  
    Koijabi native CLAS DEM  
    that crowd of Koijabi people

### 34 Prepositions

Prepositions are used in Dobel to mark oblique phrases, and certain verbs idiosyncratically govern prepositional phrases rather than direct objects. Historically the prepositions in Dobel seem to have come from verbs; in fact most of the prepositions have cognate verb forms with a strong semantic relationship to the preposition. This is shown in the following figure which shows all Dobel prepositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Cognate verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yaŽa</td>
<td>to, for, at, about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ľi</td>
<td>in, into, to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bana</td>
<td>from, since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fay</td>
<td>out from, than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ľam</td>
<td>away from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fo</td>
<td>with, during</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fel</td>
<td>along with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatu</td>
<td>through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lola</td>
<td>around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saku</td>
<td>as far as, until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw</td>
<td>onto, (flying)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tan</td>
<td>on (on top of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sira</td>
<td>onto (with force)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feta</td>
<td>into, (splitting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yay</td>
<td>onto, against</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YaŽa</td>
<td>Za-yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ľi</td>
<td>Za-fo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bana</td>
<td>Za-bana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fay</td>
<td>Za-fay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ľam</td>
<td>Za-Ľam (fay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fo</td>
<td>Za-fo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fel</td>
<td>Za-fel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatu</td>
<td>Za-fatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lola</td>
<td>Za-lola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saku</td>
<td>Za-saku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw</td>
<td>Za-saw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tan</td>
<td>Za-tan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sira</td>
<td>Za-sira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feta</td>
<td>Za-feta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yay</td>
<td>Za-yay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 26: Prepositions and verbal cognates**

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether we have a verb and a preposition or whether we have a serial verb construction with the actor proclitic occurring only on the first verb, this is particularly the case with forms such as *lola* ‘around’ and *feta* ‘into, split’ as in the following examples:
In the process of the development of prepositions from verbs, the actor proclitics were lost. However when a verb that governs a prepositional phrase has its valency reduced by the use of the prefix r-, the r- also occurs on the preposition with an actor proclitic. Thus the verb meaning ‘plead to’ or ‘beg of’, which always occurs with a preposition, Ža-mara fo, may be detransitivised by adding r- to both the verb and the preposition, in which case the preposition also has an actor proclitic, and, because it too is ‘detransitivised’ has no complement:

(116) Žama ma-r-mara ma-r-fo fara mina-r-sifar fay fa’no.
1pePr 1peA-VR-plead 1peA-VR-PREP that 2pA-VR-speak for village
We plead that you speak on behalf of the village
cf. Žama ma-ma ma-mara fo-Ža.
1pePr 1peA-come 1peA-plead PREP-2sU
We have come to beg of you.

Also, when a verb and preposition are used reflexively or reciprocally and the prefix r- is consequently added, the verb and the preposition both have actor proclitics and the r-.

reduplication that is necessary in this construction [see § 22], however, occurs on the preposition, not the verb, thus:

(117) da-r-wuli da-r-yyyyaŽa-ye...
3pA-VR-say 3pA-VR-DUP-to-3pU
they said to each other...
cf. da-wuli yaŽa-u...
3pA-say to-1pU
they said to me...

35 Other word classes

36 Negators, dubatives and affirmers

There is a class of words that includes negators, dubatives and affirmers. These are words that say something about the truth or intent of a clause, whether it is true, perhaps true or not true. They occur within the phrase which functions as predicate of the clause. They may all (except the

42In some other Aru languages, including West Tarangan (Richard Nivens, personal communication), prepositions retain actor proclitics, and are thus even more like verbs than in Dobel.
imperative/optative negator, Žoka'lay) occur as proclauses (replacing a whole clause), as in (118), (119) and (120) below.

The general negator is nažu'da ‘no, not’ which is often shortened to nda. There is also a temporal negator, 'nataža ‘not yet’ (which may be shortened to nata). Then there is an imperative or optative negator Žoka'lay, ‘don’t, may it not’. The dubative is maysaža. There are also two affirmers, Žoa'lay, ‘indeed’, which affirms that a statement is true, and Že, ‘yes’ which answers a question in the affirmative.

(121) sažu nda Žo-r-laža.  
I not 1sA-VR-know  
I don’t know.

(122) “m-yoka-n?” “nda.”  
2sA-see-3saU No  
“Can you see him?” “No.”

(123) 'nataža Ža-mul.  
not.yet 3sA-return  
He hasn’t returned yet.

(124) Žoka'lay m-dayar-ni!  
don’t 2sA-hit-3saU  
Don’t hit him!

(125) Žoka'lay kusan Ža-fan.  
don’t rain 3sA-fall  
May it not rain!

(126) maysaža Ža-sula ma’del.  
perhaps 3sA-drunk wave  
Perhaps she is seasick.

(127) Žoa'lay da-ma ti.  
indeed 3pA-come PERF  
They have indeed come.

