

# A Grammar Sketch of Shiwilu

## A Semantic Syntax Approach

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## List of Abbreviations

1SG	first person singular
2SG	second person singular
3SG	third person singular
1PL	first person plural
2PL	second person plural
3PL	third person singular
1.O	first person object
2.O	second person object
ABL	ablative
ADDIT	additive
ALL	allative
CAUS	causative
COGNOSC	cognoscitive
COMP	comparative
COP	copula
DESID	desiderative
DIM	diminutive
FCT	factual
FRUST	frustrative
GEN	genitive
IMP	imperative
ITE	iterative
LIM	limitative
LOC	locative
NMLZ	nominalizer
PL	plural
PRD	predictive
PROG	progressive
PROH	prohibitive
PURP	purposive
REAS	reason
SG	singular
SOC.CAUS	sociative causative
SUB	subordinate
VAL	valenciator
VBLZ	verbalizer

# Introduction

## **Thesis Structure**

In this thesis I provide a basic sketch of the Shiwilu language. The main focus lies on providing a proper, general documentation of the syntactic properties of the language. In order to achieve this, I discuss, among other things, the verbal structure, the complementation, and ergativity.

The first chapter deals with the previous studies on Shiwilu, and explains why this thesis is a necessary addition to the available knowledge on Shiwilu. Subsequently, I provide a sociolinguistic overview which mostly focuses on the vitality of the language. I believe this information to be imperative for a good understanding of the language, as one can infer a great deal about the future development of a language from the size of the speech community. Finally, I close the introductory segment of this thesis with a quick overview of the fieldwork conducted to collect the data used for this thesis.

After the introduction, I delve into the grammar of Shiwilu. I begin by giving a basic phonological overview of the language. This section remains rather superficial, as phonology is not the main focus of the present study, and it serves mainly as a clarification of the orthography. This is followed by some basic grammatical properties of the language. In this section, mainly features concerning word order are discussed.

In the next section, I take a look at Shiwilu word classes. Starting with the open word classes, I first discuss the nouns and list some derivational and inflectional processes. Then, I look at the verbal processes, which concludes the open word classes section. Afterwards, I discuss the closed word classes found in the data.

In the remaining sections of the grammar sketch I examine some syntactic processes in Shiwilu. The focus of this section lies on complement clauses, both dependent and several independent clauses, and the treatment of arguments in transitive sentences, as well as ergativity.

## **Previous Studies**

There have been several studies on the Shiwilu language. There are a couple of manuscripts from the 18<sup>th</sup> century which was the first study of Shiwilu. The first manuscript, titled *Vocabulario en la Lengua Castellana, la del Ynga, y Xebera* contains information about the pronunciation of Shiwilu as well as a vocabulary list (Bendor-Samuel, 1981). The second manuscript is also from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These data come from the earliest missions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Bendor-Samuel, 1981). The manuscript contains a number of stories and prayers, as

well as a summary of grammatical concepts found in the data (Bendor-Samuel, 1981). A few manuscripts also appeared in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Bendor-Samuel, 1981). The first had a small word list, the second published the Shiwilu numbers from 1 to 5, and the third is a supposedly weak grammatical sketch with some vocabulary, as reported by Bendor-Samuel (1981) in his PhD thesis on Shiwilu.

Bendor-Samuel's thesis, "The Structure and Function of the Verbal Piece in the Jebero Language", is very concise and is the most complete work on Shiwilu to date; it entails the syntactic properties of Shiwilu associated with verbs, it provides an outline of the phonology, it discusses the word classes, and it provides information about the nominal structure. However, the thesis is written within the framework known as tagmemics, which can be rather cryptic, and untrained readers might lose oversight of the presented content.

Shiwilu texts are also included in a master thesis by Michel Peperkamp (2005). This master thesis is an anthropological study of the Shiwilu people, and the Shiwilu language is discussed as well. The phonology of Shiwilu is presented first, and some semantic and morpho-syntactical information is also provided. For instance, the verbal structure of Shiwilu is discussed. However, the thesis does not go on in depth about these topics. There are 7 texts included in total, with sentence numbers ranging from approximately 30 to 90.

Another study was carried out by María Gracia Madalengoitia Barúa (2014). This is a bachelor thesis, and focuses on the phonology of Shiwilu.

There is also a book with a collection of Shiwilu texts written by Pilar Valenzuela (2011a). This book also contains a small phonological and morphological sketch, but this is not the main focus of this work.

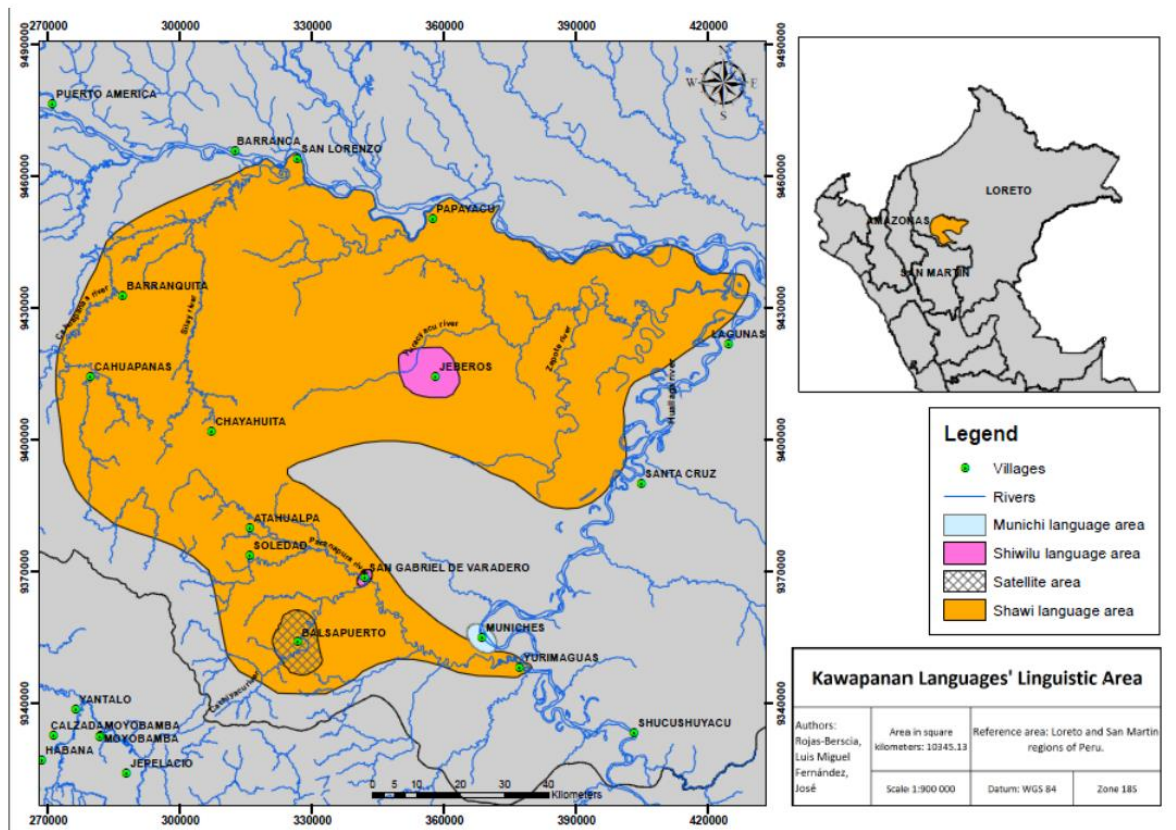
Finally, there are several articles on grammatical properties in Shiwilu written by Pilar Valenzuela. While these articles document interesting features of Shiwilu, such as the ergative marker (2011b), a general overview discussing all grammatical properties of Shiwilu has yet to be published. This is how my thesis will contribute to the knowledge base of Shiwilu: I give a general overview of all the features of Shiwilu, instead of just focusing on one aspect of the language.

