Tawala  Verb  Classes:

a   pilot   study.

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CONTENTS

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The study of Tawala[1] verb classes is undertaken with
the ultimate purpose of investigating the relationship
between semantics and syntax in Tawala verbs.  This paper,
however, is only a first step in that direction, viz, the
organisation of the data, together with the setting up of
morpho-syntactic frames likely to be productive in further
investigations.  In order to achieve even this modest
purpose, it was necessary to limit the data to a workable
size, and hence the sub-title "a pilot study".

### 1.1 Method

Too many supposedly empirical studies of language
employ the "anecdotal" method, where a hypothesis is
considered established if a dozen good examples are culled
from the vast stock of possible examples.  However, the
relationships between semantics and syntax are so exceed-
ingly complex that there is need for more comprehensive
studies which seek to come to grips with complete languages
or at least a representative portion of them.

Rather than select data because they prove the point,
I have selected data for this study on the following basis.

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[1]Tawala is an Austronesian language spoken by 10,000 people
on the easternmost tip of the Papua New Guinea mainland
and on small nearby islands.  I have been working on this
language under the auspices of the Summer Institute of
Linguistics since 1974.

A corpus of 30 recorded texts had previously been tran-
scribed and this transcription reduced to a concordance
by computer in November 1979. After excluding the main
person/number markers, 14,441 entries appear in the
concordance. These represent the multiple occurrences of
2,021 key words. Once the various forms in which a word
may appear is accounted for, I estimate a vocabulary of
approaching 1,000 words. In all there are 460 different
verbs, 383 of these being chosen for the present study.
The 87 verbs omitted, for the most part, occur only once
in the text and not enough is known of their semantics or
syntax to make their inclusion profitable.

The texts represent a wide variety of male and female
speakers, from teenagers to a very old man respected for
his "pure speech". This, together with three distinct
dialects (Kehelala, Diwinai and Labe) and a wide variety
of discourse genre (stories, instruction, narrative etc.)
should guarantee a fairly representative cross-section of
the Tawala language forms. Because of the difficulty of
recording spontaneous conversations, most of the texts are
"formal" monologues spoken into the tape recorder. However
a number of impromptu speeches at public gatherings are
also represented. There is a need for this material to
be supplemented by spontaneous day-to-day dialogue.

One real advantage of using texts, rather than the
dictionary, in selecting Tawala verbs is that it side-
steps the vexed question of which lexical items are verbs.
Roots in many Austronesian languages are notoriously
fluid in their ability to function as various parts of
speech, e.g. root <u>bagibagi</u> 'work'

noun: <u>Hai    bagibagi i   kokoe.</u>   'Their work is finished.'
        their work     it finish

adjective: <u>Meyagai    bagibagi-na.</u>    'It is the village's work.'
        village     work-3ps

intrans. verb: <u>Ta      bagibagi.</u>     'Let us work!'
        we(inc) work

trans. verb: <u>Nima-hi-yei    hi    bagibagi-yeya.</u> 'They worked it
        hand-3pp-with they work-it      with their hands.'

Using texts as the source of data means that the
"verbs" included in this paper are the roots which are
functioning as verbs as indicated by the morphology. At
various points throughout the paper notice is taken of the
related parts of speech in which the root commonly functions,
however no systematic attempt is made to solve the problem
at this stage.

Once the 383 Tawala verbs were recorded on separate
cards they were separated into etic categories. The
following semantic classes[1] were used as the categories

[1]The semantic classes and in fact the inspiration for this
paper were derived from Professor R.M.W. Dixon in a
semester-long seminar on syntax which I attended at the
Australian National University in 1980.

for this initial sorting:

PRIMARY VERBS

1. motion - run, fly, climb, ride, return, meet, bring

2. rest - sit, stand, float, live, stay, enclose, hold

3. affect - hit, pierce, cover, twist, cook, stir, smash, build

4. meteorological - raining, windy, blowing

5. corporeal - eat, sniff, spit, sleep, cry, die, hurt, cuddle

6. giving - give, buy, exchange, rent, get, receive

7. attention - see, watch, appear, listen, show, search

8. speaking - praise, command, talk , ask, answer, discuss,
        boast, teach

9. thinking - reflect, consider, assume, trust, decide,
        anticipate, forgive

10. liking - love, fancy, worship, loathe, pity, envy

    amusement - playing, acting

    competing - winning, racing, losing

SECONDARY VERBS

modifying - begin, finish, try, succeed, practice

modals - can, could, might, shall, will, ought to

desiring - want, covet, dread, plan, scheme, dare, need

causation - make, force, get, have, provoke, let, stop

value judgement - seem, appear, happen, look like

(English examples are included in order to indicate some-
thing of the range of meaning intended by each category.)

In re-sorting the Tawala data I purposely avoided
letting these categories become a straight-jacket, but
rather tried to let the Tawala data fall into its "natural"
categories.  There is obviously a subjective element in
any such activity, and the categories I have set up in
this paper are essentially tentative.  In particular I
felt the need for a category involving "social relations".
The numbers given above correspond to the Tawala verb
types 3.1 - 3.10 below.

## 1.2 The Priority of Semantics

Many linguists of the 20th century have, with some
measure of success, attempted to write formal grammars
without reference to meaning.  Such attempts (e.g. Bloomfield
and Chomsky) used the natural sciences as the modal to be
emulated in a truly "scientific" study of language.  These
studies have recently run onto the rocks due to the inability
of a purely formal grammar to generate grammatical and
only grammatical sentences.  Somehow meaning must be included
in the scheme of things.  This accounts for the current world-wide
interest in semantics.

Many years ago Sapir saw the need to make linguistics
a science, but one "which does not ape the methods nor
attempt to adopt unrevised the concepts of the natural

sciences." (1929:76)[1] Linguistics must remain connected
to life; meaning is the life-line between the real world
and the spoken word.