(128) “sayi-ni.” “Žoa'lay!”  
tall-3saU Indeed  
“He’s tall.” “Yes, indeed!”

(129) “Ža re?” “Že!”  
you there yes  
“Is that you?” “Yes.”

37 Adverbs

There is a closed class of adverbs that qualify verbs. The following are examples of adverbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu</td>
<td>still, also, too, again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mul</td>
<td>again, back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žay'žuy</td>
<td>all over, completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katan</td>
<td>alone, empty handed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fedi</td>
<td>ahead, first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ssel</td>
<td>continuously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sobi</td>
<td>well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toar</td>
<td>truly, straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yala</td>
<td>wrongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yužu</td>
<td>very, (intensifier)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples illustrating the use of some of these adverbs follow:

(130) **bu'lay-Žama fel kawul-Žama tu.**
      hungry-1peU and tired-1peU also
      We are hungry and we are also tired.

(131) **da-fo-ye mul yaŽa fa'no.**
      3pA-bring-3pU back to village
      They brought them back to the village.

(132) **laran-ni Žay'Žuy yaŽa kudu.**
      red-3saU completely because blood
      It was red all over because of the blood.

(133) **ta-Ža baw wa katan.**
      1piA-eat dry.sago DEM alone
      We are eating this dry sago by itself.

(134) **saŽu Žu-fan re fedi.**
      1sPr 1sA-arrive LOC first
      I got there first.

(135) **Wursin Ža-tara Ilafi see.**
      Wursin 3sA-call Ilafi continuously.
      Wursin kept on calling Ilafi.

38 Locationals

The words that I am calling locationals are in fact both locative and temporal deictics. They are **wa**, which broadly means ‘here’ or ‘now’, and **re**, which broadly means ‘there’ or ‘then’. A third locational **nno** ‘away over there’ only has a locative and not a temporal sense.

The locationals **wa**, **re**, and **nno** occur either as locative phrases (LP), which function as the head of locative clauses,\(^43\) or in prepositional phrases (PP) in non-locative clauses. When they occur in locative clauses (i.e. as the main argument of a verb), locationals have an exclusively locative reference, but when they occur in PPs they may have either a locative or a temporal reference. The following examples illustrate the use of the locationals:

(136) **men re.**
      (1peA)sleep there
      We slept there.

---

\(^43\)These will be dealt with in Hughes (to appear).
(137) ta-bana nno. Let’s go away over there.
       1piA-go over.there VP loc LP
(138) Ža-koy yaŽa wa. It died here.
       3sA-die at here VP intr PP
(139) Ža-koy fo re. He died at that time.
       3sA-die at/during then VP intr PP

It will be noted that in (140) the locational has a locative reference, but in (141) it has a temporal reference.

The locational, wa and re, also function as clause-rank particles which mark the clause as either present time and present location (wa), or as remote time or remote location (re). The locational then occurs clause finally. The following examples illustrate their use:

(142) sažu Žo-r-nau-Ža wa, m-rein fara sena-Ža
       1sPr 1sA-VR-teach-2sU LOC 2sA-listen so.that happy-2sU
       I’m teaching you now, listen so that you will be happy.
(143) sažu billeay-u re,
       1sPr DUP-small-1sU LOC
       Žana taffarbu-di da-r-silay yuŽu-u
       1sPoss parent-PL 3pA-VR-love INTENS-1sU
       When I was small, my parents really loved me.
(144) Den Sala yasi nay ne Ža-dayar re.
       Den Sala wife(3sG) EM DEM 3sA-hit LOC
       It was Den Sala’s wife banging back then.

They act in the same way in relative clauses:

(145) koyar ne, sažu Žu-wwuli-nil re, Ža-koy ti.
       dog DEM I 1sA-DUP-say-3saU LOC 3sA-die PERF
       That dog, that I talked about back then, has died.

The use of these locationals functioning as particles in this way, as well as indicating present or remote time and/or location, also indicates that the action of the clause is in some way known and therefore background information. Indeed it could be argued that the primary function of the use of these particles is to background the clause, or at least the predicate, and that the choice
of **wa** or **re** then give the additional remote-present information. In (146) and (147) the clauses with the locationals are in fact subordinate to the main clauses that follow them, so the whole clauses are backgrounded. In (148) the information that someone was banging is known to all the hearers who actually heard the banging and wondered what it was. The new information is that it was Den Sala’s wife who was doing it.\(^4\) In this sentence the **re** marks both that the predicate is known background information and that it is past.

39 Temporals

There is a closed class of temporals that function as the head of a temporal phrase. (A temporal phrase may also have a temporal noun as its head.) The following is a list of some temporals:

- may’re tomorrow
- yamayira the day after tomorrow
- Žiku’san yesterday
- saŽaran now
- mayira daily, regularly
- Žorama tu re wa earlier
- Žorama just, just now
- Žatu later
- ŽilaŽi often

40 The Question Markers, **ya** and **ba**.

Content questions are formed in Dobel by the use of the question markers **ya** and **ba**.