### **Sociolinguistic Overview**

Shiwilu, also known as Jebero, is spoken in the Alto Amazonas province in the region of Loreto in Peru. The main villages where Shiwilu is spoken are Jeberos, which is the largest of the Shiwilu settlements, and San Gabriel. The linguistic area of Shiwilu is shown below in Map 1 (Rojas-Berscia, 2018).

Map 1: Kawapanan languages' linguistic area (Rojas-Berscia, 2018)

Map 1: Kawapanan languages' linguistic area (Rojas Berscia in prep. a)



The language belongs to the Kawapanan language family, together with its sister language Shawi. Shawi is a vital language with an Ethnologue language status of 5, which means it is a developing language and in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form (Simons & Fennig, 2018). Shawi also has a lot more dialect varieties compared to Shiwilu. Shiwilu appears to be much too small a language to have notable dialects, but Shawi does have some regional varieties with phonological differences, such as Balsapuerto, Cahuapanas, and Sillay.

Unfortunately, unlike Shawi, the use of Shiwilu has been steadily declining. Adelaar reported a population of approximately 2,500 people identifying themselves as Shiwilu in 2000, as presented in Ethnologue (Simons & Fennig, 2018). A report from 2011 by Leclerc showed a decline in the populace to approximately 2,400, also reported by Ethnologue (Simons & Fennig, 2018). However, Ethnologue does point out that these numbers are not necessarily about Shiwilu speakers, but also include the ethnic population and the number of people living in the Shiwilu area, which is specified in their definition of population. The number of speakers appears to be much lower; an informal assessment conducted by Valenzuela in 2010 pointed out that there may be about 30 fluent speakers (Valenzuela, 2011b). Ethnologue has classified the language status of Shiwilu as a 7, which means Shiwilu is a shifting language. A shifting

language is still spoken by the child-bearing generation, but is not transmitted to children. This could mean that, unless effective revitalization projects are put into practice, the Shiwilu language might face extinction in only a few generations. This means proper documentation of the language is important, as this could prove vital in supporting such projects.

### **Fieldwork**

The data used in this study was collected in a period of seven days, from the 13th of May until the 20th of May, in the town of Jeberos. The data was collected using elicitation, interviews, and the recording of Shiwilu conversations. Elicitation was mostly done with the help of Diomer Lopez Chota, a 62 year old teacher, and Julia Inuma Inuma and Lourdes Inuma Laulate, two 88 year old Shiwilu women. The data produced were mainly of a morphosyntactic nature. The texts and conversations were collected with the help of 5 elderly Shiwilu women; namely Julia Inuma Inuma and Lourdes Inuma Laulate, Carolina Mozombite Laulate, aged 64, Cleofe Mozombite Laulate, aged 75, and Marta Luz Pérez Huiñapi, aged 66. These texts are also meant to give a clearer picture of morphosyntactical processes in Shiwilu, but in a more natural context than elicitation. The Shiwilu corpus is archived within The Language Archive at the MPI, and could only be collected thanks to the sponsorship of the Language in Interaction consortium.

## **Grammar Sketch**

### **Phonological Overview**

#### Consonants

Shiwilu has 10 consonants, as seen in Table 1 below. This chart is largely based on (Rojas-Berscia, in prep.). However, some phonemes are taken from Valenzuela and Gussenhoven (2013) and Madaleno Barúa (2014).

Table 1: The consonant chart of Shiwilu (Rojas-Berscia, in prep.)

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Plosive	p	t		k
Affricate				
Nasal	m	n		
Fricative		s		
Tap				
Lateral approximant		l		
Approximant	w	ɔ̃	j	

### Vowels

Shiwilu has five vowels in its inventory: /i ɐ ɔ̃ a u/. These vowels are presented in the chart below. Vowels in Shiwilu have no quantity contrast and all vowels can appear anywhere in the onset, nucleus, and coda position of the word (Valenzuela & Gussenhoven, 2013). Table 2 below is an approximation of the place of articulation of these vowels, based on Rojas-Berscia (in prep.).

Table 2: The vowel chart of Shiwilu (Valenzuela & Gussenhoven, 2013)

	Front	Central	Back
<b>Close</b>	i		
<b>Mid</b>	ɔ̃	ɐ	u
<b>Open</b>		a	

### Orthography

The orthography used in this thesis is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2: The Shiwilu orthography used in this thesis

<b>IPA</b>	a	ɐ	ɔ̃	i	j	k#	#k	l	m	n	s	ʃ	t	tʃ	u	w	j	ɔ̃
<b>Orthography</b>	a	e	er	i	y	'	k	l	m	n	s	sh	t	ch	u	w	y	d

### **Basic Grammatical Properties**

Shiwilu is an agglutinative language, which means every morpheme conveys a single grammatical property. It has a polysynthetic structure, which means the words of the language mainly consist of multiple morphemes and a sentence can consist solely of a single verb (Payne, 1997). Shiwilu, like Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018), is a pro-drop language. In addition, Shiwilu has a head-marking system. Subjects and objects can be incorporated in the verb, as shown in

sentence (1). The first person singular pronoun in this sentence can be deleted as it is already marked on the verb, which is evidence of the polysynthetic nature of the language.

- (1) *kwa ka'per-l-e-n*  
 1SG visit-FCT-1-2.O  
 'I visit you'

In transitive sentences the structure of Shiwilu is SOV; in intransitive sentences an SV order is used, which means Shiwilu is a Predicate-Final language. This is shown in sentences (2) and (3):

- S V  
 (2) *kwa te'ka-l-e'*  
 1SG run-FCT-1SG  
 'I ran'

- S O V  
 (3) *kwa chuchu-sha ka'-ert-e'*  
 1SG forest.meat-DIM eat-PRD-1SG  
 'I will eat meat from the forest'

It is also possible for Shiwilu to have an OVS structure, as seen in sentence (4). There is no difference in meaning between sentence (3) and (4), but it may be the case that the OVS structure is used to put more emphasis on the object.

Using the framework of Semantic Syntax (Seuren, 1996), it is possible to assign an underlying rule to the syntax that might explain this change in structure. This underlying rule governing the formation of this word order would be optional SUBJECT RAISING. When SUBJECT RAISING is applied, the subject is raised from the Semantic Analysis and lands at the end of the sentence, as seen in figure 1b. If this rule was not applied, “*kwa*” would have stayed in its original position, and we would get sentence (3).

