

# A grammar of Idu, a language of Arunachal Pradesh

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### ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFF	Affirmative marker
EVD	Evidential
HAB	Habitual
NEG	Negation marker
NUM	Number
PRES	Present
RPAST	Recent past
CPAST	Completed past
PCONT	Past continuous



### ABSTRACT

This document is a grammar of Idu, a language spoken around Roing in the Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh, NE India. Anthropological and early travel literature is briefly reviewed, together with previous literature and attempts to devise an orthography. Idu is usually classified as ‘Mishmi’, together with Tawra, as an isolate branch of Tibeto-Burman, although this remains unproven. Idu appears to be endangered, with regional languages including Nepali and Hindi causing loss of competence among the younger generation of speakers. Constituent order is SOV, but with a great degree of flexibility, and some constructions include the typologically unusual OSV. There are fragmentary traces of accusative marking. Pronouns are regularly dropped in declarative sentences. Idu is broadly an isolating language, but the verbal system is marked by complex extensional morphology and pronominal indexing. Idu has an elaborate system of registers, including the speech of the *īgū*, shamans, and hunters as well as mediation, humorous and cursing registers. Idu maintains an elaborate metrology, systems of measurement for time, volume and distance, described in an appendix.

Keywords; Idu; grammar; dictionary; Arunachal Pradesh

### **Preface**

This grammar has been developed simultaneously with a dictionary of Idu, and many of the example sentences here are shared with the dictionary. The primary audience is the Idu people, and I have therefore tried to make the text as free from theoretical vocabulary which is soon discarded. In addition, the grammar is eventually intended to provide the basis for school teaching textbooks, and there should be no need to make those who eventually prepare them reach for theoretical handbooks every second sentence. Nonetheless, grammars can hardly avoid technical language completely, especially with a language as unusual as Idu. I hope I have succeeded in walking this line.

Acknowledgments and a description of the fieldwork on which this grammar is based are given in the introduction.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Idu and the term ‘Mishmi’

The term ‘Mishmi’ is used in the travel literature as far back as the early nineteenth century (Brown 1837; Rowlatt 1845) to refer to three distinct peoples, the Idu, Tawrā [=Digaru, Taraon] and the Kman [=Miju, Geman]. The common name ‘Digaru’ (a major river) is also in use which has given rise to Digarish, a linguistic term to describe the two languages Idu and Tawrā. Culturally speaking, these two languages were historically grouped with Kman, as the Mishmi. The Idu are known as ‘Luoba’ in China (Sun et al. 1980). A name recorded for the Idu in ritual speech and archaic idioms is Kera.a, and since ‘Idu’ refers to a river valley, this name may have displaced Kera.a as a reference name.

Idu and Tawrā may be related, although intensive borrowing is equally possible. Pulu (1991) has an appendix comparing common lexical items between Idu and Tawrā; the strong similarities between these suggest borrowing. However, Kman is quite distinct and is not part of the same linguistic group. For reference purposes, I am adopting the name ‘Mishmic’ to cover Idu and Tawrā.

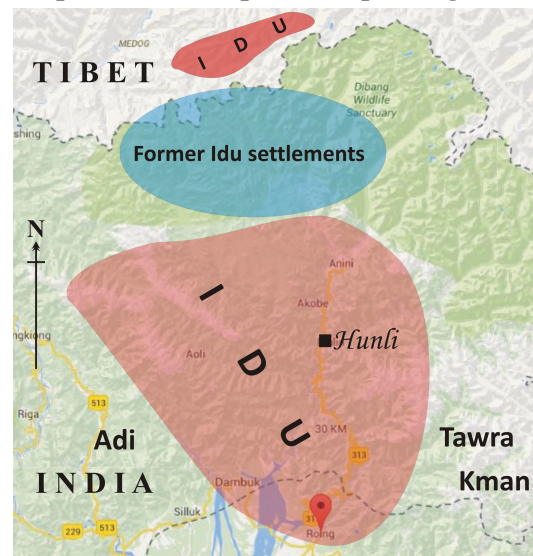
The earliest reference to the Idu language is in Brown (1837) and language data can be found in Campbell (1874) and Konow (1902). The only significant publications on Idu from the Indian side are the pre-linguistic Pulu (1978, 2002a,b). The main value of Pulu (2002a) is as an elicitation guide, although the centralised Hindu-mainstream thinking that dominates its semantics means it needs to be treated with caution. Idu has also been described briefly from the Chinese side, notably in Sun et al. (1980, 1991), Sun (1983a,b, 1999) and Ouyang (1985). None of these are in any way satisfactory, and therefore a new project was undertaken, beginning in 2015, in collaboration with the Idu Language Development Committee (ILDC) to produce a fresh description of Idu, including both a dictionary and grammar, and eventually a sociolinguistic description and collection of texts.

### 1.2 Where Idu people live

The Idu live principally in Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh with some settlements in Lohit and E. Siang. However, the ‘Upper’ Idu (Luoba) live towards the Tibetan border and there are some villages in China (Sun 1983). None of the literature has a listing of Idu villages or indeed a map showing the limits of their territory. A major earthquake in 1952 led to the destruction of many villages in the Upper Dibang and the abandonment of others, accelerating a movement down to the plains area. The disputes between India and China have meant that the international border has been closed since 1961, and Idu villages in the two nation-states are now cut off from one another. In addition, the creation of the Dibang wildlife sanctuary has cleared out many of the villages in the border region, further accentuating the division. Idu recognises the division between ‘Upper’ and ‘Lower’ Idu with the following names.

Mráyā     mountain people  
Mándō     plains people

Map 1. Sketch map of Idu-speaking area



Key: INDIA     Nation State  
Adi     Ethnic group  
■     Idu settlement  
-----     International boundary  
■     Idu villages

Map 1 shows the approximate distribution of Idu-speaking villages. The 1971 census recorded around 7700 individuals self-identifying as Idu Mishmi, although this is no measure of language competence. Other more recent figures are as high as 16,000 but there are no reliable data to support this. The restrictive entry policies of Arunachal Pradesh have meant that until recently the region was all but closed to even Indian citizens, but the opening of a bridge across the Brahmaputra connecting to Tinsukia in November 2017 has

brought in waves of Assamese tourists, to the dismay of the Idu, since Roing is the nearest town which they can reach in Arunachal Pradesh.

### 1.3 Anthropology of the Idu

The earliest discussion of Idu social life is the brief section in Dalton (1872) which covers their social organisation, religion and 'warlike propensities'. Two short monographs describe the social and material life of the Idu, Baruah (1960) and Bhattacharjee (1983) both of which reflect long residence in the Dibang area. Baruah is of particular interest, since although it was researched in the period after the earthquake of 1950, it reflects a period when the Idu still had very little interaction with the outside world. Both describe Idu relations to the world of the spirits in some detail, although there are a number of errors. It may be assumed that the data in this paper has cross-checked against both of these sources and represents the findings of recent fieldwork.

Needless to say, things have moved along since these descriptions; Baruah in particular reflects the situation more than sixty years ago. Idu have increasingly moved to the plains, and have encountered other lifestyles. The proximity of the administrative centres and more recently the Border Roads Organisation workcamps have brought a mixture of Bengalis, Assamese and others to the area. Roing was also chosen for Nepali resettlement and many Idu now speak some Nepali. Idu lifestyle has been much affected by these experiences. The longhouses are gradually disappearing in favour of modern cement-block houses, and modern dress has displaced traditional dress except for festivals. Only the older generation are seen with the straight fringe haircut seen in earlier monographs, a distinctive style responsible for one of the earlier names for the Idu, Chulikata. Despite this, there is a strong argument that Idu have remained quite conservative in terms of social culture and religious adherence.

The Idu are subsistence farmers, and depend on vegetative crops such as taro, bananas and yams, as well as cereals including foxtail and finger millets, sorghum and Job's tears. Rice is now an important part of the diet but this is relatively recent. The richness of the wild environment ensures that a significant proportion of protein still comes from wild resources and large and small mammals and fish are regularly consumed.