The marker **ya** ‘what?’ is used to ask the identity of a thing or action.

(149) Ža m-dem ya? What are you doing?
you(sg) 2sA-do what

(150) mi-ma, mi-fo ya? What did you travel in, when you came?
2pA-come 2pA-travel.in what

The question marker **ya** is also used to ask the reason for something:

(151) m-ma yaŽa ya? Why have you come?
2sA-come because what

\(^4\)In this case the agent is further foregrounded by being left dislocated with a pronominal construction filling the subject slot in the clause.
The marker \textit{ba} forms a question by replacing a demonstrative or locative:

(152) \textit{kalar ba?} \quad \text{Which house?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{house} & \text{Qmk} \\
\end{tabular}

cf. \textit{kalar nay} \quad \text{this house}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{house} & \text{DEM} \\
\end{tabular}

(153) \textit{Ža-bana ba?} \quad \text{Where is he going?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
3sA-go & \text{Qmk} \\
\end{tabular}

cf. \textit{Ža-bana nno} \quad \text{He is going there.}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
3sA-go & \text{LOC} \\
\end{tabular}

When \textit{ba} is replacing a demonstrative and its referent is a singular animate noun, or any plural noun, it takes undergoer enclitics:

(154) \textit{tamatu ba-ni?} \quad \text{Which person?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{person} & \text{Qmk-3saU} \\
\end{tabular}

(155) \textit{ba-ni ne?} \quad \text{Who is that?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Qmk-3saU & \text{DEM} \\
\end{tabular}

(156) \textit{turaŽu ba-di} \quad \text{Which knives?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{knife} & \text{Qmk-3pU} \\
\end{tabular}

In existential clauses, \textit{ba} sometimes occurs twice in the same clause, once replacing a demonstrative and once a locative:

(157) \textit{letay nay ba \ ba?} \quad \text{Where is the boat?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{boat} & \text{EM} \quad \text{Qmk} \quad \text{Qmk} \\
\end{tabular}

cf. \textit{letay nay nno tay're/nno} \quad \text{There is the boat, at the shore/over there.}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{boat} & \text{EM} \quad \text{DEM} \quad \text{shore/LOC} \\
\end{tabular}

(158) \textit{yana-ngu kakay nay ba-di ba?} \quad \text{Where are my children?}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
child-1sG & \text{CLAS(PL)} \quad \text{EM} \quad \text{Qmk-3pU} \quad \text{Qmk} \\
\end{tabular}

41 Clitics

There is a class of clitics. The actor proclitics cliticise to the verb word. The Undergoer enclitics cliticise to the verb phrase. They are described above in sections 13 and 14, respectively.

---

45Will be dealt with in Hughes (to appear).
There are two other enclitics which both attach to the final phonological word of the clause, and which are both modifiers of the clause; that is they are clause constituents, not phrase constituents. These are the perfective clitic ti, and the imminent clitic da, whose function is to mark the action of the clause as intending to be carried out immediately or before some other action that is in focus.

(159) Ža-ma ti.
3sA-come PERF
He has come.

(160) Ata'ler wa namataya ti
vegetable DEM cooked PERF
This vegetable is cooked.

(161) Ža-ma da.
3sA-come IMM
Let him come first (before something else that is in focus).

(162) Žu-bana kalar da.
1sA-go house IMM
I’m going home now.

42 Reduplication

Dobel, in common with other languages in Aru, has a complex reduplication system. Reduplication has both morphological and syntactic functions. It has also become lexicalised in certain words, where it has lost any syntactic or morphological function.

43 The phonological forms of reduplication

In Dobel reduplication occurs to the left of the stressed syllable. It is reduplication of only the initial consonant of the stressed syllable (which we will call C-reduplication). There is however a second reduplication-like form which started historically as reduplication, but has become completely lexicalised. This is reduplication of the initial consonant plus the vowel of the stressed syllable (CV-reduplication).
The CV-reduplication form, is very limited in Dobel. It occurs on nouns when the reduplication has become entirely lexicalised, as described below, and only when the initial syllable is stressed. In the Kojabi dialect CV-reduplication is manifest as the result of a historical reduplication of the first CV of the stressed syllable whether that syllable be a CV or CVC syllable. Although the stressed syllable is the one whose initial CV is reduplicated, in Kojabi the stress itself is not reduplicated, thus the reduplicated word remains one phonological word (stress group) with the stress on the original stressed syllable of the root. Nouns that have this form cannot occur without ‘reduplication’, but they may occur with either CV- or C-reduplication.