- O V S  
 (4) *chuchusha ka'-rt-e' kwa*  
 forest.meat eat-PRD-1SG 1SG  
 'I will eat meat from the forest'

Figure 1a: The Semantic Analysis of sentence (4)

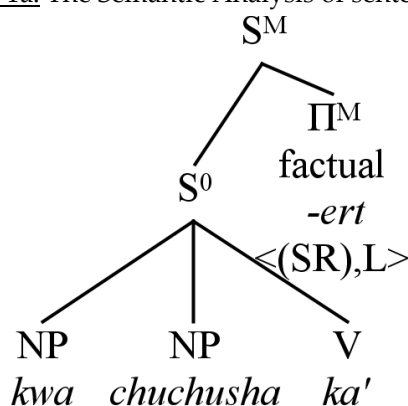


Figure 1b: The cyclic rule SUBJECT RAISING has been applied, putting *kwa* between the S and the predictive predicate

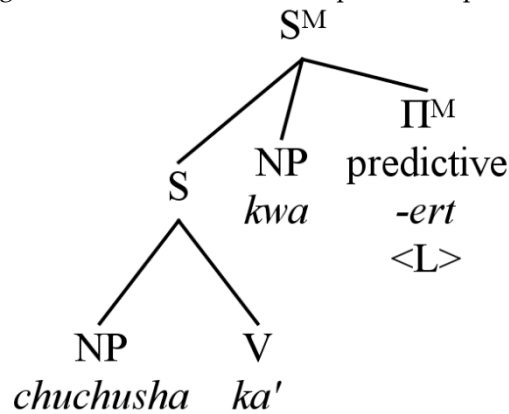


Figure 1c: The cyclic rule LOWERING has been applied, so the predictive (future) is lowered on the verb, resulting in the Shallow Structure

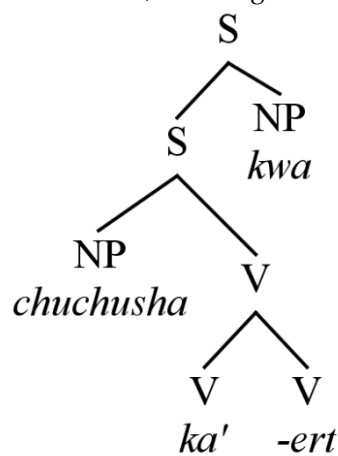
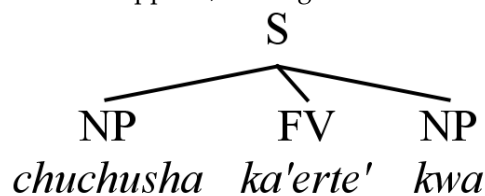


Figure 1d: The post-cyclic rules PERSON AGREEMENT and MINCE are applied, leading to the Surface Structure



## Open Word Classes

The term ‘open word classes’ is used for the categories of parts of speech to which new tokens can be added (Aikhenvald, 2015). In this section I will discuss the two main open word classes of the Shiwilu language, namely nouns and verbs.

### Nouns

Nouns can be defined as words which refer to the most “time-stable” concepts (Payne, 1997). Nouns include the names of persons, objects, and locations; concepts for which it is useful to have a stable referent. In Shiwilu, nouns are the heads of an NP. These nouns are typically

disyllabic, as is the case in sister language Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018), but there several exceptions. Some examples of Shiwilu nouns are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Some Shiwilu nouns

<i>muda</i>	man	<i>ni'ni</i>	dog
<i>pide'</i>	house	<i>ninan</i>	city

### Noun derivation

Derivations are “operations which derive an inflectable stem from a root or an intermediate stem” (Payne, 1997). In Shiwilu, derivation is done with the use of suffixes, which seems to be typical for South-American languages as Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018) and Selk'nam (Rojas-Berscia, 2014). As is the case in Shawi, noun derivation in Shiwilu is not very productive. One kind of noun derivation found in the data, the diminutive, is shown below.

#### *Diminutive*

Shiwilu has two kinds of diminutive: “-*wa*” en “-*sha*”. -*wa* appears to be mainly used to express smallness in animals, and is very likely related to the diminutive “-*wa*” in Shawi, which is used in similar contexts (Rojas-Berscia, 2018).

*ni'ni* ‘dog’ → *ni'ni-wa* ‘small dog’

-*sha* differs from -*wa* in the fact that it is also found on inanimate objects. Shawi has a diminutive -*sha* as well, but in this language it can only be used for animate, human referees (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). -*sha* is very similar in both form and function to “-*cha*” in southern Quechua, which may point to a possible relation (Valenzuela, 2011c).

*chuchu* ‘meat from the forest’ → *chuchu-sha* ‘small amount of meat from the forest’

*wawa* ‘baby’ → *wawa-sha* ‘small baby’

### Noun inflection

Inflection are operations “which are required by the syntactic environment in which a root appears [and] do not normally later the basic meaning of the concept expressed.” (Payne, 1997). In other words, inflection entails, for instance, the number, the location, the possessor, or the function of a noun in certain contexts.

### Plural

Shiwilu has a plural marker “-lusa”. For the contexts in which this plural marker was found in the data, it was solely used to decline animate, human nouns, so unfortunately no concrete claims can be made concerning the semantic features of the nouns this marker is used for.

This inflectional morpheme is also very similar to its Shawi counterpart, “-ru’sa” (Rojas-Berscia, 2018).

<i>enmupinem</i>	‘man’	→ <i>enmupinen-lusa</i>	‘men’
<i>ka’aper</i>	‘woman’	→ <i>ka’aper-lusa</i>	‘women’
<i>muda</i>	‘man’	→ <i>muda-lusa</i>	‘men’

### Possessive markers

The possessive in Shiwilu is also expressed by a suffix on the noun, which conjugates depending on person. All possessive markers are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Shiwilu possessive paradigm

Person	Singular	Plural
1 (exclusive)	- <i>we</i> ’	- <i>wide</i> ’
1 (inclusive)	- <i>mapu</i>	- <i>mapuwa</i> ’
2	- <i>pen</i>	- <i>penma</i> ’
3	- <i>nen</i>	- <i>penna</i> ’

Shawi adds a morpheme to the possessive paradigm if a noun is alienable (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). Alienable means that a noun is inherently part of the possessor. No such distinction has been found in the corpus used for this thesis; however, this does not mean that this distinction is absent in Shiwilu.

Alienable:	<i>pide</i> ’- <i>we</i> ’	Inalienable:	<i>lada</i> - <i>we</i> ’
	house-1SG		eye-1SG
	‘my house’		‘my eye’

### Oblique case marking

Oblique case markers are used for “nominals that lack a grammatical relation to some predicate” (Payne, 1997). The oblique cases found in Shiwilu are listed in Table 5 below.