A social anthropologist writing in the 1930s would certainly have characterised Idu as a segmentary lineage society. Strongly acephalous, they are divided into paired clans, and these were the basis for residence and warfare far into the colonial era. Marital partners were formerly from preferred clans, although these rules have largely broken down in favour of free choice. Polygyny was common in the past, and was realised in a longhouse system, where wives were provided with individual hearths and family space strung along communal corridors. Cooper (1873: 189-190) described this system quite accurately and it has not changed markedly in the past century and a half. These structures remain widespread in rural areas.

The aspect of Idu culture which persists and could accurately be described as the social glue which keeps their society coherent, is a strong respect for the practice of shamanistic religion. World religions<sup>1</sup>, typically Christianity and Buddhism, still have few adherents in this area. Both for healing and the performance of the complex rituals involved propitiating *khānyū* spirits, easing the passage of the soul after death and healing the sick, requires the ministrations of the *īgū*, ritual specialists. There is no evidence that the importance of these is diminishing, or that new individuals are not continuing the tradition.

The unease generated by this cultural loss has generated a response in terms of a movement for cultural revival. Idu culture is undergoing adaptation and reinvention, something which can be most obviously seen with the Rē festival. Rē is a core ceremonial activity in Idu life, a large-scale feast involving the slaughter of numerous pigs and the preparation and consumption of large amounts of food and beer. These are similar to 'feasts of merit' found in other parts of the world and strongly reminiscent of the New Guinea *moka*. To accumulate the pigs required, individuals must contract debts to both clans and personal friends, which often take years to repay. Despite the financial outlay, the function is both to generate enormous prestige for individuals and to create a network of obligation which binds together clans for a generation. Although there

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<sup>1</sup> Hinduism has a strong presence among migrants and also government support since the centrally-funded Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed Hindu shrines in many places. But Idu converts are few.

is some feeling among modern Idu that Rē is wasteful and creates debts which would be better expended on health or schooling, younger people are continuig the tradition in 2018, so clearly its percieved benefits outweigh its percieved demerits.

The traditional Rē festival has a curious mirror, the government-sponsored modern version. This was created in 1967, as part of a broader effort in Arunachal Pradesh to promote a specific festival for external visitors to experience. Similar fetivals were created for the Kman and Tawrā, the Tamladu, which is celebrated at much the same time of year. In 1967, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi visited Roing, and was welcomed with a festival, which obviously did not owe much to the actual Rē tradition (Photo 1). Cultural dancing, speeches and displays of traditional crafts as well as food stalls were then and are still the backbone of the government version. For a half-century Rē has gradually gathered a more formal side, with performances by dance-groups, schoolchildren and visits by ministers. Stages, coloured lighting, heavy

**Photo 1. First Rē festival, 1967**



1967, 1st Reh Group Nyaya. Courtesy, collection of Late Budhiman Linggi

Source: As indicated

amplification.political rhetoric and performances by popular singers, as well as the near interminable awarding of certificates for minuscule achievements, are all part of three days of festivities. In 2018, Rē was celebrated with considerable energy, and the building of a traditional longhouse in which high-status igu chanted, at times drowned out by amplified music. Photo 2 shows the presentation of the Idu orthography book and wallchart taking place during Rē in 2018.

**Photo 2. Rē festival, 2018, presenting the Idu orthography**



Source: Author

### 1.4 Previous attempts to develop an Idu orthography

There have been a number of attempts to develop an Idu orthography beyond the pedagogic publications of Pulu referenced above. Some of these have been in the context of missionary organisations, and seem to

have been partly clandestine. It is safe to say that none have been widely adopted. The travails of Idu are described at greater length in Blench (2018). A summary of the proposed orthography is given in an Appendix.

### 1.5 Dialect and variability in elicited forms

In 1950 a major earthquake struck the Dibang Valley effectively overthrew any neat system of dialect variation. Many settlements in the Hill areas were abandoned, and households came to settle among the plains dwellers, including Idu, Tawra, Assamese and Nepali. It seems likely that prior to 1950, there was a more stable pattern of correspondences between ‘Upper’ or ‘Hill’ Idu and ‘Lower’ or ‘Plains’ Idu. It is likely that prior to the earthquake, Idu dialects were more marked, and associated with the twelve river valleys along which the Idu traditionally lived. However, the restructuring of the population led to a collapse of marked boundaries, and now there is a single major distinction recognised, that between the Midu (plains) and the Mithu (mid-level). The ‘Upper’ dialects, i.e. those spoken around Anini, also have a few distinctive lexemes, but otherwise there is little difference with Mithu. The differences between Midu and Mithu, however, are not those usually associated with dialectal diversification, sound-shifts and morphology. In this respect, the phonology and syntax of the two seems virtually identical. The major difference is the loss of initials in the plains dialects. Table 1 provides some examples of this process.

**Table 1. Comparison of Midu and Mithu lexemes**

<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Midu</b>	<b>Mithu</b>
brush-tailed porcupine	āló	kāló
banana	àji brū	màji brù
When?	kājīhō	káisō
high	ìrù	hìrù
no!	ngā	ḡáwà
now	ēcāhō	ētā
bad	èlè	hèlè
cold	jīsī	dròsī
jungle	āmbá	kāmbá
tastes good (alcohol)	àkā	màkā
sago palm sp	àlōmbó	màlōmbó

There seems to be no underlying logic to which consonants are deleted and it is suggested this is a largely iconic process, symbolising the differentiation of lects in social discourse rather than reflecting an underlying diversification.

A related issue in trying to establish a standard form of Idu is variation between speakers. Idu speakers are similarly tolerant of considerable lexical variation, being aware of multiple forms of words, even if they do not use them. These can be drawn from some of the specialised registers, such as the shamanic and hunters’ lexicon. Without any coherent community, forms from different dialects have been mixed together. As a result, there are often multiple versions of the same lexical item, and a high tolerance for different pronunciations, especially of vowels and tones. The dictionary therefore lists as many variant forms as have been gathered. It is not uncommon in an elicitation session for different speakers to produce different vowels, and insist that they are all ‘the same’. This makes producing a consistent phonology for Idu problematic at best. Particular areas of variation are the fricatives and the modifications of C<sub>1</sub> with palatals and rhotics. These variations are discussed in greater detail in the phonology section.

### 1.6 Borrowing in the Idu lexicon

The Idu have long been traders and have played middlemen in trade between the valley of the Brahmaputra and the Tibetan Plateau for as much as a millennium. It is therefore unsurprising that they have borrowed a variety of terms from neighbouring languages. Nonetheless, it appears that it was only in the twentieth century that the greatest number of terms were borrowed, mostly reflecting bureaucratic and technological change.



Most perplexing is the relationship with the Tawrã language. The similarity of many terms, such as colours and numerals has led earlier scholars to conclude this was evidence for a genetic relationship between the two languages. However, Blench (in press) argues this may instead be the result of long-term borrowing brought about by a close cultural connection. This argument is too detailed to discuss at length here and is anyway likely to be inconclusive as a result of the poor documentation of Tawrã.

Other strata of loanwords are more easily identified. Tibetan borrowings are surprisingly few, mostly trade items. The neighbouring Adi, a Tani language, has contributed a few plant names and terms for social institutions. Assamese has contributed significantly more, trade items, plants and some administrative terms from the colonial era. As the Indian government has extended its control over the region, more terms have come into the language from Hindi, sometimes displacing prior Assamese borrowings. Finally, English has made a highly significant impact on Idu, both in terms of technological items and within the school system. Idu personal names are a particularly interesting field to study in this respect, since the 1970s and 1980s saw a major replacement of Idu names with Hindi names, while even a few English names crept into the language. The tide of sentiment has now changed back towards Idu-derived names, and borrowed ones may soon be consigned to history.

### 1.7 The present study

In the light of the weakness of the available linguistic descriptions as well as the desire of the Idu to have a functional orthography, a project is being undertaken to develop a dictionary, grammar and practical writing system. So far, three field visits have been made to the Roing area in Arunachal Pradesh. The circumstances of these are shown in Table 2;

**Table 2. Field studies on Idu**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
17-26/2/15	Roing
1-15/12/15	Roing
7/1 to 1/2/17	Roing
4/1 to 2/2/18	Roing
1/10 to 18/10	Roing

Partners in this work were members of the Idu Language Development Committee (ILDC), Mite Lingi, Yona Mele, Apomo Linggi and Hindu Meme, and this is as much their project as mine. The project is being carried out under the auspices of the Idu Cultural and Literature Society (ICLS).