Some examples of syllable CV-reduplication follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(163)</th>
<th>crocodile</th>
<th>ka-'kasa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sp. of bird</td>
<td>ti-'tim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butterfly</td>
<td>Ža-'Žaw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sand-fly</td>
<td>sa-'sar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mosquito</td>
<td>tu-'tun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be noted that the above examples are all animals. In Dobel many animals names are ‘reduplicated’ (although not all). This may be the historical residue of a productive function of reduplication that commonly occurred with animal names. In any case these lexical items are now frozen forms of a reduplication which is no longer productive.

All true productive reduplication and some lexicalised reduplication in Dobel is C-reduplication. C-reduplication is where only the initial consonant of the stressed syllable is reduplicated. In Dobel any consonant phoneme may occur as the onset of the syllable. As far as I am aware C-reduplication of this sort is not found in any of the other languages of the Aru Islands.

46In two other villages where the author has lived, Warjukur and Algadang, this reduplication is manifest as a reduplication of the whole syllable whether CV or CVC, and the stress is also reduplicated. Thus: /tun/ becomes /'tun-'tun/. It is a moot point whether the resulting form is two phonological words, or one phonological word with two primary stresses.

47All nouns that take CV-reduplication may instead have C-reduplication, however there are nouns (some even have initial stress) that take C-reduplication but may not take CV-reduplication.
with the possible exception of Lola, a language closely related to Dobel. This reduplication of the initial consonant of the stressed syllable is manifest phonetically as a lengthening of the consonant. Phonologically it is gemination of the C onset of the stressed syllable, which then yields a derived syllable type $C_1C_2V(C_3)$, where $C_1$ is a copy of $C_2$; $C_1$ always occurs immediately preceding $C_2$, even if it is in the middle of a morpheme. The following are some examples of C-reduplication showing the unreduplicated form in parenthesis:

(164)  | sago-pounder       | yyakur       | (yakur) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sandy</td>
<td>ŽŽula</td>
<td>(Žula)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the forest</td>
<td>ku'bbol</td>
<td>(ku'bol)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diving</td>
<td>ser-nnum</td>
<td>(ser-num)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw</td>
<td>mmata</td>
<td>(mata)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>llay</td>
<td>(lay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it does</td>
<td>Ža-ddem</td>
<td>(Ža-dem)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**46 Lexicalised reduplication**

The extant reduplication process results in the form described above where a geminate consonant forms the coda of the stressed syllable. The CV-reduplication forms above are no longer the outcome of a current reduplication process, but from a historical perspective are clearly the result of reduplication. All such CV- forms have become lexicalised. That is the CV-reduplication form is present in certain nouns simply as a requirement of the lexical item. However, in all cases where it occurs it is in free variation with C-reduplication, further evidence that we are dealing with reduplication here. Thus the forms given in (165) above have synonymous alternatives which result from C-reduplication:

| crocodile     | ka-'kasa       | kkasa      |
| sp. of bird   | ti-'tim        | ttim       |
| butterfly     | Ža-'Žaw        | ŽŽaw       |
| sand-fly      | sa-'sar        | ssar       |
| mosquito      | tu-'tun        | ttun       |

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48In other Aru languages corresponding functions are handled by CV- or CVC- reduplication, as well as some other more complex forms of reduplication.

49This Reduplication is in fact a separate morpheme, however, since C-reduplication occurs frequently in the middle of a morpheme (e.g. ku’bbol ‘of the forest’), for convenience I will not show it hyphenated as separate, but simply written as a double consonant.
There are also many nouns that can have only C-reduplication. Any noun that has non-initial stress, if reduplicated must have C-reduplication, since CV-reduplication only occurs when the stressed syllable is initial. There are also several nouns with initial stress (which could thus conceivably have CV-reduplication) that have C-reduplication with a purely lexical function, but that may not take CV-reduplication.

The lexicalised reduplication is contrastive with its absence, and there are several minimal pairs, for example:

\[(166) \text{ser} \quad \text{sp. of shell} \quad \text{sser} \quad \text{sp. of fruit} \]
\[\text{Žay'law} \quad \text{mangrove tree} \quad \text{Žay'llaw} \quad \text{papaya} \]
\[\text{ma'ay} \quad \text{palm frond} \quad \text{ma'ay}^{50} \quad \text{pleasant smell} \]

There are also a few examples of words from other word classes which are reduplicated for a purely lexical reason:

\[(167) \text{ssel} \quad \text{frequently} \]
\[\text{nno} \quad \text{that (far)/ over there (far)} \]

The CV-reduplication form is probably a residue in the language of the outcome of the reduplication process used in Pre-Dobel. C-reduplication of this kind is an innovation of the Dobel-Lola sub-group of languages.\(^51\) Also I have text examples of archaic Dobel preserved in songs and chants, which shows more widespread CV- and indeed CVC-reduplication. CV-reduplication (and other now extinct forms) were probably also used with the morphological and syntactical functions now restricted to C-reduplication. The form of CV-reduplication has been preserved solely where the reduplication has been lexicalised, in which case it co-occurs with forms analogous to C-reduplication. This is borne out by the fact, mentioned above, that there are several nouns with initial stress that may only occur with the lexicalised C-reduplication form. The reason there is no pattern determining which nouns with initial stress may occur as CV-reduplication forms, is probably because the CV- forms of these nouns happen not to have

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50Also feri ‘paddle’ and fferi ‘shoulder-blade’, although there is a semantic connection here because of the paddle-like shape of a shoulder-blade.
51See Hughes (1987:94ff) for the sub-grouping of Aru languages.
survived. All productive reduplication in Dobel is C-reduplication, hereafter simply referred to as reduplication.