The comitative is also marked with person marking; the same kind of suffix is used for predicates in copulative constructions. This phenomenon is exactly the same as in Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2013)

Table 5: Oblique cases in Shiwilu

Oblique case	Morpheme	Example
Locative	<i>-ke'</i>	<i>pide'-we'-ke' kala ni'ni'-wa ni-a'pa-l-i</i> house-1-LOC three dog-DIM be-PROG-FCT-3SG 'There are three dogs in my house'
This case is used to indicate the spacial positioning of the marked noun		
Comparative	<i>-pu'su</i>	<i>Jesus lans-a'pa-l-i awinam-pu'su</i> Jesus dance-PROG-FCT-3SG white.monkey-COMP 'Jesus dances like a white monkey'
This case is used to indicate a similarity with another noun		
Limitative	<i>-wale'</i>	<i>kwa de'kun-t-ert-e' mutupi-wale'</i> 1SG path-VAL-PRD-1SG mountain-LIM 'I will walk until the mountain'
This case is used to indicate the limit of a dynamic event		
Ablative	<i>-lan</i>	<i>i'pa'la we'-a'p-incha-l-e' menmi-uk-ke'-lan</i> now come-PROG-?-FCT-1SG field-1-LOC-ABL 'Now I am coming from my field'
This case is used to indicate the origin of a dynamic event		
Allative	<i>-lu'pa</i>	<i>kwa de'kun-t-ert-e' mutupi-lu'pa</i> 1SG path-VAL-PRD-1SG mountain-ALL 'I will walk to the mountain'
This case is used to indicate the destination of a dynamic event		
Genitive	<i>-kin</i>	<i>asu pide' kwa-kin nuka-'a</i> this house 1SG-GEN be-3SG 'This house is mine'
This case is used to indicate belonging		
Reason	<i>-male'</i>	<i>lutalun-we' chimi-l-i nana-male',</i> mother.in.law-1SG die-FCT-3SG that-REAS  <i>welle'-apa-l-i sada-wek</i> cry-PROG-FCT-3SG wife-1SG (Valenzuela et al., 2013) 'My mother in law died, that is why my sister is crying'
This case is used to indicate the reason for an event		
Comitative	<i>-le'</i>	<i>i'pa'la ya'-pa'-l-e' ni'ni'-we'-le'-ku</i> now DESID-go-FCT-1SG dog-DIM-COM-1  <i>tana-k</i> forest-LOC 'I want to go to the forest with my dog'
This case is used to indicate a noun is together with another noun		

### Additive

The additive marker "-*anta*" can be used to add participants to an event. In Shawi, the additive marker is "-*nta*", and it is applied in the same way, but can also be used to coordinate noun phrases or highlight the appearance of a participant in an event (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). It might

be the case that Shiwilu “-*anta*” has the same function, but as only one instance has been found in the data this cannot be said with certainty. This instance of the additive is showcased in sentence (5).

- |                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| (5) <i>Pichu lans-a'pa-l-i</i> | <i>Maria-anta</i> |
| Peter dance-PROG-NFUT-3SG      | Maria-ADDIT       |
| ‘Peter and Maria danced’       |                   |

### Nominalisation

Two kinds of Shiwilu nominalisers have been found in the corpus, as seen in sentence (6) and (7). The nominaliser “-*su*” is also found in Shawi, where it is used in purposive constructions as well (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). Although this morpheme is analysed as a nominaliser, it could also be some sort of pseudo-infinitive based on sentence (6). More study on this morpheme is needed to reach a conclusive analysis, but because it has been analysed as a nominalisation in Shawi, it is also classified as one here. “-*kapen*” behaves much more like a typical nominaliser, as it turns the verb “*ker-*” into the object of sentence (7).

- |                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) <i>kwa luwan-tu-l-e'</i> | <i>ka'-a-ma-su</i> |
| 1SG want-VAL-FCT-1           | eat-PURP-2-NMLZ    |
| ‘I want you to eat’          |                    |
|                              |                    |
| (7) <i>kwa a'-ka'a-l-e-n</i> | <i>ker-kapen</i>   |
| 1SG CAUS-eat -FCT-1-2.O      | roast-NMLZ         |
| ‘I make you eat roast’       |                    |

### Verbs

Verbs can be defined as “the grammatical category that includes lexemes which express the least time-stable concepts” (Payne, 1997). Shiwilu verbs consist of a verb stem and several morphemes which convey certain grammatical properties.

### Tense and modality

Shiwilu solely differentiates between events that happened in the past and events that will happen in the future. This distinction has been described as a tense operation (Valenzuela, 2011b), but I propose a different analysis. Tense, aspect, and modality are abstract concepts, and these operations are sometimes difficult to distinguish from one another (Payne, 1997). It seems logical to label the seemingly temporal marking on the verb as a tense operation, as tense “is associated with the sequence of events in realtime” (Payne, 1997).

However, treating these markers as a type of modality better suits the nature of the language, as there are no instances found of tense and mood both being marked on the verb. This implies that the ‘non-future’ and ‘future’ fill the same position as other types of modality markers, which makes it likely that they are modality markers as well. Also, modality markers in Shiwilu usually come with their own person marking, which is the case in Shawi too (Rojas-Berscia, 2018), and the ‘non-future’ and ‘future’ both have their own paradigm. Finally, treating these markers as modality also explains the interaction between the progressive and the ‘non-future’ more elegantly, as these morphemes used in tandem convey an equivalent to the English present tense. This phenomenon is explained more in depth in the section on the progressive aspect on page 14.

Modality “relates to the speaker’s attitude toward the situation, including the speaker’s believe in its reality, or likelihood” (Payne, 1997). Types of modality can be ordered in two categories: realis and irrealis, with the first including all moods where the speaker is sure of the occurrence of an event, and with the second including all moods where the speaker does not make the assertion that a situation occurred. Valenzuela’s ‘non-future’ in Shiwilu fits in the first category, as the speaker is sure this event occurred, and is therefore analysed as the factual mood. Valenzuela’s ‘future’ fits in the second category, as the event described by the speaker has not yet happened, which is why this morpheme is analysed as the predictive mood. Note that this is a tentative analysis, and more research is required to fully substantiate these claims; however, because of the arguments mentioned before, this is the way these markers are analysed in this thesis.

### *Factual mood*

The factual mood is marked on the verb with the suffix “-l”. It conveys that a speaker knows an event has happened. The paradigm for this mood is given in Table 6, and an example can be found in sentence (8).

Table 6: Paradigm of person-marking in the factual mood

<b>Person</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
1 (exclusive)	-l-e'	-l-i-de'
1 (inclusive)	-l-e'	-l-e'-wa'
2	-l-a	-l-a-ma'
3	-l-i	-l-i-na'

- (8) *kwa wichi-l-e'*  
 1SG run-FCT-1SG  
 ‘I slept’

### *Predictive mood*

The predictive mood is marked on the verb with the suffix “-ert”. The first person of this paradigm is marked differently; it is the only person in the paradigm to have person marking when singular, and it has “-ter” as predictive marker when plural. It is used when a speaker wants to indicate that an event will likely happen. The paradigm for the predictive mood is shown in Table 7, and an example can be found in sentence (9).