### 1.8 Typological characteristics

Idu is a tone-language, with discrete-level tones, similar to West African languages such as Yoruba and some Naga languages. It has a large consonant and vowel inventory, as well as a considerable variety of consonant modifications and vowel phonation types. Nominals have no morphology, number-marking or gender, although there are traces of accusative marking. A rich suffix-system on nominals and other parts of speech can extend semantics. Verbs, however, have highly complex suffixed morphology, resembling Kiranti or Qiangic languages. This consists of both tense/aspect morphology and verbal extensions, of which there is an extremely rich system. Constituent order is SOV, with Idu sentences being strongly verb-final however, there appears to be considerable flexibility in word order, due to persistent pronoun omission. This allows sentences with OSV order, highly unusual in this region. Adverbials, directionals and locatives are all fronted in the sentence, but adjectives usually follow the head-noun. Idu has a very marked evidential system, allowing hearers to assess the truth-value assigned to statements by a speaker.

### 1.9 Lexical relationship with Tawrã and Kman

#### 1.9.1 Comparisons across Mishmi

Lexical comparisons across Mishmi produce a very low yield of even probable resemblances. Some examples are given in Table 3;

**Table 3. Lexical resemblances across Mishmi**

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
sword	shàbrē	shabrē	shàbrē
beer	yū	iyu	yūī (get drunk)
fish	àṅā	tā	əṅā
deafness	kàpà	kàpà	kāwà
road	āló	alyim	b.lòṅ
stone	ālāphrá	phlā	phlāṅ (lower grindstone)
bedbug	àbā	àbà	mākklāp
ginger	àṅjítà	àdzìṅ	dóʔìṅ
granary	àkā	aka	kētəm
name	āmū	amaṅ	əmèṅ

The word for ‘sword’ may be a common borrowing, and indeed ultimately cognate with English ‘sabre’. The lack of regular correspondences again suggests borrowing at some earlier period of history.

### 1.9.3 Idu-Tawrā comparisons which argue for a close relationship

A comparison between Idu and Tawrā which above all has been responsible for the hypothesis of a ‘Digarish’ group is the similarities between lower numerals. Numerals ‘two’ and ‘three’ also resemble reconstructed Tibeto-Burman forms, which in the magical world of regional historical linguistics is enough for them to qualify for membership. Table 128 shows a comparison of lower numerals in the three Mishmi languages.

**Table 4. Mishmi lower numerals**

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
One	khègè	khin	kēmū
Two	kà.nyì	kayìṅ	kēnìn, kēyìn
Three	kà.sō	kasaj	kēsəm
Four	kà.pri	kaprayk	kāmbrān
Five	màngá	maja	kālèn
Six	tāhrō	tahro	kētām
Seven	íù	wē	nān
Eight	ì ú	līm	grān
Nine	khriṅī	kīṅaj	nētṃù
Ten	hūū	hálaṅ	kyēpmū

All the Idu and Tawrā forms are cognate with the possible exception of ‘nine’ and many are extremely close. Except for ‘two’ and ‘three’, Kman numerals are quite different.

Another area where there are striking similarities is in basic colours. Table 5 shows the common colour terms recognised in Idu and Tawrā, together with the abbreviated paradigm in Kman;

**Table 5. Mishmi colour terms**

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
black	mà, tĩ	ma	kāʔyùm
red	shù	shìʔ	kāʔsàl
yellow	mì	miṅ	—
green/blue	prù	prue	—
white	lo	lyo	kāmphlūṅ

Again, the Idu and Tawrā forms are extremely similar.

### 1.9.3 Idu-Tawrā comparisons showing marked lexical divergence

However, in other semantic fields, the differences between Idu and Tawrā are very marked. Basic body parts are often quite stable in Tibeto-Burman languages, but as Table 6 shows, Idu and Tawrā share almost no



common roots. Kman is included to illustrate that it shares virtually no potential cognates with Idu and Tawrà.

**Table 6. Idu and Tawrà body parts**

Gloss	Idu	Tawrà	Kman
back	ìpìndò	phlíŋ	glāwk
body	jóntà	kyàŋ	shèy
breast	nōbrā	ŋèè	cīn
eye	ēlōbrā	blm	mīk
hand	ākhó	hàprè	rāwk
leg	āŋgēsà	gròn	plā
lip	īnūbrū	thánù	chūw dàl
mouth	ēkóbà	phùùkè	chūw
nail	āhūkò	áphlíŋ	zūk
neck	sēmbirá	pà hŋ	hūŋ
nose	ēnāmbó	àpàdùn	mī?nyùŋ
palm	lāpū	àtyòpà	rāwk tèpà
skin	kòprà	pò	ùŋ
thigh	hàpū	sàhà	kètsāwk
toe	ātāmbó	gròn bràn	plā bàn
tongue	īliná	hèlèŋnà	blāy
tooth	tāmbō	là	síi

The same divergence can be illustrated with other common lexical fields. A similar pattern emerges, as in the case of morphosyntax, namely that where Idu and Tawrà resemble one another the segmental cognacy is extremely close. Otherwise, they show little or no relationship, strongly suggesting borrowing rather than genetic affiliation.

## 2. Phonology

### 2.1 Consonants

#### 2.1.1 General

Idu is marked by considerable variability in the expression of consonants, especially fricatives, both between speakers and within the speech of individuals. Statements about allophony below are thus somewhat provisional and probably cannot be resolved completely while the spoken language remains in flux. Idu consonants are shown in Table 7;

**Table 7. Idu consonants**

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatoalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p, p <sup>h</sup> b	t, t <sup>h</sup> d				k, k <sup>h</sup> g	{ʔ}
Fricative		s, s <sup>h</sup> [z]	{ʃ}	[ʃ]			h
Affricate		[ts] [dz]		tʃ, tʃ <sup>h</sup> [dʒ]			
Nasal	m	n			ɲ	ŋ	
Tap		r					
Lateral		l	ɭ				
Approximants	w		ɮ		y		

Phonemes in curly brackets, {} are marginal to the system, only occurring in a very few words. Allophones are marked in square brackets, [], and their distribution is discussed below.

Idu is in transition to a system of syllable-final bilabial nasals. Most of these arise from the deletion of final -i in the negative suffix -mì. For example;

ikhī mālām(i) undisturbed, without opposition

However, there are a few words which seem to have develop -m codas independently, for example;

cím maybe, perhaps

as in;

khənyu	mebu	àsúyì	è.ji,	cím
spirit		shock	do.PERF	maybe
maybe the spirit		shocked	the child	

This word is of particular interest also, because of the apparent tone on the final nasal, contrary the usual role about tone on nasals.

### 2.1.2 Comments on individual consonants

The retroflex [ɽ] is extremely common, and was sometimes written in earlier documents as ‘rr’ or ‘wr’. There is a strong preference for /ɽ/ before back vowels, /o/ and /u/ and for /r/ with central and front vowels. Nonetheless, contrasts show that these two rhotics must be regarded as contrastive in all positions (Table 8).

**Table 8. Evidence for /r/ ~ /ɽ/ contrast**

Idu	Gloss
rá	sharp
ɽākā	valley
rē	to scratch
ɽē	sound of a pig
rī	to fear
ɽí	to be cooked esp. rice
ró	boat
ɽò	to crumble (falling of s.t. piled up)
rùgā	befitting, appropriate, stylish, look good me
ɽùci	jaggery sugar

The retroflex [l̥] is much rarer, but is still important, and was sometimes written ‘ly’ in previous materials. /l̥/ seems to occur predominantly in initial position. Table 9 provides evidence for /l̥/ ~ /l/ contrast;

**Table 9. Evidence for /l/ ~ /ɺ/ contrast**

Idu	Gloss
lā	to say, speak, talk
ɺà	to wear (loincloth)
lè	to roll yarn with hands on the thigh
ɺè	to migrate
lí	earthquake
ɺí	tender, soft
lò	white
ɺò <sup>1</sup>	ropeway, with single rope

The retroflex /ɺ/, symbolized here by ‘hooked s’, is extremely rare and only occurs before the high front vowel /i/ and only in initial position. Nonetheless, it can be shown to be contrastive, and thus must be conserved as a phoneme (Table 10).