47 **The functions of reduplication**

48 **Morphological function: nominalisation of verbs**

The nominalisation of a verb root is marked by reduplication. For active verbs, the resulting noun is usually the instrument with which the action of the verb is performed. Thus:

(168) **da-yakur**  3pA-pound **yyakur**  sago-pounder  
**da-fel**  3pA-mix (sago) **ffel**  mixing-spoon  
**da-siyar**  3pA-draw.line **ssiyar**  stick for drawing lines  
**da-lažur**  3pA-sweep **llažur**  broom

When a non-active verb is nominalised by reduplication, the nominalised form is used in a possessive construction with the noun which would have been the Undergoer (subject) of the verb. The form of the verb which is reduplicated is always the form that would be used with a 3s inanimate Undergoer, that is with no Undergoer enclitic or with the final root vowel mutated to i. Thus:

(169) **daba ne sayi.**
    Canoe DEM long
    The canoe is long.

(170) **daba ne Žani ssayi re lay.**
    Canoe DEM 3sPoss DUP-long fathom three
    The canoe’s length is three fathoms.

Nouns thus formed are also used in a construction which marks intensification of the predicate. There are very few examples in the data of nominalised active verbs that act like this (171), whereas the construction is common with nominalised non-active verbs (172). The construction to intensify the predicate requires the use of a noun, and therefore the verb is nominalised; a nominalised verb is substituted for a finite verb. The construction is also marked by sharp rising intonation on the nominalised verb.

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52When the phoneme /l/ is reduplicated the phonetic realisation varies ideolectically between a fortis lengthened voiceless bilabial fricative [Φ:], and a fortis lengthened voiceless bilabial plosive [p:].

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 45
(173) Žani ssamur. 
He walks a lot.

3sPoss DUP-walk .
cf. Ža-samur 
3sA-walk

(174) koyar ne ani ložir 
What an attractive dog!

dog DEM 3sPoss DUP-good(3snU)
cf. koyar ne ložar-ni 
That dog is attractive.
dog DEM good -3saU

49 Syntactic functions of reduplication

The syntactic function of reduplication may be generalised as marking background information which acts as a modifier. In nearly all cases the reduplicated element acts as a modifier within the noun phrase, in which case the modifier may be a numeral, a non-finite verb, a noun or a relative clause. These will each be dealt with below. There is one case, however, where reduplication is used to mark the modifier of the predicate verb. This is described in the following section.

50 Reduplication of non-active verbs to form adverbial phrases

In Dobel an adverbial phrase of manner may be formed using the verb nam ‘do’ and a reduplicated non-active verb. This is best illustrated by examples; the non-active verbs in (175) are shown as they are used adverbially in (176-177).

(178) sin 
big
bari big
lakay fast
butemuy slow, late

(179) mo-r-sifar mom ssin. 
Speak loudly.
2sA-VR-speak (2s)do DUP-loud

(180) m-dem-Ø mom bbari. 
Make it large.
2sA-make-3snU (2s)do DUP-big

(181) Ža-samur nam lakay. 
He walks fast.
3sA-walk (3s)do DUP-fast

(182) Žu-samur Žom butemuy. 
I walk slowly.
1sA-walk (1s)do DUP-slow

53The paradigm for this verb is Žom, mom, nam, etc. [see § ].
54The non-active verbs lakay and butemuy may also be used as adverbs without nam. In this case they have no reduplication, e.g. Ža-samur lakay.
Ordinal numbers: numerals as modifiers within the noun phrase

Ordinal numbers are formed by the reduplication of the root of the numeral. As with the cardinal numbers, the ordinal numbers agree with the noun they qualify for animacy. Ordinal numbers differ from cardinal numbers in that ordinal numbers that agree with animate nouns have Undergoer enclitics. With ordinal numbers no distinction is made between human and non-human animate nouns, thus ordinal numbers that agree with animate nouns are always prefixed with Žay- or Ža-.

While the use of the prefixes Žay- or Ža- with ordinal numbers distinguishes them morphologically from verbs, their syntactic role is similar to that of verbs in that both may function as the predicate of relative clauses opened with the demonstrative ne functioning as a relative pronoun. Moreover the presence of the Undergoer enclitic -ni with animate nouns and its absence with inanimate nouns is the same as the 3s usage for non-active verbs. [See also the discussion in § 31, Numerals].