The working hypothesis of this present paper is that
semantics is prior to syntax. This has been well expressed
by Dixon 1977:24[2]:

> We work from the assumption that the syntactic
> properties of a lexical item can largely be predicted
> from its semantic description.

The direct correlation between semantics and syntax is
seen from the fact that once the meaning of a new word is
learnt, we are able to use it in a variety of syntactic
structures with a high degree of accuracy. The opposite
view, in which there is no connection between syntax and
semantics would require us to hear the new word in its
full range of syntactic structures before we could accur-
ately use it. Obviously, our experience accords with the
former of these two points of view.

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[1]I am indebted to William A. Foley's paper "Functional
Grammar and Cultural Anthropology" Canberra Anthropology 3:1
1980, for the Sapir quote and the above sentiments.

[2]Dixon, R.M.W. 1977 "Where have all the adjectives gone?"
Studies in Language 1:1 19-20.

## 1.3 The Concept of Basic Norms

The unrestricted data of a living language is so vast that if we are to avoid the anecdotal approach we need a working hypothesis which enables us to handle all the data but at the same time distinguish data which is central from that which is peripheral. Dixon 1976:347[1] suggests a suitable tool for our purpose:

> ...a language contains a set of basic norms - semantic, syntactic, morphological, and maybe even phological norms - from which it deviates in different ways and to different degrees a great deal of the time.

An example of this type of reasoning in practise is given by Lyons 1977:440[2], who uses it in order to define parts of speech in universal terms:

> The thesis that will be maintained here is that the semantic...part of the traditional definitions of the parts-of-speech define for each part-of-speech, not the whole class, but a distinguished subclass of the total class. Each such semantically defined subclass is focal within the larger class...

This tool also offers an explanation as to why judgments of grammaticality of sentences differ from speaker to speaker:

> ...these are the non-norm sentences, the extensions from the (basic) norm. Whether a particular extension is acceptable is a complex matter, depending on whether ambiguity or confusion would be likely to result, the structure of some part of the real world, interference from phonologically similar surface structures, the strength of the analogy on which the extension is based; and so on. Depending on the interrelation of these and other factors, different speakers draw the threshhold of acceptability in different places in each particular case. (Dixon op.cit. 348)

[1]Dixon, R.M.W. 1976. "Syntactic Orientation as a Semantic Property" pp 347-363 in Syntax and Semantics Vol. 7 'Notes from the Linguistic Underground' Edited by James D. McCawly.
[2] Lyons, John 1977. "Semantics" Vol. 2

It is this type of attitude that the linguist must
adopt in working at and relating the various levels involved
in the data sections of this paper where reasoning ranges
from the phonetic shape of words, through the various
morpho-syntactic categories to the meaning categories of
lexemes. In each case there are basic norms from which we
can expect some of the data to diverge. Of course we must
constantly guard against treating peripheral items as
nuclear otherwise  the data will be distorted beyond
recognition.

## 2.0 THE MORPHO-SYNTACTIC FRAMES

It would be naive to expect the syntactic tests of an
isolating language like English to apply to a synthetic
language like Tawala. Familiar categories like passive
transforms, relative clauses, serial and secondary verbs
and verb auxilliaries are all absent in Tawala. Nor is it
meaningful to speak of subject and object deletion. Thus
all the familiar ground used in the setting up of frames
in English is swept from beneath our feet. - In their place
I present the following morpho-syntactic categories.
Hopefully others will become apparent as these frames are
applied to the Tawala verbs, and further research is done
on the subject.

## 2.1 The Present Tense Prefixes

Before each root functioning as a verb occurs an obligatory person-number pronoun clitic (the free-form pronouns are optional) with the following forms:

|   | Singular | Plural |
|---|----------|--------|
| 1 | a | ta (incl) |
|   |   | to (excl) |
| 2 | u | o |
| 3 | i/e | hi/he |

TABLE 1

In the third person the i forms are the standard form always used for past and future, but only used with some verbs in the present:

(1)      Natu-we   a himili u   Alotau.
           child-my I sent    to Alotau
           'I sent my child to Alotau.'

(2)      Nou-nou-ta            polo hi    ani.
           plural-sister-our(inc) pig   they eat
           *Our (inc) sisters ate the pig.'

(3)      Lawa     natu-natu-we    i   hagu-hi.
           person plural-child-my he help-them
           'A man helped my children.'

The third person e forms on the other hand occur only in the present and only with some verbs: — *the variable*
                                            *hi; taking ↓*

(4)      Polo e   ge-ge-hi.
           pig   he PROG-go up-to speaker
           'The pig is coming towards you.'

(5)      Wam   he    gota-gota.
           boat   they PROG-arrive
           'The boats are arriving.'

(6)     <u>Bada    e   hama-hamagi.</u>
        big man he PROG-wipe down

        'The man is wiping (the boat) down.'

contrast:

(7)     <u>Bada    i   hama-hamagi.</u>
        big man he PROG- wipe down

        'The man was wiping (the boat) down.'

The <u>e</u> forms are not able to be used with all verbs,
but I can only guess the full extent of these:

1. Only verbs which can take an animate subject. Thus
<u>wam</u> in example (5) is really 'the people in the boat'.

and/or 2. Only verbs which are active. The following examples
are certainly not acceptable with the <u>e</u> forms:

(8)     <u>Bada    hi (*he) dewadewa.</u>   "The men are good.'
        big man they      good

(9)     <u>Mawa i (*e) dao.</u>             'It is a long way.'
        way  it     long

However, there is the odd example of use with non-
active verbs; are they exceptions or some other pattern?

(10)    <u>Ta      kekehi        po e  kokoe.</u>
        we(inc) strip (twine) and it finish

        'We have finished stripping (the twine).'