**Table 10. Evidence for phonemic status of /ɺ/**

Idu	Gloss	Comment
sí	to die	
sì	to bear fruit	
sī	seed	
ɺì	to slice	
ɺī	iron	< Tibetan

All words with /ɺ/ except ‘slice’ are derived from the word for iron, which is itself a borrowing. It is plausible to suggest that this root has been preserved, but has not spread to the remainder of the sound-system, accounting for its rarity.

/s/ and /ʃ/ are usually in free variation and are probably not distinct phonemes. However, in loanwords, such as /sini/ ‘sugar’ it seems the original /s/ is conserved. However, where /ʃ/ is rhotacised, i.e. /ʃr/ it is not in free variation with /s/, which may be taken as an argument for phonemic status. Moreover, speaker preferences show the pattern shown in Table 11;

**Table 11. Realisation of /s/ and /ʃ/**

Position	Realisation
before /a/, /i/, /u/	free variation except in loanwords
before /e/, /o/	typically /s/
before /ə/	hardly occurs

The voiceless fricative /z/ is prominent in a few words, for example *azu* ‘cobra sp.’ or *ibizu* ‘pika’. However, it is usually in free variation with both the affricate [dz] and the palatal affricate [dʒ]. Some speakers prefer [z] for particular words, so it may well be acceptable to write it as part of the alphabet, but it is unlikely to be a distinct phoneme.

Idu probably has no underlying glottal stop /ʔ/. A slight glottalisation is heard when two similar vowels articulated separately are pronounced, but this does not seem to warrant phonemic status. However, just a few words appear to have a glottal stop which does not originate in this way. Thus the words shown in Table 12 have this sound, commonly associated with /a/;

**Table 12. Evidence for a glottal stop in Idu**

Idu	Gloss	Comment
ābāʔ	to wait	
àʔātō	thread beam	
āʔòtà	calf of leg	
bāʔúbāʔú	spongy	
ētóʔū	fish sp.	
jóʔōō	looking like an owl	Also jōlōlō
ī'cì	to become a slave	

In the case of *jóʔōō*, the long form, *jōlōlō*, indicates the consonant which has been deleted to create /ʔ/. Deletion of a lateral is rather unusual, as glottals tend to arise from stops.

The following two words contain an unusual sequence, which appears to be a voiceless velar nasal. As they are both ideophonic and of marginal status in the lexicon, they are not considered candidates for phonemic status.

tiger, male, large                      nd<sup>h</sup>rū  
 sound of hen, conventional        ŋātā

There are two ideophones which have /d<sup>h</sup>/;

d<sup>h</sup>àà     sound produced by striking a vertical bamboo wall  
 d<sup>h</sup>ì     sound produced by foot stamp

but these are strictly sound-symbolic and /d<sup>h</sup>/ can be excluded from consideration as a phoneme.

### 2.1.3 Long consonants

Idu has a small subset of long or doubled consonants in initial and medial position. The only doubled initial consonants are /nn/ and /rr/, illustrated in the following contrasts;

rrà	leave field fallow	rá	sharp
nnā	to dance	nā	to cook food other than grains
nnī	to push	njī	to chase

These are most plausibly explained by assuming these are realisations of prefixed nasals which have been assimilated through homorganic rules.

Doubled consonants in word-medial position are /mm/, /ll/ and /tt/. Examples;

èmmē	new moon	mē	to rear
állā	to lick	ālā	musk deer
áttī	to kick	ātī	village
īttū	to come up	ītū	vagina

/ll/ and /mm/ may well be explained by the same rule of assimilation as in initial long consonants. However, the examples of the dental /tt/ are exceptional.

### 2.1.4 Consonant modification

#### 2.1.3.1 General

Idu has a wide range of modified consonants. Aspiration, rhotacisation and to a lesser extent labialisation, are all used to make phonemic distinctions and some consonants can undergo multiple modifications. One of the more perplexing issues in Idu phonology is the variability in palatalisation, labialisation and

rhotacisation, i.e. with a -y, -w or -r after a consonant. Many words seem to vary from one speaker to another and even within the speech of one individual. Although there are dialect differences between 'Upper' and 'Lower' Idu this is apparently not one of them. There is a definite tendency for younger speakers to drop these consonant modifications, for example, saying *nopu* instead of *nyopu* for 'breast'. Earlier publications on Idu envisaged a set of voiced aspirates, /b<sup>h</sup>/, /d<sup>h</sup>/, and /g<sup>h</sup>/, and /t<sup>h</sup>/, /k<sup>h</sup>/, and /tʃ<sup>h</sup>/. This is unfortunately typical of linguistic work heavily influenced by Hindi and quite irrelevant to Idu.

### 2.1.3.2 Aspiration

Aspiration is the most common form of consonant modification and can be applied to all voiceless consonants. Thus;

/p<sup>h</sup>/, /t<sup>h</sup>/, /k<sup>h</sup>/, /tʃ<sup>h</sup>/

/p<sup>h</sup>/

/p<sup>h</sup>/ is in free variation with [f], probably under the influence of Indo-Aryan languages.

phālā	tea
phē	to pluck
íphílō	butterfly
èphōlō	owl
phù	cooking pot

/p<sup>hr</sup>/

phrē	set fire to
īphrítù	type of creeper

### 2.1.3.3 Rhotacisation

The following consonants can be rhotacised

/p<sup>r</sup>/, /p<sup>hr</sup>/, /b<sup>r</sup>/, /t<sup>r</sup>/, /t<sup>hr</sup>/, /d<sup>r</sup>/, /k<sup>r</sup>/, /k<sup>hr</sup>/, /g<sup>r</sup>/, /tʃ<sup>r</sup>/, /h<sup>r</sup>/

p<sup>r</sup>

prà	bird
prē	strength
prī	to plait
prò	to lean
prù	to spread

b<sup>r</sup>

brā	to grow
màbrē	goat
brí	to marry
brò	chickenpox
mbrù	full

### 2.1.3.4 Labialisation

The following consonants can be labialised;

/p<sup>w</sup>/, /p<sup>hw</sup>/, /b<sup>w</sup>/

Table 13 provides examples of these;

**Table 13. Labialisation in Idu**

Idu	Gloss
bwèyā	long ago
bwīpá	together, things in pairs
phwēri	kitchen
phwì āndò	full grown male mithun, bull
pwèdi	s.t. glittering, gem
pwēlā	oriental skylark
pwītí	grey bird sp. with long tail
pwōthō	rufous-necked hornbill

Additional labialisation is evident in some ideophones, but this is a phonetic effect of the following rounded vowel;

khwòyákhwòyā describes walking wobbling from side to side

### 2.1.5 Prenasalisation

Idu has homorganic prenasalised consonants. The probably arise from the leftwards movement of nasalisation on vowels, as it is frequently the case that a word has two equivalent realisations with different speakers, with and without a prefix, and with and without a nasalised vowel on the stem. The rules of realising homorganic nasals are similar to those elsewhere in the world.

**n-** precedes dentals and all other consonants

ŋ- precedes velars

m- precedes bilabials

NB. Usually written n- in practical orthography

These are marked as sounded though they are all presumed to be allophones of an underlying N-. These can occur both initially and in word-medial position.

## 2.2 Vowels

### 2.2.1 Vowel inventory

Idu has an extended vowel inventory once length and nasalisation are taken into account. In addition it has a small number of extremely rare vowel phonation types. The vowels of Idu are shown in Table 14;

**Table 14. Idu vowel inventory**

Vowels	Front	Central	Back
Close	i [ĩ]		u [ũ], ɯ
Close-Mid	e [ẽ]		o [õ] [ɔ]
Open-Mid		ə, ɐ	
Open		a [ã] ʌ	

### 2.2.2 Length

All vowels in Idu show length contrast except /ə/, /ɐ/ and /ĩ/. Examples of convincing contrast are rare, given the overall size of the lexicon. It is very noticeable that many of the potential minimal pairs exemplifying

length contrast in vowels are adjectives, adverbs or ideophones, which also have a feature of iconic lengthening for emphasis. This suggests that length contrast is a developing feature, not something which has been long embedded in the language. Nonetheless, it is sufficiently common as to be required in the orthography.