With compound ordinal numbers the reduplication occurs only on the final word of the numeral. Compare the following examples:

(183) \[\text{labun ro} \quad \text{two garments}\]
     \[\text{labun ne rro} \quad \text{the second garment}\]

(184) \[\text{mayira Žurafi dubu} \quad \text{sixty days}\]
     \[\text{mayira ne Žurafi ddubu} \quad \text{the sixtieth day}\]

(185) \[\text{koyar Žay-lay} \quad \text{three dogs}\]
     \[\text{koyar ne Žay-lay-ni} \quad \text{the third dog}\]

(186) \[\text{fulan Žurafi na Žay-roy} \quad \text{twelve months}\]
     \[\text{fulan ne Žurafi na Žay-rroy-ni} \quad \text{the twelfth month}\]

It may be noted that 3s inanimate Undergoers are not marked on verbs (except in some cases by a vowel mutation with non-active verbs). Since ordinal numbers always qualify 3s nouns, there are never any agreement markers on ordinal numbers that qualify inanimate nouns, and the enclitic for ordinal numbers that qualify animate nouns is always -ni ‘3saU’.

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 47
52 Verbs as modifiers within the noun phrase

Reduplication of a verb root signals that it is being used as the modifier in a descriptive noun phrase. Non-active verbs, in that the vast majority of them encode semantic States, commonly function as modifiers within the noun phrase, but active verbs, which generally encode semantic Events, may also function as modifiers in their non-finite forms.

53 Non-active verbs as modifiers within the noun phrase

When a non-active verb functions as the predicate of a clause it is not reduplicated. The use of reduplication on a non-active verb marks it as modifier in a noun phrase rather than as the predicate of a clause. In other words, verbs are reduplicated when used attributively and not when they are used predicatively. Thus the following example is a noun phrase rather than a full clause:

(189) Žamu ser’tay mmaray
your clothes DUP-dry

Compare the following, where ‘S’ marks the subject and ‘P’ the predicate:

(190) [Žamu ser’tay] [maray].
your clothes dry

Your clothes are dry.

The use of the Undergoer enclitics is the same when the verb is a modifier in the noun phrase as it is when the verb is the predicate of a clause. In the above example the noun modified is a 3s inanimate noun, and therefore there is no Undergoer enclitic on the verb. When the noun is not 3s inanimate there will be an Undergoer enclitic, thus:

(191) tamatu ssoba-ye wadi
person DUP-good-3pU DEM
these good people
This function of reduplication is a syntactic one in that it marks the verb as modifier in a noun phrase, rather than predicate of the clause.

Non-finite active verbs may also function attributively within the noun phrase. As explained in section 24 above, the prefix ser- may be added to the verb root to form non-finite verbs. When non-finite verbs of this kind are used as modifiers within the noun phrase, the root is reduplicated.

If the non-finite verb is not a modifier within a noun phrase the root is not reduplicated. Thus:

(192) tamatu ser-nnum
person NF-DUP-dive

a person who goes diving

(193) siža ser-wwaw
fish NF-DUP-burn

baked fish

(194) tabul ser-ilesi
animal NF-DUP-raise
domesticated animals

(195) Žubu ser-kkubu
stone NF-DUP-sharpen
sharpening stone

(196) siža ser-nniw
fish NF-DUP-fly

(197) kar ser-ttir
water NF-DUP-bathe

bathing water

There is another structure whereby the reduplicated verb root of active verbs acts as the modifier in the noun phrase. This structure is less common, and it may be that all such uses are in frequently used lexicalised phrases such as the following:

(198) Žabal nniw
ship DUP-fly

aeroplane

(199) tamatu ssamur
person DUP-walk

person who walks a lot

Nouns as modifiers within the noun phrase

When a noun functions as a modifier of another noun within the noun phrase, the noun functioning as modifier is reduplicated. The modifying noun applies the features, or a particular feature, of itself to the noun it qualifies.

55 ‘Flying fish’ may be either siža nniw or siža ser-nniw.
It will be noted that the semantic relationships signalled by this construction vary considerably: if we call the head noun \( X \), and the modifying noun \( Y \), the following relationships are signalled in the examples above: in (206) \( X \) is like \( Y \) in substance, in (207), (208) and (209) \( X \) is (often) found in place \( Y \), in (210) \( X \) catches \( Y \), and in (211) \( X \) likes \( Y \).

56 Reduplication in relative clauses

Relative clauses in Dobel are marked with the use of a demonstrative functioning as a relative pronoun. When a core argument, that is the subject or object, of a clause is relativised, the predicate verb of the relative clause is reduplicated. There is a strong resemblance between this role of reduplication and that mentioned above where verbs act as modifiers in the noun phrase. Here the whole clause acts as a modifier in the noun phrase, but it is the verb that carries the reduplication. The exception to this reduplication rule is where the subject of a transitive clause with a noun phrase as object is relativised, as will be seen below. If an oblique argument is relativised then the preposition which governs it is reduplicated. Each of these cases is discussed below.