## 2.2 <u>The Transitive Suffixes</u>

A sharp distinction needs to be drawn in Tawala between
three types of active verbs:

a.  verbs that make no morphological distinction between
transitive and intransitive use:

(11)    <u>Ginahi ta    hapi.</u>          'Let's chop sago!'
        sago   we(inc) chop

(12)    <u>Ta        nae ta        hapi</u>.    'Let's go and chop.'
        we(incl) go we(inc) chop    or 'Let's go chopping.'

If it is argued that in sentence (12) <u>hapi</u> is still

transitive, then this first category would be classed as

"verbs which are always transitive."

b.  verbs which form the transitive by the addition of a

suffix to the root.  When both forms are verbs special

attention needs to be paid to the change in deep cases

involved.  There are at least two distinct classes:

<u>giluma</u>    'writing' ———— <u>gilumi</u>    'write it'

<u>poha</u>    'basket'  ———— <u>pohaya</u>    'enclose it (in
                                             a basket)

c.  verbs which have no transitive form:

<u>tou</u>        'cry'

<u>nae</u>        'go'

Another frame worth investigating is the morpheme -<u>ge</u>

which occurs as a suffix on some transitive verbs before

the normal transitive subject.  The following is a

representative list of verbs in the concordance, taking

this suffix:

<u>hanapu-geya</u>        'understand it'
<u>wiponawogo-geya</u>    'obey it'
<u>lowo-geya</u>          'afraid of it/him' (lit. run from it)
<u>tapatapalolo-geya</u> 'worship it'
<u>otu-geya</u>           'call out to it'
<u>towolo-geya</u>        'erect it.'
<u>lupoto-geya</u>        'stir it'
<u>geno-geya</u>          'worry about it'

## 2.3 The Causative Prefixes

The Tawala causative prefixes (li-, wi-, lu-, om-, wo(i)-) provide an incredibly rich field for investigation. I previously (Ezard 1978[1]:1165ff) gave a brief outline of some of the major uses of these verbal prefixes, however, much work remains to be done. They are heavily involved in establishing new word classes. E.g. om- makes many roots stative verbs, and li- makes many roots transitive verbs etc. I pointed out in the above mentioned paper that the resultant meanings are often unpredictable, but I suspect that a thorough knowledge of the semantics of Tawala verbs may go a long way to making them predictable. The following sections make some suggestions in this direction; however detailed answers must wait a major paper devoted solely to them.

For the purposes of this present paper we need to keep in mind that these prefixes are often the equivalent of English secondary verbs and like them vitally important in setting up frames for testing verbs.    Examples:

| wi- | am | 'to eat' | wi-am | 'to feed someone' |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | towolo | 'to be standing' | wi-towolo | 'to stand something/someone up.' |
| but | | | | |
| | gwae | 'to cause water to be murky' | wi-gwae | 'to be murky' |

[1]Ezard, Bryan 1978. Classificatory Prefixes of the Massim Cluster.  pp 1159-1180 of SICAL: Proceedings P.L. C61
    Fascicle 2

| li- | hilage | 'to be finished' | li-hilage | 'to kill' |
| | dumalu | 'to be straight' | li-dumalu | 'to straighten' |
| | | | | |
| wo- | hale | 'to throw' | wo-hale | 'to dismiss a meeting' |
| | geleta | 'to arrive' | wo-geleta | 'to be revealed.' |
| | towolo | 'to be standing' | wo-towolo | 'to get to one's feet' |
| | | | | |
| om- | apu | 'to bake (it)' | om-apu | 'to be baking' |
| | hiyawa | 'to read (it)' | om-hiyawa | 'to be able to read' |
| | gomu | 'to snap off' | om-gomu | 'to miscarry' |
| | | | | |
| lu- | hilage | 'to be finished' | lu-hilage | 'to poison'(with sorcery) |
| | bogahu | 'smoke' | lu-bogahu | 'to smoke (a cigarette)' |

## 2.4 The Verb Modifiers

There is a closed class of some 20 adverbs which intensify verbs. Examples:

| duma | 'very' |
| meme | 'again' |
| hota | 'only' |
| imahi | 'completely' |
| wahaga | 'exceedingly' |
| pahi | 'entirely' |
| gogona | 'together' |
| yabayababa | 'vainly' |
| gawata | 'incessantly' |

Use of these modifiers is very much determined by the semantics of the verb they modify and each verb normally takes only one or two of these. Thus we have another frame worth investigating. The following wahaga forms occur in the concordance:

(1 )   Apo hi-na    me   wahaga.      'They will stay a long time.'
       FUT they-INT stay completely

(1.)   Om   ani'mbenena hi   lata wahaga.
       your gift           they grow completely

       'Your gifts are truly great.'

(1 )   Tam u   gobu  wahaga.
       you you dirty completely

       'You are really socially unacceptable.'

(1 )   Naka i   dewadewa wahaga.      'That (custom) is really good.'
       that it good       completely

## 2.5 Word Class of Roots

One course of enquiry likely to yield fruitful results
is an examination of the range of grammatical uses applying
to each root.  Again this is an exceedingly complex field
of enquiry and would require a major paper to provide
even an outline of the topic.  This again involves us in
the area of causatives (2.3) which often signal the change
of class.

In carrying out such a study one should bear in mind
that the data elicited is no longer natural language, but
rather, potential language extension.  Each root has its
basic norm of use; only once in a hundred or maybe even a
thousand times does one hear some of the non-central forms.

The sort of results I would expect from a study of
this nature is that we could set up root classes such as
the following:

Class I  Roots which are basically nouns, but also used as
transitive (with li- or wi- prefix) and intransitive verbs.

Class II Roots which are basically nouns, but also occur
as adjectives (reduplicated form) and stative verbs.

Class III  etc.

It is highly likely that these root classes would have a
close correlation with semantics.