- (9) *kwa ka'a-ter-wa'*  
1SG run-PRD-1PL  
'I will eat'

Table 7: Paradigm of person-marking in the predictive mood

Person	Singular	Plural
1 (exclusive)	-ert-e'	-ter-wa'
1 (inclusive)	-ert-e'	-ter-wa'
2	-ert-Ø	-ert-ma'
3	-ert-Ø	-ert-na'

### *Imperative mood*

Imperatives are used by a speaker to command someone to perform an action (Payne, 1997). The imperative mood in Shiwilu is marked on the verb. It is marked with either a /k/ or /t/ when the verb stem ends in a vowel, but in other instances there appears to be a Ø-marker. The imperative can be marked the suffix “-er”, which is likely a second person marker addressing the implicit referent. It is apparently not possible to negate this mood; the negative imperative, or prohibitive, has its own paradigm, as shown on page 14.

An example of the imperative can be found in sentence (10).

- (10) *pa'-k-er*  
go-IMP-2  
'Go'

A seemingly different kind of imperative marker found in Shiwilu is the suffix “-'”, with a possible preceding /a/ if the verb stem ends in a vowel. It seems that the suffix “-wa” here is the same as the first person plural inclusive marker, which also follows from the meaning of this construction. It is namely used when a speaker commands someone to perform an action with them.

It is possible that this marking and the previously discussed imperative are two different kinds of person marking belonging to the same paradigm, with the /k/ becoming a /ʔ/ in this context. It could also be that the imperative has a standard Ø-marking, and the different

consonants are inserted because of vowel collision. More research is required before anything conclusive can be said; however, this is the way the imperative is analysed in this thesis.

An example of the imperative can be found in sentence (11).

- (11)      *pa'-a'-wa*  
          go-IMP-1PL.INCL  
          'Let's go'

### *Prohibitive*

In Shiwilu, when a speaker wants to convey that someone should not perform an action, it won't do to simply negate the imperative; instead, a separate paradigm is used. Although this construction does not seem like a mood, but rather like a negative desiderative construction, it is still discussed in this section as it is an imperative of some sorts.

The paradigm of this construction is as follows: the suffix “-*ta*” is used when speaking to a single referent, “-*ma*” is used when there are multiple referents. Interestingly, the desiderative “*ya-*” is obligatory with this paradigm. This is probably because it is more polite to assert that you do not want someone to perform a certain action, rather than simply telling them not to. “*ya-*” will be discussed further in section on the desiderative on page 18.

An example of the prohibitive can be found in sentence (12) below.

- (12)      *aner' ya-wencha-ta*  
          not    DESID-come-PROH.SG  
          'Don't come'

### Aspect

Aspect is defined as “the internal temporal shape of events or states” (Payne, 1997). Aspect in Shiwilu is marked on the verb with a morpheme. In SemSyn, aspect markers are treated like predicates, which here means they have LOWERING as a cyclic rule. It is likely that aspect markers descended from ancient verbs, adverbs, or other kinds of predicates and have since been incorporated in the verb.

### *Progressive aspect*

The progressive, or continuous, aspect “implies an ongoing, dynamic process” (Payne, 1997). The progressive in Shiwilu is marked with the morpheme “-*pa*” on the verb. It is used to convey that a process is ongoing. It is found with both the factual and predictive mood, and can even be used with other aspectual markers.

It could be that the roots of the progressive marker lie in verbs compounding with the verb “*pa*”, which means “to go”. An example of this can be seen in sentence (10), or in sentence (13) below.

- (13)     *niup-ina*        *pa'-art-Ø-na* *nawa*  
           where-FOC?   go-PRD-3-PL   3PL  
           ‘Where will they go?’

It is very likely that in the past the verb would be stacked on the verb ‘to go’ to indicate an event was ongoing. In time, *pa'* underwent grammaticalisation until its origin as verb can only be seen in its syntactic behaviour. This is a common pattern in the languages of the world, as many continuous markers are derived from dynamic verbs like ‘to go’ (Campbell, 2013).

If used in tandem with the factual mood, the progressive can be used to express the equivalent to the present tense in English. This construction is actually quite logical now that the tense of Shiwilu has been reanalysed as modality. The speaker does not make any assertion regarding tense, but simply indicates whether an event has taken place or will take place, and the progressive is used to convey the continuation of this event. In a sentence like (14), the factual entails that the event has actually occurred, and the progressive means that it is still going on. This meaning indeed conceptually overlaps with the present tense, but the structure is very different.

- (14)     *kenma lansa'-pa-l-a*  
           2SG   dance-PROG-FCT-2  
           ‘You are dancing’

#### *Iterative aspect*

The iterative aspect conveys that an event happened “several times in succession” (Payne, 1997). In Shiwilu, the iterative is marked with the morpheme “*-pile*” on the verb, with an optional insertion of /aʔ/ in case the verb stem ends in a consonant. It is possible that the iterative aspect is derived from the progressive. Doing something continuously and repeatedly have some semantic overlap, so it might be the case that the iterative was formed by placing “*-ile*” after the progressive “*-pa*”. However, this is purely speculative, and more data on this topic is required before such claims can be substantiated.

The iterative is found in the factual and the predictive mood. An example of the iterative can be found in sentence (15).

- (15)     *kenma tulunera'-pile-ert-Ø*  
           2SG   sing-ITE-PRD-2SG  
           ‘You will be singing repeatedly’

### *Frustrative*

Another feature of Shiwilu found in the data is the frustrative, which is marked with the morpheme “-wi” on the verb. This is not an aspect, but rather a predicate. The frustrative is used to indicate someone has failed to perform a certain action. Shawi also has a frustrative marker, but this is a circumfix instead of a suffix: “-pi...we” (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). However, the first part of this Shawi circumfix, “-pi” behaves the same as “-wi”, so a possible relation is likely.

An example of the frustrative can be found in sentence (16).

- (16) *nawa de'kun-tu-wi-l-i-na'*  
 3PL walk-VAL-FRUST-FCT-3-PL  
 ‘They almost walked’

### Copula constructions

Copula are defined as “any morpheme (affix, particle, or verb) that joins, or “couples”, two nominal elements in a predicate nominal construction” (Payne, 1997). Just like Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018), Shiwilu has two ways to join nominal elements: with the use of a verb or with a suffix on the predicate.

### *Verbal copula*

The Shiwilu verb used in copula constructions is “*nuka*”. This verb has person marking which agrees with the subject, as seen in Table 8 below. An example of the use of *nuka*’ is shown in sentence (17).

Table 8: Paradigm of person-marking on the copula verb “*nuka*”

Person	Singular		Plural	
1 (exclusive)	<i>nuka</i> ’	-ka	<i>nuka</i> ’	-dekwa
1 (inclusive)	<i>nuka</i> ’	-ka	<i>nuka</i> ’	-wa’
2	<i>nuka</i> ’	-ma	<i>nuka</i> ’	-ma’
3	<i>nuka</i> ’	-’a	<i>nuka</i>	-r’ka

- (17) *nan-i’na shin muda nuka’-a*  
 3SG-FOC? tall man COP-3  
 ‘He is a tall man’

### *Morphemic copula*

Shiwilu can also conjoin nominals with the help of a suffix. This suffix is a person marking morpheme which agrees with the subject. It is placed on the object or adverbial predicate. An example sentence is shown in sentence (18), and the paradigm for this suffix is given in Table 9.