Underlying length contrast is considered to be present where both vowels also have the same tone. There are occasional examples where the doubled vowel has a sequence of dissimilar tones. This probably originates from deletion of an intervocalic consonant and is therefore not treated as an example of vowel length. This gives the appearance of a tone glide in rapid speech, but it is not underlying a contour tone.

The following tables present evidence for length contrast in Idu.

a ~ aa

dā²	to borrow	dāā	safe distance
jā	to come down	jāā	reddish colour
kà	goitre	kàà	to cut out required shape
mrā	poison	mrāā	herb sp.
sà	net	sàà	slowly
wá	to scratch	wáá	sound of cock when you grab it

e ~ ee

cè	to cut	cèè	to tease
-te	verbal suffix denoting actions downwards	tēē	sound of twigs snapping

i ~ ii

ilī	soil	ilīī	sting
mì	yellow	mìī	appearing uniform from a distance
pī	to bite (snake)	pīī	quiet
brī	torn	brīīmbó	tree sp.

o ~ oo

mó	hunting technique for kites	móó	dazzled
tò	to pull	tòò	severely

u ~ uu

grū	to cry loudly	grūū	fees, payments
hū	to beat with stick	hūū	heavy, weighty
mù	to grow in a twisty way (as a creeper)	mùū	to go out (fire, light)
phù	cooking pot	phùū	to puff air out of mouth
ɽù	to snatch	ɽùū	single strip of pork meat

### 2.2.3 Nasal vowels

Idu has five nasal vowels, /ã/, /ẽ/, /ĩ/, /õ/ and /ũ/. The central vowels and the modified vowels are not subject to nasalisation. Nasal vowels normally display length contrast, but no minimal pair has been found for ĩ ~ ã.

The Rẽ Festival is one of the most important cultural traditions of the Idu, celebrated every year in February. However, it has typically been spelt 'Reh', although Idu does not have syllables with final 'h'. This may have been an attempt to represent nasalisation, but it is misleading. It hard to change established spelling, but it would be better if the festival were now spelt Ren.

Nasalisation of the vowel preceding a homorganic nasal can occur word-medially, and it may be that nasalisation should be treated as phonetic in these cases.

àndũmbõ dung beetle

ã

ãlõ to bring out s.t. hidden, reveal  
cã to fall on top of s.t.

ã ~ ãã

pã barren (animals) pãã sound produced by foot stamping

ẽ

àlẽlõ length  
àprẽmbõ tree sp.  
àwẽ bamboo basket for rice

ẽ ~ ẽẽ

cẽ to knit cẽẽ to tie

/ã/

àkã rat, big

/ã/

àprẽ carpet  
brẽgã to kill s.o. while dying

ĩ

/õ/

ãkhõ hand  
ãlõ road, path, track  
ànãtrõ herb sp.  
cõ to punch

õ ~ õõ

cõ to stamp s.t. on paper  
tõ flour  
cõõ shortage  
tõõ to break (rainfall)



brōbrō describes s.o. walking very actively brōō to shoot up straight

/ũ/

àkrù bamboo stemborer  
 ānjípù cucumber  
 āphũ to observe taboo after a killing  
 cù to sprout (horn, branch from tree)

/ũũ/

ālō ũũ sandstone, easily broken

ũ ~ ũũ

bũ	to emit smoke	bũũ	to be cloudy
cũ	to be immobile with sickness	cũũ	quite
hũ	liver	hũũ	ten
thrũ	to count	thrũũ	very sad

### 2.2.5 Creaky vowels

Idu has extremely infrequent creaky vowels, /a̰/, /ḛ/ and /ḭ/. By far the most common is /a̰/, which only occurs in a restricted context, before /y/. The main known examples of this sequence are given in Table 15.

**Table 15. The Idu creaky vowel /a̰/**

Idu	Gloss
āyē	be irritating
āyē	strip kernels from maize
àyē	poison
àyà	daughter
àyèbè	ritual
māày	serow

The creaky vowel cannot be treated as a conditioned variant of /a/. There are numerous /ay/ sequences in Idu which do not have this vowel and the verb *àyè* ‘to go round’ provides a direct minimal pair with the forms in Table 15. Table 16 provides evidence for phonemic status of Idu of /ā̰/;

Nonetheless, it is clearly contrastive, as shown in Table 16;

**Table 16. Evidence for phonemic status of ā̰**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
àyà	fan	āyā	white worm found in bamboo
āyā	daughter	āyá	fish sp.
àyē	to poison	àyè	to go round
āyē	to strip kernels from maize		
àṛē	to weed	àṛè	to measure
āṛē	to shuck a maize cob	àṛè	to aim (gun etc.)
māày	serow	māārdā	serow

/ḛ/ is only attested in two words;

mèēr enemy

mḗ̀èr guest at Rě festival

There are no lexemes which provide evidence for contrastive pairs. Nonetheless it is not clear that how this phonation type would be conditioned by context.

/i/

/i/ only occurs in the names of two Idu clans

Mríí

Mríì

The sequence mri without a creaky vowel occurs in;

*mri phītō* ‘to make a face while crying’

suggesting this is not a conditioned variant.

None of the words with creaky vowels are obvious borrowings, and indeed creaky vowels are not reported from nearby languages, common as they are in parts of SE Asia. Their origin and why they are so rare is unexplained.

### 2.2.6 V.V sequences of identical vowels

In addition to this, Idu also has sequences of similar vowels articulated separately which are distinct from long vowels. They are treated as separate segments and a dot is placed between them to denote their presence. In some cases the tone is identical, but it can be dissimilar. Characteristic examples are of V.V sequences with identical tone heights are shown in Table 17;

**Table 17. Idu V.V sequences with identical tone heights**

Idu	Gloss
ērā.ā	knife
é.ésí	feeling tired, fragile
īsū.ū	Himalayan flameback (bird sp.)
ìyū.ū	weakness due to excessive bleeding

Idu also has sequences where there is a distinct hiatus between two similar vowels, realised as a glottal stop for some speakers. Again, sequences may be on a level tone or two different levels.

A few words also exhibit VV sequences with non-identical tone heights, as shown in Table 18;

**Table 18. Idu VV sequences with non-identical tone heights**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ā.à	to give birth to child
è.éta	dao handle
mrē.è	guest at Rē festival
è.ē	to go to the toilet (speaking to a baby)
mōònā	feather
brò.ō	python
pùū	to talk about s.t.

Similarly, there are rare words which include sequences with nasalised and non-nasalised vowels, as shown in Table 19;

**Table 19. Idu VV sequences with nasalised and non-nasalised vowels**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
cè.ékhè	algae

Orthographic practice has yet to be finalised but present opinion is leaning towards writing these distinctions with a dash –.

### 2.2.7 VV(V) sequences of non-identical vowels

Idu permits rare sequences of dissimilar vowels, again distinguishing between those articulated separately and those which form a continuous sequence.

**Table 20. Idu VV sequences with dissimilar vowels**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
à.ò	sudden body pains
à.ú brēnā	herb sp.
áú āndīsi	ear-ring
à.ú pú	pumpkin, white
è.ònà	face
ètágè.ā	somewhere
í.ù	seven
khè.ē	to defecate
māày	serow

The following VVV sequence is quite exceptional.

shū hēàà reddish (e.g. sunset)

As noted above in the discussion of glottal stops, some of the separately articulated sequences are developing audible stops to clarify the sequence of vowels to hearers.

Apart from nasalisation, Idu has two other types of vowel modification, retraction and creaky voice. Retraction in IPA is represented by an underline, but a better convention will need to be devised for any practical script. Retracted schwa /ə̠/ is relatively common and is in association with lip-rounding of the preceding consonant. Two other retracted consonants are extremely rare and occur primarily with

ideophones or other expressives. For some speakers, retracted /ə/ appears to be in free variation with a /we/ sequence.