To illustrate the type of study I have in mind, I
present here some examples from data I collected earlier
in the year from Sam Andrew, a Tawala man who was visiting
Canberra in connection with his work.  The final example
in Table 2 illustrates one problem that such a study would
encounter, viz. the present synchronic meaning distinctions
with diachronically related forms.

| Root | Meaning | V intrans | V trans. | V stat. | Noun | Adjective |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ugo | 'fruit' | ugo _(meaning?)_ — | — | ĩ— | ugougo | — |
| gudu | 'door' | — | gudu-ya 'close-it' | — | gudu | gudugudu-na |
| gugau | 'sweet' | — | li-gugou-ya | gugau | — | gugou-na |
| guguya | 'proclaim' | guguya | guguya | — | guguya | — |
| bagibagi | 'work' | bagibagi | bagibagi-yeya | wo-bagibagi | bagibagi | bagibagi-na |
| dewa | 'custom' | | dewa-ya 'do-it' | dewadewa 'goodness' | dewa 'custom' | dewadewa-na 'good' |

TABLE 2

## 2.6 Case Frames

One useful line of investigation is the type of case which each verb takes as its subject, object and indirect object. Notes of this nature accompany the listings given in section 3.

## 2.7 Progressive Aspect

The reduplicated forms of the progressive aspect are normally determined by phonetic shape of the root. (Ezard 1978: section 4 and Ezard 1979[1]: section 22) As the semantics of the verb often correlate with the phonetic shape of the root, it follows that the reduplicated forms differ for different semantic verb types. This point is not developed in this paper but becomes obvious when the lexical patterning correlated with the semantic classes is observed (e.g. sections 3.1-3).

In one or two cases the progressive aspect appears to rest solely on the semantics of the verbs and such cases are pointed out in the data section (e.g. 3.3e).

[1]Ezard, Bryan 1979. Tawala Grammar and Basic Vocabulary. pp107. Computer printout.

## 3.0 TAWALA VERB CLASSES

The following lists of Tawala verbs according to their semantic classes is for the most part tentative. Certain subsections, in which ·there is a correlation between semantic classes and phonetic shape, seem to present a solid foundation. However, other areas are far more likely to change with subsequent revision of this paper. Anyone who has attempted the semantic analysis of even a selected 383 words in a foreign (to him) language will be aware of the time-consuming nature of the work, and this is the main reason for the tentative nature of the lists. I am conscious of the need to rework my analysis, but am forced by lack of time to present them as they stand. Even worse, I have been unable to apply the morphosyntactic criteria of the previous section in any systematic way to the semantic categories. I do make comments in this direction, but much work is required before these comments could make any claim of being complete and systematic.

### 3.1 Verbs of Motion

Verbs mostly require an animate subject and rarely take an object.

a. Generic verbs of motion involve a CVV pattern. These four words are among the most common in the language:

| | |
|---|---|
| nae | 'go' |
| nei | 'come' |
| gae | 'go up' |
| gei | 'come up' |

These can be presented in the following matrix:

| motion in respect to speaker: | | |
|---|---|---|
| | away from | towards |
| neutral | nae | nei |
| ascending | gae | gei |

In addition, the motion towards speaker verbs distinguish motion towards speaker and occasionally motion towards hearer:
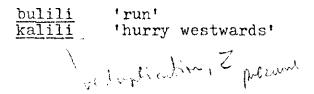
| motion towards: | | |
|---|---|---|
| | speaker | hearer |
| neutral | nei | nehi |
| ascending | gei | gehi |

These verbs are all +control; there is also a CVV verb which is —control.

  peu   'fall'

b. Specific verbs of motion:

   hala  'dance'
   dala  'crawl'
   lupa  'jump'
   hopu  'go down'

c. Specific verbs of motion involving speed:

   bulili  'run'
   kalili  'hurry westwards'

d.  Motion involving a starting point:  |————

       lowo         'run away'
       gelu         'get on board'
       wi-yoli      'sink, drown'
       wo-mahili    'leave'  (involves speed?)


e.  Motion involving an end point:  ————|

       talu         'land (on perch)'
       yato         'land (on perch, airstrip)'
       gota         'arrive (at beach)'
       geleta       'arrive ' (generic)
       geina        'climb (tree)'
       wi-aloni     'meet (storm)'  (negative connotation)


f.  Verbs involving passing a middle point:  ——|——

       wi-tago      'go across (a mountain)'
       damana      'go across (a bay)'

## 3.2 Verbs of Rest

Apply to both animate and in-animate categories unless otherwise stated.

a.  Generic verb of rest: the first verb is very common and often the equivalent to the verb 'to be' in English, especially with non-animate subjects.

       mae         'live, stay, remain, exist'
       eno         'lie down' (animate only)


b.  Specific types of rest:

       duhuna      'sit'⎫ dialectal variation
       tugula      'sit'⎭
       towolo      'stand'
       wi-otonana  'wait'  (human only)
       li-hunahuna  'wait impatiently' (human only)
       polou       'bow'
       lougu       'be in the shade'

## 3.3 Verbs of Affect

These verbs mostly involve a human subject,      and
are controlled action verbs.