- (18) *kwa Shiwlu-ku*  
 1SG Shiwlu-1  
 ‘I am Shiwlu’

Table 9: Paradigm of morphemic copula

Person	Singular	Plural
1 (exclusive)	-ku	-ndek
1 (inclusive)	-ku	-nwa’
2	-ken	-nma’
3	∅	-nwa’

### Negation

Negation is used to assert “that some event, situation, or state of affairs does not hold” (Payne, 1997). Shiwlu has morphological negation, “-in”, which is marked upon the verb, as is usually done with morphological negation (Payne, 1997).

In the data, this kind of negation is found in both the factual and predictive mood and with the progressive aspect, as seen in sentences (19) to (21). The morpheme is placed after the aspect markers, but before the mood markers. It tends to nasalise the factual marker, as can be seen in sentence (19) and (21).

- (19) *kwa chuchu-sha ka’-in-n-e’*  
 1SG forest.meat-DIM eat-NEG-FCT-1  
 ‘I did not eat meat from the forest’
- (20) *kwa chuchu-sha ka’-in-ert-e’*  
 1SG forest.meat-DIM eat-NEG-PRD-1  
 ‘I will not eat meat from the forest’
- (21) *kwa chuchu-sha ka’-ap-in-n-e’*  
 1SG forest.meat-DIM eat-PROG-NEG-PRD-1  
 ‘I am not eating meat from the forest’

### Compound verbs

Just like in Shawi, it is possible to stack verbs on top of each other in Shiwlu. In constructions like these, the first verb modifies the meaning of the second verb. This can be seen in the desiderative meaning “ya-” gives to the verbs marked with this morpheme in the prohibitive, or how when “ninch-i-” is placed in front of a verb it conveys that the speaker knows how to perform that action.

### *Desiderative*

Aside from being used in the prohibitive construction, the morpheme “*ya-*” is also used to express a desire to perform a certain action. This morpheme is exactly the same as the desiderative morpheme in Shawi, in both function and form (Rojas-Berscia, 2018).

An example of the desiderative can be found in sentence (22).

- (22)     *kwa ya-ka'-l-e'*  
          1SG    **DESID**-eat-FCT-1  
          ‘I want to eat’

### *Cognoscitive*

Shiwilu has a cognoscitive marker “*ninchi-*”, which is derived from the verb ‘to know’. This morpheme is very similar to the Shawi cognoscitive “*nitu-*”, which behaves the same way (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). Two examples can be seen in sentence (23) and sentence (24).

- (23)     *nana kerniala                   ninchi-tera'-tu-l-i*  
          3SG    manioc.sticks        **COGNOSC**-plant-FCT-3  
          ‘He knows how to plant manioc sticks.’

- (24)     *nana tana-k                   ninchi-dekkun-l-i*  
          3SG    forest-LOC        **COGNOSC**-walk-FCT-3  
          ‘He knows how to walk in the forest’

### **Closed Word Classes**

‘Closed word classes’ are defined as “those whose members can be listed fully, and no new members can be added” (Aikhenvald, 2015). Shiwilu has several closed word classes, which will be discussed in the following sections. Note that these are not all the closed word classes in Shiwilu, and not all closed word classes presented here are described fully. This is because of a lack of data concerning this topic, as this was not the focus of this study.

#### Adjectives

In Shawi, adjectives are a closed word class (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). This is the main reason Shiwilu adjectives are also placed in this section, as they were not focused on in elicitation, and as such most adjectives are unknown. Two examples found in the data are shown below.

- shin*   “tall”  
*wipen* “fat”

## Pronouns

Shiwilu has personal pronouns, interrogative pronouns, and demonstrative pronouns.

### Personal pronouns

Shiwilu has an intricate personal pronoun system. There is an inclusive-exclusive distinction in both the first person singular, also called a dual, and the first person plural. Many of the plural pronouns are inflected versions of their singular counterparts. All the pronouns are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Personal pronouns in Shiwilu

Person	Singular	Plural
1 (exclusive)	<i>kwa</i>	<i>kuda</i>
1 (inclusive)	<i>kenmu</i>	<i>kenmuwa'</i>
2	<i>kenma</i>	<i>kenmama'</i>
3	<i>nana</i>	<i>nawa'</i>

### *Possible evidential*

In some instances, the suffix “-i’na” can be found on personal pronouns. It is unclear what meaning this suffix actually entails, but it seems to convey some sort of affirmation. This means that it could be a kind of evidential of certainty, but more examples are required before any concrete claims can be made. Below are some instances of this morpheme found in the data, along with an example sentence in (25).

1SG *kwa* → *kwi’na*

3SG *nana* → *nani’na*

1PL *kuda* → *kudi’na*

(25) *kw-i’na*      *Shiwilu-ku*  
1SG-EVID      Shiwilu-1  
‘I am Shiwilu’

Another suffix sometimes found on personal pronouns is “i’pa”, an example of which can be found below. This suffix conveys the meaning that it is doubtful one will perform an action. It could be part of a similar paradigm to *i’na*, as the forms of the two morphemes are quite alike. Their function also seems related, as they both express the certainty with which the marked pronoun will undertake an action. However, more data is needed to confirm their role and

possible relation. Below are some instances of this morpheme found in the data, along with an example sentence in (26).

1SG *kwa* → *kwi'pa*

- (26) *kw-i'pa wench-ert-e'*  
 1SG-EVID come-PRD-1  
 'Maybe I will come'

### Interrogative pronouns

Shiwilu has several words acting as interrogative pronouns, which are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Personal pronouns in Shiwilu

<i>den-ina</i>	who
<i>ma'pu-sina</i>	what/how (singular)
<i>ma'nen-ina</i>	what/how (plural)
<i>eniup-ina</i>	where
<i>unpi-'ina</i>	when
<i>mak'-ina</i>	why

In Table 11 it can be seen that all interrogative pronouns can co-occur with the suffix “*i'na*”. The meaning of the “*-ina*” suffix is not quite clear. It could be some sort of interrogative marker. However, it is also possible that the suffix is related to the previously mentioned “*-i'na*” and have a sort of focal function in this context instead of an affirmation. Because of this possible relation, *-ina* is analysed here as a possible focal marker. The pronouns can also occur without this suffix, as shown in sentences (27) and (28).

- (27) *den te'ka-l-i*  
 who run- NFUT-3SG  
 'Who ran?'

- (28) *ma'pu pa-l-a-ma'*  
 what go- NFUT-2-PL  
 'What happened?'

Some interrogative pronouns can be marked for person and number. *den*, English ‘who’, has been found to be marked for person, while *ma'pu*, English ‘what’ or ‘how’, has different marking for singular and plural. The complete paradigm of this phenomenon can be found below.

- (29) *den-kw-ina kwa*  
 who-1-FOC 1SG  
 ‘Who am I?’
- (30) *den-ken-ina kenma*  
 who-2-FOC 2SG  
 ‘Who are you?’
- (31) *den-Ø-ina nana*  
 who-3-FOC 3SG  
 ‘Who is he?’
- (32) *den-kw-ina kuda*  
 who-1-FOC 1PL.INCL  
 ‘Who am I?’
- (33) *den-ken-ina kenma-ma’*  
 who-2-FOC 2-PL  
 ‘Who are you?’
- (34) *den-Ø-ina nawa*  
 who-3-FOC 3PL  
 ‘Who is he?’
- (35) *ma’-nen-ina ya-nu’-tu-l-a-ma’*  
 what-PL-FOC DESID-do-VAL-NFUT-2-PL  
 ‘What did you (plural) want to do?’
- (36) *ma’-pus-ina kenma nu’-tu-l-a*  
 what-SG-FOC 2SG do- NFUT-2  
 ‘What did you (singular) do?’