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57 The phoneme /k/, when reduplicated, is realised as a lengthened labialised velar plosive [k:].

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 50
57 Relativisation of the subject of intransitive verbs

When the subject of an intransitive verb is relativised, the verb which is the predicate of the relative clause is reduplicated. All kinds of intransitive active verbs are included in this pattern, whether basic intransitives, with or without the prefix \( r- \), or derived intransitives (with the prefix \( r- \)).

(212) tamatu ne Ža-lla re Ža-mul ti.
     person REL 3sA-DUP-run LOC 3sA-return PERF
     The person who ran (away) has returned.

(213) tamatu ne na-r-ttara nay niža kalar.
     person REL 3sA-VR-DUP-call EPr DEM house
     The person who is calling is in the house.

58 Relativisation of the subject of transitive verbs

 Whereas relativising the subject of intransitive verbs always causes the verb of the relative clause to be reduplicated, relativising the subject of transitive verbs does not always do so. Whether or not the verb is reduplicated in a transitive clause when the subject is relativised depends on whether the object of the clause is a noun phrase or an Undergoer enclitic. If the object of the clause is a noun phrase, then the verb is not reduplicated when the subject is relativised, but if the object is an Undergoer enclitic then the verb is reduplicated when the subject is relativised. This is illustrated in the sentences below:

(214) koyar ne Ža-Žara tamatu de re Ža-koy ti.
     dog REL 3sA-bite person DEM LOC 3sA-die PERF
     The dog that bit those people has died.

(215) koyar ne Ža-Žara iri re Ža-koy ti.
     dog REL 3sA-bite 3pPr LOC 3sA-die PERF
     The dog that bit them\( (\text{np}) \) has died.

(216) koyar ne Ža-ŽŽara-ye re Ža-koy ti.
     dog REL 3sA-DUP-bite-3pU LOC 3sA-die PERF
     The dog that bit them\( (\text{encl.}) \) has died.

58While it is possible for the subject of non-active verbs to be relativised, it is very rare as the same meaning is achieved by the non-active verb functioning as a modifier in the noun phrase, as in

Morphology and Reduplication in Dobel 51
Thus, when the subject of a transitive clause with an Undergoer enclitic is relativised, the clause behaves the same way as an intransitive clause whose subject is relativised, whereas a transitive clause with a full noun phrase as object behaves differently when its subject is relativised.

It is worth noting that when constituents of the causative clause using *nam* are relativised, they act in the same way as for transitive clauses, except that the *nam* does not carry the reduplication, but rather the verb that is its complement.

(217) Žodar ne nam-di  da-r-ttir...
    woman REL 3sA.cause-3pU 3pA-VR-DUP-bathe...
    the woman who is bathing them\(\text{encl.}\)...

(218) Žodar ne nam  yana-y na-r-tir...
    woman REL 3sA.cause child-3sG 3sA-VR-bathe
    the woman who is bathing her child...

59 Relativisation of the object of transitive verbs

When the object of a transitive clause is relativised, the object itself is marked in the clause by an Undergoer enclitic on the verb phrase. The relativisation of the clause is marked by the use of the relative pronoun and by reduplication of the verb root. 3s inanimate nouns as relativised object have no Undergoer enclitic. The following pairs of examples illustrate this function of reduplication:

(219) a. \[ Ža-dem \] [kalar bbari-ø].
    3sA-make house DUP-big-3snU
    He is making a big house.

b. [kalar [ne Ža-ddem-ø]] [bari-ø]
    house REL 3sA-DUP-make-3snU big-3snU
    The house which he is making is big.

(220) a. \[ Ža-ka \] [siŽa lloŽar-ni.]
    3sA-eat fish DUP-good-3saU
    He is eating a good fish.

59 This is dealt with fully in Hughes (to appear).
Locative clauses with intransitive locative verbs as the head, which have a specific locative goal, are treated like transitive clauses in that the locative has a direct object-like relationship to the verb. The locative of such clauses is relativised in the same way as the object of a transitive clause.

As with the relativisation of subjects, if the object of a causative clause is relativised, although the object is syntactically object of the causative verb nam, the reduplication is on the root of the verb which is the complement of nam.