a.   Intransitive verbs involving action on many small objects:

| | |
|---|---|
| om-giluma | 'carve, write' |
| om-hiyawa | 'count, read' |
| om-datu | 'collect shells' |
| om-hapi | 'pound sago' |
| om-dine | 'comb hair' |
| om-bulumu | 'sweep' |
| om-goda | 'stir sago pudding' (sago is cut in tiny |
| om-printing | 'print'                    pieces) |
| om-tepo | 'bail out' |
| om-apu-geni | 'burn it' (rubbish) |

b.   Intransitive verb involving a trip to the bush to collect:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lu-puwaka | 'hunt for pigs' | (puwaka | 'pig') |
| lu-aniani | 'collect food' | (aniani | 'food') |
| lu-mayau | 'collect firewood' | (mayau | 'tree, fire') |
| lu-ginahi | 'make sago' | (ginahi | 'sago') |
| lu-bandolo | 'collect coconuts' | (bandolo | 'bundle' from Eng. |
| | | | (4 coconuts tied together) |
| lu-pata | 'make nest' | (pata | 'shelf') |

c.   Transitive verbs involving a radical transformation

of object.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| boli | 'chop a piece off' | |
| tahi | 'carve' | non-animate |
| hapi | 'pound sago palm' | |
| tawi | 'dig' | |
| uni | 'kill, catch for killing' | |
| pani ⎱ tami ⎰ | 'tie' (traditionally for            killing) | animate |
| peli | 'exchange places' | |
| lawi | 'hit, kill' | |
| launi | 'hit' | |

d.  Transitive verb involving a punctiliar result - normally a non-animate object.  The suffix -ya is an object marker agreeing with the overt object in person and number.

| | |
|---|---|
| tone-ya | 'spear' |
| kaha-ya | 'separate' |
| hepa-ya | 'lift up' |
| poha-ya | 'put in a basket' |
| tala-ya | 'cut (lengthwise)' |
| tele-ya | 'leave food for later' |
| libe-ya | 'throw rubbish into the sea' |
| gudu-ya | 'shut' |
| hoe-ya | 'open' |
| dewa-ya | 'make, do' |
| higu-ya | 'fill' |
| huma-ya | 'wrap' |
| buyo-ya | 'squeeze out' |
| howa-ya | 'spit' |
| buhu-ya | 'drill' |
| guta-ya | 'share' |
| wogo-ya | 'hold' |
| wila-ya | 'mix' |

e.  Repeated actions involving an instrument:

| | |
|---|---|
| woe | 'paddle' |
| wao | 'dig holes for planting' |

Note: The progressive form of these verbs is formed by complete reduplication (woewoe 'keep paddling') which contrasts with the partial reduplicated forms of the CVV motion verbs (e.g. nenae 'keep going').

f.  Verb involving a line-like result.  I think the intransitive forms are statives with the subject referring to the patient.  The addition of the transitive suffix -i also marks the fact that the patient is now the object.

Examples:

(17)  <u>i  ulona</u>  'it is cooking'
     <u>it cook</u>

(18)  <u>a uloni</u>  'I am cooking it'
     <u>I cook it</u>

<u>ulona</u> - <u>i</u>  'cook'
<u>lelega</u> - <u>i</u>  'line up'
<u>toula</u> - <u>i</u>  'collect, load up'
<u>yaluma</u> - <u>i</u>  'mend fish net'
<u>upuma</u> - <u>i</u>  'pile up'
<u>hiyawa</u> - <u>i</u>  'count, read'
<u>hiwoga</u> - <u>i</u>  'pour out, unload'
<u>giluma</u> - <u>i</u>  'carve, write'
<u>didina</u> - <u>i</u>  'sew'
<u>guluwa</u> - <u>i</u>  'bury'

h.  Verbs with no progressive aspect:

| Intrans. | Transitive | |
|---|---|---|
| <u>dodola</u> | <u>dodoleya</u> | 'break something hard to break'(?) |
| <u>saina</u> | <u>saineya</u> | 'sign' (from English) |
| — | <u>tuhugaya</u> | 'find' |
| — | <u>hoe haleya</u> | 'release' |
| — | <u>wi-haleya</u> | 'release' |

j.  Verbs involving causative prefixes.  Semantics

somewhat uncertain.

<u>li</u>- verbs: often associated with starting an action;

<u>li</u>- often transitivises a verb.

<u>li-dagu-ya</u>  'start, move' st.  (<u>dagu</u>  'move')
<u>li-hogo-ya</u>  'fill' st.  (<u>hogo</u>  'be full')
<u>li-wouna</u>  'renew'  (<u>wouna</u>  'new')
<u>li-woloeni</u>  'finish' st.  (<u>woloe</u>  'be finished')
<u>li-wawala-i</u>  'create, commence'st. (<u>wawala</u> 'creation')
<u>li-damana</u>  'push across'  (<u>damana</u> 'across')
<u>li-dogo</u>  'prepare garden
          for planting'  (<u>dogo</u>  (?))
<u>li-hilage</u>  'kill'  (<u>hilage</u> 'finish, die')

wi- verbs: these are mostly clear causatives.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wi-hilage | 'poison'(sorcery) | (hilage | 'be finished') |
| wi-eno-ya | 'put to sleep' | (eno | 'sleep') |
| wi-ani-hi | 'feed' | (ani | 'eat') |
| wi-geini | 'put up' | (geinu | 'climb') |
| wi-hogo-ya | 'fill' | (hogo | 'be full') |
| wi-hepa-ya | 'lift' | (hepa | (?)) |
| wi-mehe-ya | 'repay, pay back' | (meiha | 'payment') |
| wi-yaga-ya | 'chase' | (yaga | 'scrape') |
| wi-lawi | 'hit' | (lawi | (?)) |
| wi-lui-ya | 'put in' | (lui | 'go in') |
| wi-kokowi | 'finish' | (kokoe | 'be finished') |
| wi-apapoe-ya | 'destroy' | (apapoe | 'bad') |
| wi-kadidili-ya | 'strengthen' | (kadidili | 'strong') |
| wi-wawali | 'create' | (wawala | 'creation') |
| wi-luwaga-ya | 'duplicate' | (luwaga | 'two') |
| wi-leta(-ya) | 'try' | (leta | (?)) |
| wi-lougo | 'hit'(sorcery) | (lougo | 'magic song') |

lu- verbs (cf. 3.3 b.)

lu-tugutugu-ya  'slosh water out of canoe by pushing
it backwards and forwards'