### Demonstrative pronouns

Two demonstrative pronouns, or deictics, have been found in the data.

The first is ‘*asu*’, meaning ‘this’. An example of this is found in sentence (37) below.

- (37) **asu** pid-e’ kwa-kin nu-ka’a  
**this** house-1 1-GEN COP-3SG  
 ‘This house is mine’

The third person singular pronoun, ‘*nana*’, can also be used as a deictic meaning ‘that’. The deictic meaning of this word seems to be weak, as it can also be translated as a definite pronoun. An example is shown below in sentence (38).

- (38) **nana** muda wichi-l-e’  
**that** man sleep-FCT-1SG  
 ‘That man slept’

## Syntactic Processes

In this section some major syntactic processes of Shiwilu are presented. First, several kinds of complement clauses are shown. Subsequently, the focus lies on valency changing operations. Finally, the treatment of arguments in transitive sentences is discussed, and this section closes with an overview of ergativity in Shiwilu.

### Complement clauses

Complement clauses are clauses that function as an argument of another clause (Payne, 1997). There are three kinds of Shiwilu complement clauses found in the data: the subordinate, the sequential, and the simultaneous clause.

#### Subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses, or independent clauses, are clauses “that depend on some other clause for at least some of its inflectional information” (Payne, 1997). In Shiwilu, the verbs in subordinate clauses have the purposive marker “-ka’” with its own paradigm, shown in Table 12 below. Interestingly, the purposive marked verb is also marked with a nominaliser. Its function might be to indicate the dependent nature of the clause, as a noun cannot be an independent sentence, in contrast to a verb. This construction is almost identical in both form and function to the purposive construction found in Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). An example of the Shiwilu purposive is given in sentence (39).

Another possible construction is shown in sentence (40). As mentioned before, the standard construction in Shiwilu is SOV, and sentence SVO. It is possible that this construction is formed because of topic-comment modulation to put more emphasis on the object by placing it at the end of the sentence. It could also be caused by Spanish influences, for these sentences have been elicited. The Spanish sentence used for elicitation is ‘El quiere que tu vengas’, which is of course SVO, and it is possible the Shiwilu speaker kept this order in his translation.

Table 12: Paradigm of person-marking in subordinate clauses

Person	Singular		Plural	
	Purposive marking	Person marking	Purposive marking	Person marking
1 (exclusive)	-ka’	∅	-ka’	-idek
1 (inclusive)	-ka’	∅	-ka’	-wa’
2	-ka’	(-ma’)	-ma’	-ma’
3	-a’	∅	-rka’	∅

- (39) *wencha'-a'-su*      *luwan-tu-l-i*      *nana*  
 come-PURP.3-NMLZ    want-VAL-NFUT-3    3SG  
 'He wants him to come'
- (40) *nana* *luwan-tu-l-i*      *kenma wencha-ka'-su*  
 3SG    want- VAL-FCT-3      2SG    come-PURP.2-NMLZ  
 'He wants you to come'

### Sequential clauses

Shiwilu has a separate verbal paradigm for clauses that immediately follow the main clause in a temporal sense. The paradigm of verbs in these sequential clauses is shown in Table 13. In this construction the temporal adverb “*nane'lan*” is optional. In all instances of the sequential found in the data, the main clause was lacking a subject, which is likely due to Shiwilu being a pro-drop language. An example of a sequential construction is given in sentence (41).

Table 13: Paradigm of person-marking in sequential clauses

Person	Singular	Plural
1 (exclusive)	- <i>mu</i>	- <i>mu-de'</i>
1 (inclusive)	- <i>mu</i>	- <i>mu-wa</i>
2	- <i>n</i>	- <i>n-ma</i>
3	- <i>n</i>	- <i>n-na</i>

- (41) *kwa* *te'ka-mu*      *nane'lan*      *wichi-l-e'*  
 1SG    run-1.SEQ      then      sleep-FCT-1  
 'After I ran, I slept'

### Simultaneous clauses

To express the fact that two events happened simultaneously, the simultaneous construction can be used. Verbs in the simultaneous clause are marked with “-*se'*”, or a variation on this morpheme, and have person marking as well, the paradigm of which is shown in Table 14. The simultaneous can also be used in tandem with the imperative, as seen in sentence (42). Sentence (43) is an example of a simultaneous clause used with the factual mood.

Table 14: Paradigm of person-marking in simultaneous clauses

Person	Singular		Plural	
	Simultaneous marking	Person marking	Simultaneous marking	Person marking
1 (exclusive)	- <i>se'</i>	- <i>ku</i>	- <i>se'</i>	- <i>ku-de'</i>
1 (inclusive)	- <i>se'</i>	- <i>ku</i>	- <i>se'</i> - <i>se'</i>	- <i>ku-wa</i> - <i>ku-de'</i>
2	- <i>se'</i> - <i>ma'</i>	- <i>kin</i> - <i>si'</i>	- <i>si</i>	- <i>ma'</i>
3	- <i>se'</i>	∅	- <i>a'</i>	- <i>ser</i>

(42) *kwa teka'-se-ku tuluner-ker'*  
 1SG run-SIM-1 sing-IMP  
 'While I run, sing!'

(43) *kwa teka'-se-ku nana tuluner-l-i*  
 1SG run-SIM-1 3SG sing-FCT-3  
 'While I run, he sings'

### Valency changing operations

Valence “refers to the number of arguments present in any given clause” (Payne, 1997). Valency changing operations are operations which increase or decrease the possible amount of arguments a verb can have. Shiwilu has several constructions that make it possible for verbs to take on more arguments.

#### Causative

The causative is used to imply that an event is caused by someone or something. In Shiwilu, the causative is formed by placing the prefix “a’-” on the verb, which is very similar to the causative of Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). This prefix is treated like a predicate in the SA. An example of the causative is shown in sentence (44).

(44) *Luis chuchu-sha a'-te'ka-l-i*  
 Luis forest.meat-DIM CAUS-run- FCT-3  
 'Luis makes the meat run (Luis carries the meat)'

#### Sociative causative

The sociative causative is very similar to the causative in form, but its meaning is slightly different. It is used when a speaker makes someone perform an action alongside them. Shawi also has a marker with a similar function, namely “*ichi-*” (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). The Shiwilu prefix is “*ek-*”. This morpheme is written with a coda ‘k’, for it comes from Arawak (Rojas-Berscia, p.c.). An example of the sociative causative is given in sentence (45). An interesting observation is the use of the valency increasing suffix “*-tu*”. *te'ka* is traditionally an intransitive verb; however, the causative alone should be enough to increase the valency of the verb. It might be the case that this construction is the product of hypercorrection.