If the noun governed by a preposition is relativised it is marked in the relative clause by an Undergoer enclitic on the preposition, which is in turn reduplicated. As explained above, 3s inanimate nouns are not marked by an enclitic. Compare the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Oblique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. [Ža-soža [lala] [saw yaba-y.]] 3sA-spill hot.water on foot-3sG</td>
<td>He spilt hot water on his foot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. [yaba-y [ne Ža-soža lala ssaw-ø] [saray-ø.]] foot-3s REL 3sA-spill hot.water DUP-on-3snU sore-3snU</td>
<td>His foot, that he spilt hot water on, is sore.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some thoughts on reduplication in relative clauses

The lack of reduplication when the subject of a transitive clause with a noun phrase as object is relativised raises interesting questions. Although Dobel is not an ergative language, if it were the case that when the subject of all transitive verbs is relativised there was no reduplication on the verb, then we could say that when the *absolutive* (subject of intransitive verbs or object of transitive verbs) is relativised the verb is reduplicated, but when the *ergative* (subject of transitive verbs) is relativised the verb is not reduplicated. However, as we have seen, the relativisation of the subject of a transitive verb whose object has cliticised to the verb phrase also causes the verb to be reduplicated, thus such a subject acts in the same way as the subject of an intransitive clause. As we have seen, the argument *O* may occur as a full NP, a full pronoun or an undergoer enclitic. Each of these is a full clause constituent, but it is when the surface occurrence of *O* is a full phonological word, that the verb is reduplicated in the relative clause if the subject is relativised.

Relative clauses tend to encode information which is old information and also background information, which is not on the event line. Indeed all modifiers in the noun phrase encode information which is background. For example, verbs used predicatively in the main clause tend to encode event-line information, whereas when they are used attributively they encode background information. In Dobel reduplication of the modifier in the noun phrase marks the fact that the information is background. Compare the following examples, where in (224) the information that the person is good is old background information, and the new information is that he has died, whereas in (225) new, foregrounded information is that he is good.

(226) *tamatu ssoba-ni ne Ža-koy ti.*

person DUP-good-3saU DEM 3sA-die PERF

That good person has died.

(227) *tamatu ne soba-ni.*

person DEM good-3saU

That person is good.

If we return to the relative clauses, we may note that intransitive relative clauses where the subject is relativised, are simply giving background information about the head of the noun phrase. The
same is true of transitive relative clauses, where the object is relativised and is marked in the relative clause as an enclitic. In the case of transitive clauses where the subject is relativised, the information is still only background information if the object is an Undergoer enclitic, as in (228) above. However, if the object is a full pronoun or a full noun phrase, as in (229) and (230) respectively, then that object is marked as being foregrounded information. In the case of a full pronoun, it is old information, but marked as foregrounded; in the case of a full noun phrase it is new information or information that is brought back into focus in the discourse and it is foregrounded. Because of this marking of the information as foregrounded, it would be contradictory to mark the clause as background by reduplication. This accounts for the lack of reduplication in relative transitive clauses where o is a full phonological word.

62 Other syntactic uses of reduplication

There are certain other areas where reduplication is used, which are not cases of modification.

Firstly, the verb is reduplicated after the construction Že fuy fay ‘not want’ as in:

(231) Že-di fuy fay da-rrei-ni
    desire-3pU finish from 3pA-DUP-hear-3pU
    They don’t want to listen to him.

In this case the foregrounded information is the ‘not wanting’, rather than the hearing.

Secondly, the verb is reduplicated in subordinate temporal clauses such as the following:

(232) Jon orama na Ža-bhana nama na-r-tom tamatu ne.
    Jon just CONJ 3sA-DUP-leave then 3sA-VR-meet person DEM
    Jon had just left when he met that person.

Thirdly, the verb is reduplicated in the cleft construction with yaŽa translated as “It is X who...”.

(233) Tuwan nay fufun yaŽa Ža-yyilatu-ye.
    Lord the.one top that 3sA-DUP-choose-3pU
    It is God who chose them.
Fourthly the verb is reduplicated after the construction **nama nay wa na**, a construction that assumes that the information is known information, and it links it to some new information in a contrast relationship:

\[(235) \quad \text{Nal tufu wur ari,} \quad \text{(3sA)take generation ten approx} \]
\[(235) \quad \text{nama nay wa na Ža-kkoy wa.} \quad \text{then EM DEM and 3sA-DUP-die LOC} \]

He lived to see about ten generations and now he has died/and here he’s died now (as we were know).

Fifthly, the verb may be reduplicated when the verb is a complement of another verb:

\[(236) \quad \text{Wa nda na-r-laŽa Ža-kkoy,} \quad \text{seem NEG 3sA-VR-know 3sA-DUP-die,} \]
\[(236) \quad \text{nakain Ža-yi na-r-fayyiri.} \quad \text{that's why 3sA-go 3sA-VR-DUP-tell} \]

It seems he didn’t know he had died, that's why he went and told.

In this case, the fact that the man had died is common knowledge, and therefore background information, so it is reduplicated.

As I have said, the above examples are not cases of modification within the nominal or verb phrase. However, reduplication can seen to be consistently marking elements which encode information which is semantically backgrounded. While individually they may not constitute strong evidence, collectively they support my conclusion that the underlying function of reduplication is to mark non-event-line, backgrounded information.
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to appear “A Grammar of Dobel”

SHOPEN, Timothy, Ed.