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lu-tata-ya | 'cover' | (tata | (?)) |
| lu-guta | 'share' | (guta | 'a share') |
| lu-nagili | 'pierce a hole' | (naginagila | 'soft earth') |
| lu-peto | 'stir sago' | (peto | 'black palm (used to make stirring stick)) |
| lu-mutu-ya | 'crush' | (mutu | 'point') |
| lu-tom-geya | 'block' | (tomgana(?) | 'blockage') |

om- verbs (cf. 3.3 a.)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| om-tele-ya | 'to be left over' | (tele-ya | 'leave food for later' |
| om-kuka | 'sail' | (kuka | 'sailing canoe') |
| om-boine-ya | 'bundle' | (boina | 'bundle') |

wo(i)- verbs. wo- normally involves handling something.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wo-i-dewadewa-ya | 'fix' | (dewadewa | 'be good') |
| wo-i-malamalagem-i | 'tame' | (malamalagama | 'be tame') |

welu- verbs usually involve appearing or disappearing;
there is only one in our data:

welu-powa   'be lost in jungle' (powa  'make mistake')

k. Verbs involving a change of state of object patient:

| | |
|---|---|
| kekeh-i | 'undo' |
| kehal-i | 'push through' |
| tulagon-i | 'disregard, break (law)' |
| huwe-ni | 'blow' (shell trumpet) |
| woloe-ni | 'finish (work)' |

l. Reflexive action – "ditransitive" verb with object and subject in person and number agreement.

| | |
|---|---|
| guna-wile- | 'return' |
| lu-haga-wile- | 'look around' |

Examples:

(19)    a gunawile-u      *I return'
        I return-me

(20)    hi   gunawile-hi  'they return'
        they return-them

m. Verbs involving carrying and moving objects. The language is especially rich in this area and a thorough study of these verbs is needed.

a) generic verbs of carrying.

| | |
|---|---|
| awala - i | 'carry' (lit. 'shoulder') |
| waya | 'take' |

Plural forms: this is the only point in the language where there are suppletive verbal forms to express the plural concept of a verb.

| singular | plural | |
|---|---|---|
| waya | wini-hi | 'take' |
| awala - i | hihiwa - i | 'carry' |

b) Specific verbs of carrying:

| | |
|---|---|
| tami(-hi) | 'select and take' |
| bui(-ya) | 'turn over, translate' |
| houna - i | 'put' |
| teina - i | 'pull' |
| telena - i | 'play out a line or net' |
| niye-ya | 'take away' |
| giye-ya | 'pull up' |
| gei-yai | 'bring up' |
| nei-yai | 'bring' |
| himili-yai | 'send' |

c) Complex verbs of carrying:

| | |
|---|---|
| awala hopu-neya | 'carry down' |
| houna hopu-neya | 'put down' (literal and metaphorical) |
| teina hopu-neya | 'pull down' |
| tele hopu-neya | 'put down' |
| tele gelete-ya | 'place in view' |
| awala gelete-ya | 'carry into view' |
| wo-gelete-ya | 'put into view' |
| tele-nei-ya | 'pull in'(?) |

n. Verbs of working and trying:

Generic verb:

| | |
|---|---|
| wi-bagibagi | 'work' |

Specific verbs:

| | |
|---|---|
| goda | 'stir sago' |
| tutu | 'knock, hit' |
| tutu-gudu | 'knock closed' |
| tutu-hopu | 'knock down' |
| tutu-haga-ya | 'knock a support into place' (?) |
| om-pati | 'patch' (from English 'putty') |
| wawala - i | 'start, make, create' |
| wi-letaya | 'try, attempt' |
| lu-dadana - i | 'try' |
| beiha | 'search' |
| nonogo | 'prepare' |
| wo-nonogo | 'prepare (with hands ?)' |

## 3.4 Meteorological Verbs

There were no meteorological verbs in our data. However they are a distinguished sub-set often occurring without any verb morphology. For example:

(21)     Gadiwewe.     'It is raining.'
         rain

## 3.5 Corporeal Verbs

a.  Life-sustaining functions

There are to my knowledge only four VCV verbs, and these are the following set which are semantically closely related as indicated in the sub-heading.

|  |  |
|---|---|
| eno | 'sleep' |
| uma | 'drink' |
| ani | 'eat' (trans) |
| am(u)* | 'eat' (intrans) |

*The u following m is always dropped in Tawala.

b.  Verbs involving clothing - both verbs are transitive:

|  |  |
|---|---|
| lui-ya | 'put on' |
| gagi | 'take off' |

c.  Verbs involved in taking something into the body:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lu-bogahu | 'smoke (tobacco)' | (bogahu | 'smoke') |
| lu-haba | 'chew (betel nut)' | (haba | 'red') |
| lu-yawahi | 'breathe, inhale' | (yawata | 'breath') |
| lu-tanigana | 'listen, hear' | (taniga | 'ear') |

d.  Verbs involved in expelling things from the body:

|  |  |
|---|---|
| howa | 'spit' |
| meda | 'vomit' |

e. Verbs involving a slowing down of bodily activity:

>wi-yuwa      'pain'
>wi-yagohina  'rest'
>wi-yohi      'fast'
>cf. wi-kamna dewadewa 'to get better'

f. Verbs involving the mouth:

>kima-ya      'bite'
>guuguya      'suck (breast)'

g. Verbs involving basic senses:

>nonola - i   'hear'
>gale-ya      'see'

h. Verbs with wide semantic meanings and great variation

of form:

>tou          'weep, cry'
>totogo       'be sick'
>om-hilage    'hunger' (lit. 'food-finish')
>hi guni-ya   'be born'

om-hilage is the only verb of its kind in the language,

in that it requires the two morphemes to be present, but

places the person/number clitic between them e.g.:

(22)    Am   a hilage.         'I am hungry.'
        food I finish

hi guni-ya is also unique in that the 3rd person

plural indefinite pronoun is compulsory and is the functional

equivalent to the English passive, e.g.:

(23)    Hi   guni-u  1967.     'I was born in 1967.'
        they bore-me 1967

*How do you say 'Mary bore me?'* (handwritten)

## 3.6 Verbs of Giving

Two of these in our data are ditransitive which means that the "object" suffix does not agree with the object given but with the person to whom it is given. Both verbs require a human subject and an animate or human "object".

| | |
|---|---|
| wele-ya | 'give to someone' |
| hagu-ya | 'give (help) to someone' |

The remaining verbs are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lu-halena | 'exchange' | (hale | 'throw') |
| lu-iligona | 'give food in exchange for work' | | |
| gimala - eya | 'purchase, trade' | | |
| wi-meya | 'pay back' | | |
| li-dumalu-ya | 'make payment' (lit. 'make things straight') | | |

## 3.7 Verbs of Attention (cf. 3.5 g. for verbs involving basic senses)

There are two verbs of "attention", both ditransitive and very similar in function and meaning to the "verbs of giving" (3.6).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wi-atatiye-ya | 'show, teach' | (atatiye | (?)) |
| lu-gelete-ya | 'reveal, clarify' | (geleta | 'arrive') |

## 3.8 Verbs of speaking

a. Generic word for speaking:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| bahe-ya | 'say' | (baha | 'word') |

There are many variants of this generic word (often directional):

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| baha-nae | 'speak out' | (nae | 'go') |
| baha-gelete-ya | 'be spoken to' | (geleta | 'arrive') |
| baha-yabayababa | 'speak in vain' | (yabayababa | 'empty') |
| baha-hopu | 'speak down to someone' | (hopu | 'descend') |

b.  Specific types of speaking - with causative prefixes:

wi- verbs:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wi-alutu | 'gossip' | (alutu | (?)) |
| wi-gowa-ya | 'name someone' | (gowa-na | 'his name') |
| wi-gou-ya | 'accuse' | (gou | 'fault') |
| wi-pali-lougo | 'heal' | (lougo | 'magic song') |
| wi-lougo | 'hit with magic' | (lougo | 'magic song') |
| wi-benabenama | 'confess' | (benama | (?)) |
| wi-baabani | 'converse' | (baabani | (?)) |

lu- verbs:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| lu-pali | 'beg, ask for' | (pali | 'speak magic') |
| lu-hetala | 'investigate, examine' | (hetala | 'court') |
| lu-guguya | 'proclaim, preach' | (guguya | 'proclamation') |
| lu-geleta - eya | 'clarify' | (geleta | 'arrive') |
| lu-bayada - eya | 'ask question' | (bayada | (?)) |
| lu-guyoguyo-geya | 'ridicule' | (guyau(?) | 'chief') |
| lu-gagayo | 'forbid' | | |

kawa- verbs - verbs of proclamation:

kawa(i)-bade-ni   'proclaim to be a man' (bada 'term of
                                        respect for older man')
kawa(i)-moine-ya  'proclaim to be true'  (moina 'true')

pali- verbs  The verb pali means to breathe a magic

formula.  There are dozens of words which involve pali-

as a prefix, however it has often lost its 'magic'

meaning and is simply the prefix of speaking "par excellence".

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| pali-hale-ya | 'give permission' | (hale | 'throw') |
| pali-lougo | 'say magic formula' | (lougo | 'sing') |
| pali-witumagana | 'promise' | (witumagana | 'rely on, trust' |
| pali-wele-ya | 'tell' | (wele | 'give') |

wo- verbs:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wo-lili-geya | 'spread news' | (lili | (?)) |
| wo-talagi-yeya | 'praise' | (talagi | (?)) |

li- verbs:

li-moine-ya 'verify, prove'        (moina      'true')

c. Other types of speech:

dedede        'tell story'
otu(-geya)    'call out'
otu-mai       'call to me'          (-mai       'come')
koyama        'lie'

## 3.9 Verbs of thinking

a. Verbs involving a cognitive process. Many of these
words involve the root nugo 'heart' which is considered the
base of all thinking and most emotion. Many of these verbs
also have the causative prefix wi-.

wi-nugonugo-tuhu   'think'          (tuhu    (?))
wi-wogatala        'plan'
wi-tumagane-ya     'believe something'
wi-nugo-guluwi     'forget'         (guluwi 'bury')
wi-nugo-neina      'lack understanding,
                    be ignorant'   (neina   (?))
hanapu             'be wise'
hanapu-geya        'understand something, know someone'
geno               'worry'

b. Verbs involving human propensity. These verbs are
probably an open class in their own right and are given
full treatment in Ezard, 1980:25-29[1]. Here I will simply
list the forms found in the data; there is probably no
sharp dividing line between these verbs and those in the
preceeding section.

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[1]Ezard, Bryan 1980. Far, far away; an analysis of Tawala
adjectives based on the article "where have all the Adjectives
Gone?" Typescript.

nugo- verbs:

    nugo-wayau      'lose interest'    (wayau    'cold')
    nugo-hale-ya    'surrended'        (hale     'throw')
    nugo-dubu       'be sorrowful'     (dubu     'dust')
    nugo-gohola     'be incredulous'   (gohola   'jump')
    wi-nugo-tootogo 'be melancholic'   (tootogo  'sickness')

hini- verbs: (hini  'skin')

    wi-hini-lowolowo 'be afraid(?)'    (lowo     'run away')
    wi-hini-maya     'be nervous, shy' (maya     'feel')
    lu-hini-gigai    'be proud'        (gigai    'exulted')

c.  Verbs involving emotions:

    kaoha       'happy'
    goholi      'jump with surprise'
    matouta     'fear'

d.  Negative attitude – detested:

    om-boho         'be selfish'
    om-gagana       'be selfish'
    om-genagenalili 'be jealous'