Examples of /ə/ and /ẽ/;

ẽpẽ	to eat something in particles
ətákhurū	latrine
gè	to carry on the back
hè	honey
khè	beeswax

Examples of /o/;

òr sound of pig

Examples of /u/;

ūr	to jack up (car etc.)
ūrtè	to pour

### 2.3 Tones

Idu has three level tones<sup>2</sup>, marked as follows;

High-	´
Mid	-
Low	`

A macron (¯) over a vowel is thus mid-tone and not length. There are no glide tones, somewhat surprisingly in the light of their importance in Tawra and Kman. There are numerous minimal triplets on CV syllables, for example;

bá	classifier for mithuns
bā	to go
bà	to whisper

dá	to feel
dā	to borrow
dà	to fix bamboo to a mat or a wall

dé	to ignore
dē	pure, clean
dè	to stand

hú	to dig with the hand vertically
hū	to beat with stick
hù	to put hand horizontally in a hole to search

Idu tones can be described as semi-mobile in context. There is no evidence for grammatical tone, but tones on verb roots can sometimes change, usually rise when extensions are added (§). Tones may also change in compounds, according to rules which remain poorly understood. Crucially, all phrases and sentences in the

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<sup>2</sup> The author would like to acknowledge the special role of Hindu Meme on the tone section. Without his tireless and accurate whistling of a large number of lexical items and example phrases, the tones could not have been completed.

dictionary examples are transcribed phonetically, as heard, and not as in citation forms. However, in a practical orthography, basing tone-marking on citation forms is the only practical solution to distinguishing homographs. In ritual formulae, tones can be radically distorted, sometimes to the point where speakers cannot unravel an utterance except where the originator of the formula already knows its meaning. The large numbers of CV roots which contrast only in their tonal values recall West African languages such as Yoruba, more than most Tibeto-Burman regional languages.

A few examples point towards some tonal morphology in Idu, as for example in Table 21;

**Table 21. Examples of tonal morphology in Idu**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
āsē	to sing	àsè	song
má	new	mā	old (things)
hù	to put hand horizontally in a hole to search	hú	to dig with the hand vertically

However, these are fragmentary and inconsistent, and are unlikely to point to a broader system.

Apart from the Tani languages such as Adi, the main sources of loanwords in Idu are non-tonal, Assamese, Hindi and English. Despite long proximity and trade with Tibet, Idu has very few Tibetan loanwords. Recent English loanwords are often non-assimilated, and maintain non-native morphology and inconsistent tone. Assamese and Hindi, however, have usually been adapted to Idu phonology and morphology and assigned tones. These tend to be stereotyped, and are either Low-Mid or Mid. Examples of typical Assamese borrowings are given in Table 27.

**Table 22. Assamese borrowings in Idu**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
bāgān	kitchen garden, flower garden
bārsēnē	any open container
bòstā	bag
cīnī	chisel
còkhrē	chair
kāsī	sickle
khār	manure
mùndūrā	guava
pòrī	to study
sākī	tea-strainer
àrisī	glass
sīnī	sugar
mēkārī	cat
nāṅgōlē	plough
sādā	tobacco
tāmūl	areca nut

Idu has a small set of borrowings from Adi, which is a tonal language, albeit more restricted than Idu, shown in Table 23. These are tonally diverse and probably reflect their original tonal values.

**Table 23. Adi borrowings in Idu**

Idu	Gloss
bōdā	plains in the southern region
kèrú	basket, back, conical
òmòrítà	papaya
pēmsámá	to hang around fruitlessly
sīŋkēnē	kumquat

## 2.4 Word structure and atypical consonant sequences

All Idu syllables are open; cases of syllable codas, except in loanwords from Assamese, Hindi, Adi and English (Table 24) are extremely rare. In native words, the coda –r might be an allomorph of a homorganic nasal attached to the following syllable. For example;

**Table 24. Loanwords in Idu showing syllable codas in –r and -l**

Idu	Gloss	Comment
mòbāyl	mobile phone	< English
mārsā	potherb, cultivated and wild	<i>Acmella paniculata</i> . < Adi
mārsē	careless work	
māārdā	rust	Upper dial. <i>māwādā</i>
tāār.hū	sixty	

## 3. Morphology

### 3.1 Nouns

#### 3.1.1 General

Idu permits a wide variety of nominal structures, as its compounding morphology allows relatively long words to be generated. Like most languages in this region, Idu has limited true bound morphology. Bycontrast, verbs can be modified by a series of suffixes, and these are indexed to pronominals, without affecting the shape of the verb. Gender and number are marked on nouns by a class class of indepent post-nominal elements. Numeral classifiers are obligatory with a subset of nouns, but are not bound to them. Although highly tonal, tones bound to vowels are very conservative and rarely change in compounding. Hence it can be difficult to assign a ‘part of speech’ unambiguously. The same basic form may be noun, verb, adjective and adverb. Subsets of nouns exhibit residual forms which may point to a system of semantically assigned prefixes, a feature common in Austroasiatic languages and also occurring in some regional languages in Arunachal Pradesh (Blench 2014). This system is analysed in more detail in §3.1.6.

#### 3.1.2 The shape of Idu nouns

Idu nouns are most characteristically CV(N)CV, with an optional V- prefix. A small subset of nouns are VCV, which has almost certainly arisen through deletion of C<sub>1</sub> of the stem. In some cases this pathway can be demonstrated, as the more conservative Hill dialects, conserve C<sub>1</sub>. For example *āmbā*, ‘jungle’, is *kāmbá* in Hill dialects. A rare structure, such as *èòná* ‘face’ (V(C)VCV) arises from deletion of C<sub>1</sub> with conservation of the V- prefix. Table 25 shows the structures of Idu nominals as presently identified, excluding loanwords.

**Table 25. Structure of Idu nominals**

Structure	Idu	Gloss
V	ā	child, children
VCV	àbā	bedbug
VCVCV	àbālā	mediation
V <sup>2</sup> VCV	āʔòtā	calf of leg
VCVCVCV	āchāyīpà	creeper sp.
CV	bā	hole
CVV	bī	grass sp.
CVCV	bāmbū	golden jackal
CVVCV	bīmbó	tree sp.
CVCVCV	bèrábò	thunder
CVCVCVCV	brègūsimbó	tree sp.
CVCVCVCVCV	kāpōtōlōmbó	insect, generic

The rare cases where two dissimilar or independently articulated vowels form VV sequences are dealt with below. The structure of loanwords depends on how well these have been integrated into the Idu phonological system. Loanwords permit a variety of coda-final consonants are not common in Idu, as the examples show;

bàkēt bucket < English  
 bàgān kitchen garden, flower garden < Assamese

### 3.1.3 Number marking

Number in Idu nouns is not marked morphologically and wherever it is obvious from the context not marked at all. With unqualified nouns, there are several forms meaning ‘many’ which follow the noun. For persons, these are;

**Table 26. Idu number marking suffixes**

Idu	Application
àlòmbrò	persons
àrū	crowd, herd
n-do	things, inanimates

Thus;

man men  
 īmú īmú àlòmbrò  
 īmú àrū

For animals and objects, usually only àrū is used. Where a noun ends in a vowel, àrū assimilates to it;

sá àrū→sárū mithuns

For inanimates, tándò ‘many’ is used’

àlàprā tándò many stones

For things found in groups an occasional singulative is recorded;

louse trùùṅgù lice trùù

-gù appears to be an incorporated numeral classifier. Similarly with this pair of words;

tānjàmbō molar tooth tānjā molar teeth

This suggests that occasional lexical items considered inherently plural can be ascribed a singulative, but this is not a consistent process.

### 3.1.4 Gender

As broadly in Tibeto-Burman languages, gender is not marked morphologically on nouns. Natural gender distinctions on persons are marked by distinct lexemes, as;

father	nābá	mother	nānyī
man	mēyá	woman	yākú

Domestic animals in Idu are marked for gender and also reproductive status by distinct postposed lexemes. As is common in regional languages, a three-way distinction between bovids, other animals and poultry is applied (Table 27).