(45) *Luis ek-te'ka-tu-l-i Miker*  
 Luis SOC.CAUS-run- FCT-3 Miguel  
 'Luis makes Miguel run with him'

## Reflexive

A reflexive is used to indicate that someone performed an action on oneself. In Shiwilu this meaning is conveyed with the prefix “*in-*” on the verb. This suffix behaves the same as the Shawi reflexive, the suffix “*ni-*” (Rojas-Bersia, 2018). An example is given in sentence (46).

- (46)      *kenmu-wa’ in-ka-tu-pa’-l-e’-wa’*  
          1.INCL-PL      REF-help-VAL-PROG-FCT-1-PL  
          ‘We helped ourselves’

## Valenciator

Shiwilu has the suffix “*-tu*” which can be added to a verb to increase its valency. The behaviour of this morpheme is very similar to “*-te*” in Shawi (Rojas-Berscia, 2018). In the data used for this study, it is most notably found as verbalizer. By placing this suffix on a noun, it adds an argument, thereby effectively making that noun a verb.

*dekkun* “path”      → *dekkun-tu* “walk”

## Object incorporation in transitive sentences

In Shiwilu it is possible to mark the object on the verb. This is only allowed if the object is a first person or second person. There is no verbal object marking for third person objects, and in these contexts the third person personal pronoun is used. Transitive constructions in which the subject acts upon a third person object can trigger the ergative marker in certain situations, which is further explored on page 26. The paradigm of incorporated objects is given in sentences (47) to (50).

- (47)      *kwa de’-tu-l-e-n*  
          1SG    kill-VAL-FCT-1-2.O  
          ‘I killed you’
- (48)      *kenma de’-tu-l-u*  
          1SG    kill-VAL-FCT-2-1.O  
          ‘You killed me’
- (49)      *Kwansha de’-tu-l-i-u*  
          Juan        kill-VAL-FCT-3>2.O  
          ‘Juan killed me’
- (50)      *Pitru de’-tu-l-i-n*  
          Pieter    kill-VAL-FCT-3>2.O  
          ‘Pieter killed you’

## Ergativity

Ergativity is the “case inflection marking transitive subjects” (Aikhenvald, 2015). The following chapter provides a closer look at ergativity in Shiwilu.

### The nominal hierarchy

Shiwilu is a language with optional ergativity, which means that the subject has to be marked in some contexts, while in others this is not necessary. The ergative is marked on the subject by the suffix “-*ler*”. Valenzuela (2011) has shown that the ergative can only be used when a subject is acting upon a third person object, as shown in sentences (51) and (52). The objects of these sentences are both in the third person singular, which means that the subjects of sentence (51) and (52) can be ergatively marked.

(51)      *kwa(-ler)*      *dei'-tu-l-e'*      *nana*  
 1SG(-ERG)      kill-VAL-FCT-1SG      3SG  
 ‘I killed him’

(52)      *kenma(-ler)*      *dei'-tu-l-a*      *nana*  
 2SG(-ERG)      kill-VAL-FCT-2      3SG  
 ‘you killed him’

It is impossible to mark the subject with an ergative when a subject is acting upon a first or second person object, as shown in sentences (47) to (50) on page 25. In sentence (47) and (48) the object is in the second person singular, which is why the subject cannot be ergatively marked. The same applies to for sentences (49) and (50), as the object of these sentences is in the first person singular, leaving the subjects unmarked.

When this information is organised, Shiwilu appears to have a hierarchy of nouns governing the marking of the ergative on subjects. This nominal hierarchy is shown in Table 14.

**Table 14:** Nominal hierarchy in Shiwilu

S>	S>	S>	S>	S>	S>	S>Proper	S>	S>	S>	S>	S>	S>	S>
1PL	1SG	2PL	2SG	3PL	3SG	Noun	HUM.PL	HUM.SG	ANIM.PL	ANIM.SG	INAN.PL	INAN.SG	INAN.SG
Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )	(- <i>ler</i> )
													<i>Common nouns</i>

A nominal hierarchy governing the appearance of the ergative marker. is very common in the languages of the world which use an ergative structure. This phenomenon is known as split ergativity (Dixon, 1994).

In Shiwilu, the split appears to be between the second and third person pronouns. This is a logical place for such a split, because if the arguments are in the first or second person, *-ler*

is unnecessary as salient arguments do not need an ergative marker (Silverstein, 1976). It is always clear from the context to whom the first and second person pronouns refer, so there is no need to use an ergative marker to indicate which argument is the subject and which is the object, for this is already known. A third person pronoun, or a noun, can refer to something which is not present, so in these cases, to avoid any ambiguity about who performed an action and who underwent it, the ergative marker is used.

However, the assignment of the ergative in Shiwilu has an interesting and uncommon property. Traditionally, whether the subject gets the ergative marking is based on the salience of the subject (Dixon, 1994), but in Shiwilu it is based on the salience of the object. This is an interesting and uncommon feature, one Shiwilu does not even share with sister language Shawi (Bourdeau, 2015). It is unclear what the origin is of this peculiar pattern, so further research is required to solve this puzzle.

#### Optionality

The ergative can only appear when a subject acts upon third person pronouns or nouns, but even in these contexts the ergative can be optional. The ergative is found to be obligatorily marked when the word order is changed to the OSV construction. This process is only found in NP's. If the ergative is not added, the meaning of the sentence changes, as shown in sentences (53) to (55). In sentence (53) the regular word order is used, so *-ler* is optional. In sentence (54) the arguments are switched; the object now comes before the subject, so the ergative marker is obligatory to avoid ambiguity. Sentence (55) shows that the meaning changes if the argument order is reversed and *-ler* is not added.

(53)      *amana(-ler) de'-tu-l-i*                      *papa-mapua*  
             jaguar(-ERG) kill-VAL-FCT-3SG          father-PL  
             'The jaguar killed Jesus'

(54)      *papa-mapua amana-ler de'-tu-l-i*  
             father-1PL jaguar-ERG kill-VAL-FCT-3SG  
             'The jaguar killed Jesus'

(55)      *papa-mapua amana de'-tu-l-i*  
             father-1PL jaguar kill-VAL-FCT-3SG  
             'Jesus killed the jaguar'

## Conclusion

In this thesis I have given a general sketch of the grammar of the Shiwilu language. The main focus was on the syntax of the language, which is why I have primarily aimed to give a comprehensive overview of verbal inflection, complement clauses, and the treatment of arguments in transitive sentences. Listed below are the most notable new contributions to the knowledge base of Shiwilu this thesis offers.

In the section on basic grammatical properties, I have proposed a possible formal explanation of the OVS word order of Shiwilu by using the formal framework of Semantic Syntax. While it was already known that the this word order can occur in the language, no formal explanation has yet been proposed

In the section on verbs, specifically on tense and modality, I have argued that Shiwilu has no tense in the traditional sense. Instead, the speakers use modality to make temporal assertions concerning events. This new analysis also explains why the interaction between the factual mood and the progressive aspect yields a meaning equivalent to the English present tense.

In the section on ergativity I have drafted a nominal hierarchy to showcase the features of the objects which triggers the occurrence of the ergative marker, as well as the influence of word order. This is an interesting topic for further research, as the ergative in Shiwilu is triggered depending on the salience of the object rather than the subject, which is uncommon in the languages of the world.

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