3.10 Verbs of Liking

All the verbs of liking in our data are ditransitive:

    lu-hogale-ya          'love, like, want'
    lu-nugo-tootogo(-geya) 'show pity, kindness, mercy, love'
    mamali(-hi)           'greet'
    melabeni(-hi)         'comfort, be near'

## 3.11 Social Verbs

a. Group activities:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| toleha | 'feast' | | |
| omboina | 'congregate' | | |
| tapalolo | 'pray, worship' | | |
| li-bolu | 'socialise'(talk together) | (bolu | 'group') |
| wi-alutu | 'gossip' | (alutu | (?)) |

b. Two-party activity:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| tawine | 'marry' | | |
| wi-heliheliyam | 'make friends' | (heliyam | 'friend') |
| wi-tona | 'fight' | (tona | 'tusk') |
| wi-toumana | 'visit' | (toumana | 'stranger') |

c. One-sided activity:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| wi-mulitagou | 'follow' | (mulina | 'behind') |
| wi-pona-wogo-geya | 'obey' | (pona | 'voice') |
| | | (wogo | 'hold') |
| wo-tago-ya | 'follow'(as student) | (tagona(?) | 'cross over') |
| lu-tago(-ya) | 'obey' | ( " | " ) |
| tahaeya | 'lead, go first' | (tahaya | 'path') |
| taniwaga | 'rule' | | |

d. Group motion verbs involve the prefix liya-:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| liya-hopu | 'go down together' | (hopu | 'descend') |
| liya-nae | 'go together' | (nae | 'go') |

3.12 Stative Verbs

These have related adjectival forms as follows:

a.   Verbs with reduplicated adjectival counterparts:

| Verb | Adjective (3 pers/sing) | Meaning |
|---|---|---|
| gobu | gobugobu-na | 'dirty' |
| dao | daodao-na | 'long' |
| witai | witewitei-na | 'heavy' |
| maga | magomagou-na | 'many, abound' |
| danene | danedanene-na | 'steal, stolen' |
| dumalu | dumadumalu-na | 'straight' |
| hilage | hilahilage-na | 'finished' |
| wakeke | wakewakeke-na | 'white' |
| uguwa/i | uguguwa-na | 'black, darkened' |
| hegoya | hegohegoya-na | 'full' |
| tapiya | tapitapiya-na | 'weak' |
| palouma | palopalouma-na | ' witchish' |

b.   Verbs with identical or closely related adjectives:

| apapoe | apapoe-na | 'bad' |
|---|---|---|
| kokoe | kokoe-na | 'finished' |
| wipoya | wipoya-na | 'hot, powerful' |
| wipilipili | waipilipili-na | 'tangled, difficult' |
| tawatawa | tawatawa-na | 'cooked' |
| potopoto | potopoto-na | 'thick, dense' |
| dewadewa | dewadewa-na | 'good' |
| kayakaya | kayakaya-na | 'red' |
| bolobolou | bolobolou-na | 'old, feeble' |

c.   Verb with no counter-part adjective:

    haki        'good'

d.   Verbs with an identical reduplicated noun counterpart:

| Verb | | Noun | |
|---|---|---|---|
| motamota | 'wormy' | motamota | 'worm' (mota 'snake') |
| yabiyabi | 'steer' | yabiyabi | 'large paddle for steering' |
| bagibagi | 'work' | bagibagi | 'work' |

e.  Verbs derived from nouns with causative prefix:

wi-bada      'be/become older man'   (bada     'man')
wi-keduluma  'be/become older woman' (keduluma 'woman')
lu-wawine    'be/become effeminate'  (wawine 'female')


3.13 Process Verbs usually take inanimate subject:

buda       'rot'
lata       'grow'
loya       'be barren, without fruit'
tenam      'float'
yaguli     'be unburned'
yababa     'fade away'
wiwila     'go round'
totoya     'be overgrown'
lalana     'shine' (sun)
kololo     'drip, trickle'
alata      'burn'
magula     'mature, ripen'
lu-ano     'bear fruit'
poipoi     'be dried'
wi-dagu    'wriggle, struggle'

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The most noteworthy conclusion to be drawn from the above data is the remarkable correlation between the phonetic form of many words and their underlying semantic relationships.  This means that a speaker would not need to fully understand the semantics of a verb to employ it correctly in context.  While this may seem to support those who search for an autonymous syntax, it must be remembered that there is by no means a one-to-one relationship between form and semantics, and also that semantics is still a prerequisite to knowing which semantic domain we are dealing with, for there are parallel phonetic types within the various semantic classes.  However, the shared features of phonetic shape must make life easier for the younger generation learning the language.  Certainly, as a non-native speaker of the language I have wondered how I was able to generate many new sentences with comparative ease.

A second conclusion is by way of corroboration of the method set out in 1.3 above.  The concept of basic norms in relation to the definition of a part of speech as being those words which belong to the distinguished subclass. Schachter 1978:10[1] defines the semantic nature of verbs as:

[1]Schachter, Paul 1978.  Parts-of-speech Systems, to appear in S. Anderson et al. (eds.), Language Typology and Syntactic Field Work.

the name given to the parts-of-speech class in which occur most of the words .that express actions, processes, and the like.

I think all linguists would agree that actions and processes represent the core of verbal semantics. It is thus interesting to note that it is in these areas that the correlation between phonetic form and semantic class is most clearly seen.

There is much work to be done on the subject of this paper, particularly in the area of the morpho-syntactic frame described in section 2. However, it has become clear that the line of investigation will prove fruitful.

Finally, the value of basing morpho-syntactic studies on a thorough semantic base has become more and more evident as I have proceeded with this study. Studies in English had convinced me that I was sure to unearth some relevant data if I proceeded on the assumption of the priority of syntax. However I was totally unprepared for the fundamental place semantics plays in the choice of Tawala causative prefixes and even more so, for the way semantics determines the very phonetic shape of Tawala vocabulary.