**Table 27. Gender marking on Idu animal names**

Idu	Gloss	Example	Gloss
àṛí	male animals, general	ili àṛí	boar
àṛó	male bovids	màcū àṛó	bull
àlā	male (birds)	ètō àlā	cock
àpí	female animal, general	ìlì àpí	sow
èchē	female bird	ètō èchē	hen
krú	female bovids	sà krú	mithun cow

### 3.1.5 Numeral classifiers

#### 3.1.5.1 Classifiers system

Idu, like Tawrā and Kman, has a restricted number of numeral classifiers, markers which are obligatory when qualifying nouns with numerals. The system can be described as residual, since many nouns, including most animates, no longer take classifiers. This is similar to Tawra and Kman, but quite different from the neighbouring Tani languages, where classifiers are very numerous (Post 2007). Idu mixes bound and free classifiers; free classifiers can also be moved about to suggest the shape of an entity which does not take an obligatory classifier. To this extent, classifiers are something like affixes in noun-class languages such as Niger-Congo. In Niger-Congo languages, a noun may ‘normally’ take a certain prefix, but this can be altered to suggest a specific feature. Thus animals in folk-tales often take a human prefix, instead of usually assigned segment. Partial lists of numeral classifiers are given in Pulu (1978) and Pulu (2002), but a more complete version is shown in Table 28;

**Table 28. Idu numeral classifiers**



Form	Applied to	Shape or class
ā̀l̀à	cloth, paper, planks	flat rectangular objects
(-m)b̀ò	trees, plants, main trunk of anything	trunk (trees, body)
br̄ā	potatoes, beads, oranges, stones	small round things
br̄ū	maize, bananas, small branch of a tree, usually cylindrical	cylindrical long objects
(-n)do	bamboo clusters, houses, hunted deer, pig carcasses	?
(-ŋ)g̀ò	fish, rats	
(-ŋ)g̀ò	fish, rats	
ná	specific leaves, some types of paper	flat things
ph(r)á	small packets (such as cigarettes)	small solid rectangular objects
p̀ò	packets, <i>l̀ékép̀ò</i> necklace	medium solid rectangular objects
p̀ò	bundles (firewood, hay), playing cards	large solid rectangular objects
pr̄ā	leaves, paper, flat things	flat objects
p̄ū	elephants, chickens, wild birds, cucumbers <sup>3</sup> , papayas, pumpkins	large and medium round and oval things
-t̀ò ~ t̀ò	single bamboo plant, reeds with cylindrical stem, sugar-cane	giant grasses

The bound classifiers –(n)do and –to are underspecified for tone, and vary in accordance with the stem tone of the noun they qualify. The numerals typically follow the classifier and may exhibit a reduced form compared with the count form. Examples of each of these in use are as follows;

ā̀l̀à

ā̀l̀à flat rectangular objects

Applies to; cloth, paper

tapuh̄ū    ā̀l̀à    nyi  
 cloth    CLF    two  
 two cloths

The following is a striking example of how classifiers can become stacked as they become unproductive by being bound to a stem.

ādzōpr̄ā    ná    ā̀lhà    màngá  
 paper    piece    CLF    five  
 five pieces of paper

*pr̄ā* is a standalone classifier for flat things, but has been lexicalised to create a noun for ‘paper’. Meanwhile, the classifier *ná*, also applied to leaves and paper, has been re-analysed as a noun signifying ‘piece’. Hence the whole collation still requires another classifier, and *ā̀l̀à* is applied.

(-m)b̀ò trunk, main stem of s.t.

Applies to; large standing plants;

ās̄imb̀ó    k̀ap̄ri  
 tree.CLF    four  
 four trees

<sup>3</sup> Local cucumbers are short and ovoidal, unlike the European cucumber, hence they fall into this class

or;

ājīmbó            kàpri  
banana plant.CLF   four  
four banana plants

However, it can also be adapted for the trunk of a human body. For example;

ésámbò      anus plus trunk

brā small round things

Applies to; potatoes, beads, oranges, stones. A potentially irregular object, such as a stone, can trigger other classifiers if its shape warrants them.

gèsi      brā    (khə)gè  
potato    CLF   one  
one potato

In the following example, the root for ‘stone’ is álV-;

ālāphrá    brā    màngá  
stone      CLF   five  
five (round) stones

This can be seen other lexemes;

áló.ũũ      sandstone  
ālōhrū      pebble

The *-phrá* element is almost certainly an allomorph of *phá*, the classifier for small solid objects, which has been incorporated into the stem.

*brū* cylindrical long objects

Applies to; maize, bananas, small branches of a tree

àmbó    brū    gè  
maize    CLF   one  
one cob of maize

or;

àjì            brū    gè  
banana      CLF   one  
one banana

(-n)do semantics unclear

Applies to; bamboo clusters, houses, hunted deer, pig carcasses

aṅgə.do            màngá  
bamboo.CLF    five  
five bamboo plants

õ.ndo      màngá  
house.CLF   five  
five houses

In the following example, the hearer will know the deer are dead from the classifier alone;

manjo    do    màngá  
deer    CLF   five  
five [dead] deer

(-ŋ)go has two allomorphs, (-ŋ)gō and (-ŋ)gò. The mid-tone form marks single entities, while the low-tone version indicates the same things in bundles or piles;

āŋá    ŋgō    gè  
fish   CLF   one  
one fish

but;

āngá   ŋgò   màngá  
fish   CLF   five  
five bundles of fish

This would almost certainly indicate bundles of smoked or dried fish as they are sold in the market. If the speaker wanted to distinguish the number of fish in a bundle, the following construction would be used.

ŋgò    gə    ma    ŋgō    màngá  
CLF   one            CLF   five  
bundle of five fish

ph(r)á small solid rectangular objects

Applies to small packets (such as cigarettes)

In this example, the hearer would infer from the classifier that packs, rather than individual cigarettes were being referred to;

sīgērē    phá    sò  
cigarette   CLF   three  
three packs of cigarettes

pò medium solid rectangular objects

Applies to; packets, *léképò* necklace

àtā    pò    nyì  
food   CLF   two  
two packets of food

In this example, the necklace *léképò* has already incorporated the *pò* classifier once, but apparently it has so far been lexicalised that the classifier is repeated.

léképò pò nyì  
necklace CLF two  
two necklaces

pò solid rectangular objects

Applies to; bundles (firewood, hay), playing cards

ākō pò nyì  
hay CLF two  
two bundles of hay

In this example, the hearer can infer that packs of cards are being referenced, not individual cards;

tas pò nyì  
cards CLF two  
two packs of cards

It is quite surprising that a pack of cigarettes and playing cards have different classifiers, as they are approximately the same shape and size. Evidently, the loose nature of the cards, more similar to hay, influences the choice.

prā flat objects

Applies to; leaves, paper, flat things

Although the classifier ná clearly derives from ná ‘leaf’, synchronically ‘leaf’ takes another classifier.

ná prā tàhrò  
leaf CLF six  
six leaves

In the following example, as with the necklace *léképò*, the word *āsīprā* has already incorporated the *prā* classifier once.

āsīprā prā màngá  
plank CLF five  
five planks

pū large and medium round and oval things

Applies to; elephants, chickens, wild birds, cucumbers, papayas, pumpkins

ātā pū màngá  
elephant CLF five  
five elephants

ànjìpū pū gè  
cucumber CLF one  
one cucumber

-to ~ tō giant grasses

Applies to; single bamboo plant, reeds with cylindrical stem, sugar-cane

All the bamboos and canes have classifiers incorporated into the stem, and Idu makes a systematic distinction between bamboos with the suffix –to and canes with the suffix –tō.

āṅētō      tō̃      khrinī  
bamboo      CLF      nine  
nine bamboo plants

rùpòtò      tō̃      màngá  
sugar-cane      CLF      five  
five sugar-cane plants

### 3.1.5.2 Evidence for former classifiers

Idu has evidence for frozen morphology, classifiers which may formerly have been free elements but which are now only attested in stems. For example, Table 29 provides evidence for a probable former classifier *(m)bu*, conceivably an allomorph of *pu*.

**Table 29. Evidence for a former -bu classifier in Idu**

Idu	Gloss	Comment
àndīmbū	dung beetle	
āpīmbú	mole, white-tailed	<i>Parascaptor leucura</i>
āṛèmbù	snakehead	
bāmbū	golden jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
ícīmbù	turtle	
ṅwōbū	Indian mottled eel	<i>Anguilla bengalensis, Monopterusuchia</i>
tàbù	snake, generic	

All the nominals with a *-(m)bu* suffix are round and/or long animals. However, the tone is quite varied, whereas in productive classifiers, it is static. This suggests that either the tone was underspecified or historical stem changes have restructured the tone of the suffix.

### 3.1.5.3 Stacked classifiers: bamboo and cane

Bamboos and canes are highly salient in Idu culture as they are throughout the region. As a consequence, bamboo has two distinct classifiers, *dō* for clusters of bamboo and *tō* for the single plant. However, *-tō* has also become incorporated in the roots for bamboo and cane and thus provides an empty slot for a classifier. Thus it is possible to say;

āṅētō      tō̃      khrinī  
bamboo plant      CLF      nine

The classifier is thus repeated. Equally possible is;

āṅētō      dō      khrinī  
bamboo plant      CLF      nine

which implies clusters of bamboo. The *dō* is plausibly an allomorph of *tō*. Table 30 shows all the names for bamboos and canes so far recorded in Idu.

**Table 30. Bamboos and canes with incorporated -tō ~ -tō̃**

Gloss	Idu
bamboo I	āṅētō, māṅētō
bamboo I	bùlúkā
bamboo I	āṛútó

bamboo II	ābrátó
bamboo III	hīcító
bamboo IV	brádūtò
bamboo V	ìlītò
bamboo VI	kālītò
bamboo VII	àpàtò
bamboo VIII	mānútó
bamboo VIII	àpító
bamboo IX	bàndātò
cane I	lákātō
cane II	àrùtò
cane III	èlāshòtò
cane IV	lākāmbòtò
cane V	ēṛātō
cane VI	lákāsù

### 3.1.6 Nominal affixes

#### 3.1.6.1 Productive nominal affixes

Idu has both productive and fossil nominal affixes. The productive affixes are suffixed to nouns or verbs in order to create gerunds. Those identified so far are;

**Table 31. Idu productive nominal suffixes**

Idu	Semantics
-cū	indicates sprouting bamboos and canes
-gḡgḡ	amount you can carry on the back (20-40 kg.)
-mò	emphatic
-mrò	denotes proximity to water bodies
-ndò	any
-nyī	extreme, very, great
-tà	meat of any animal
-wēyā	nominaliser, creating nouns from verb stems

-cū indicates sprouting bamboos and canes

?

-gḡgḡ amount you can carry on the back (20-40 kg.)

ambo.gḡgḡ amount of maize  
 èkā.gḡgḡ amount of grain

-mò emphatic

ngā.mò I.EMP

-mrò locative suffix denoting proximity to water bodies

màcì.mrò near the water  
 àhí.mrò near the Ahi river

-ndo suffix meaning ‘any’

sa.ndo any mithun  
 ikū.ndo any dog

-tà means the meat of any animal

sā.tà piece of mithun meat

Other suffixes include the augmentative

-nyī extreme, very, great applied to qualifiers;

īgū.nyī great igu  
 āmō.nyī very strong

-wēyā nominaliser

The suffix -wēyā added to verbs creates nouns;

**Table 32. The nominaliser -wēyā in the Idu nouns**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāwēyā	edibles, victuals
hī	to have	hīwēyā	possessions
lā	to speak	lāwēyā	things to be spoken
tó	to drink	tōwēyā	drinkables

Note that unlike most verbal suffixes, -wēyā lowers the tone in isolation of verb roots by one level.

### 3.1.6.2 Fossil nominal affixes

#### 3.1.6.2.1 An a- prefix for insects and fish?

Although noun classes are often thought to be absent in SE Asia, there is increasing evidence that they exist as a residual system in both Daic and Hmong-Mien. Ratliff (2010: 267) treats the nominal prefixes of Hmong-Mien as ‘weakly classifying’. Animals commonly attract semantically focused affixes in Southeast Asia (Blench 2014). Somewhat surprisingly in Idu, these occur with insects and fish, while reptiles and large mammal names are structurally diverse. Table 33 tabulates a sample of insect names in Idu, illustrating the dominance of an *à-* prefix. A number of insect names also incorporate suffixed classifiers, especially bees and flies, suggesting these were formerly independent morphemes.

**Table 33. A former à- prefix in Idu insect names**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Incorporated classifier</b>
àbà	bedbug	
abici	caterpillar, colourful	
àcitàhù	scorpion	
agayà	ant, harmless, lives inside bamboo	
ahibra	bee, nest in hole in tree	brā (round things)
áhùhù	bee, large, nest in trees, ground	
àjàrù	large, black/red, bites	
aku	bamboo stemborer	
àlòndrò	mosquito	
alobra	fly, small, black and yellow stripes	brā (round things)
àlòkòprà	big cockroach	prā (flat things)
àlòpì	cockroach	
àlùbrà	fly	brā (round things)
alupi	maggot	
ambəə	flying ant	
àmbrè	bee, Asian giant	
amubra	fly, small, black, biting	brā (round things)
amusu	fly, very small, bites at night	
àndìmbùù	dung beetle	
àndùndù	mason wasp	
ánjìpò	earthworm	
ánjìpròmbrà	earthworm	brā (round things)
aṅgre abra	wasp sp. large yellow	brā (round things)
àpòmò	caterpillar	
apətə	woodworm	? tō cylindrical classifier
àpìnjò	cricket, small	
aɾɔ	honeycomb	
áɾòkà	large red ant, edible	
aɾundì	rhinoceros beetle	
ásùcì	large black stink-ant	
atapū	insect sp. black	
athu khrə	propolis	
àthùbrà	bee, small, black	brā (round things)
áthúthà	insect sp. rolls into ball	
àwàbrà	bee, domestic	brā (round things)
àwèyà	wasp	
àwɾùlì	firefly	
awutɔ	termite	
àyàbrà	bee	brā (round things)
ayiṅgo	bee, large, striped	
ayobra	fly, large, bites cattle	brā (round things)
ayunḡo	bee, large, nests in ground	

Similarly, most fish names also begin with *a-*. A possible etymological origin for the *a-* prefix is *ā* ‘child, small’ used as a general diminutive. If so, the tone has not been conserved, since it is always low tone in transparent noun formations. It is not the case, however, that salient animal names are necessarily identified in this way. The names of snakes, of which Idu recognise at least fifteen species, show no recurring morphological elements.



3.1.6.2.2 Class terms for amphibians and birds

Apart from noun classes, SE Asian languages also display a system of marking nominal semantics described by Enfield (2007: 146) as ‘class-terms’. These consist of obligatory accompaniments to nouns, such as Thai, which marks all fish with a preceding *pla*. English retains a fragmentary system of this type where the names of birds and fish are sometimes accompanied by the term itself (‘blackbird’, ‘mutton-bird’, ‘dogfish’, ‘catfish’). Idu also has the remnants of such a system for amphibians and birds. In Idu, it is obligatory to precede about half of all bird names with *prā*, the general term for ‘bird’ (Table 34).

**Table 34. A class term *prā*- obligatorily preceding Idu bird names**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Latin name</b>
<i>prā bō</i>	cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
<i>prā cèyā</i>	crakes, generic	<i>Porzana spp.</i>
<i>prā dūkù</i>	spotted dove	<i>Stigmatopelia chinensis</i>
<i>prā ēkòkà</i>	emerald dove	<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>
<i>prā hò</i>	lesser racket-tailed drongo	<i>Dicrurus remifer</i>
<i>prā ìí</i>	streaked spiderhunter	<i>Arachnothera magna</i>
<i>prā ìmbūlū</i>	yuhinas, generic	<i>Yuhina spp.</i>
<i>prā ìpì</i>	scaly-breasted munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>
<i>prā ìṭū</i>	black drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
<i>prā jàríímū</i>	white-crested laughing thrush	<i>Garrulax leucolophus</i>
<i>prā jólō</i>	red-vented bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>
<i>prā jólō</i>	red-whiskered bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>
<i>prā jòmì</i>	white throated bulbul	<i>Alophoixus flaveolus</i>
<i>prā kālā</i>	speckled piculet	<i>Picumnus innominatus</i>
<i>prā kèsà</i>	beautiful nuthatch	<i>Sitta formosa</i>
<i>prākhōmà</i>	little cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
<i>prā khrà khàríprū</i>	green shrike babbler	<i>Pteruthius xanthochlorus</i>
<i>prā krāyā</i>	large-billed crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchus</i>
<i>prā krì</i>	rose-ringed parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
<i>prā krī</i>	kingfisher, general term	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
<i>prā krō</i>	great cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
<i>prā kūhùtù</i>	Gould’s shortwing	<i>Heteroxenicus stellatus</i>
<i>prā lí</i>	bearded vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>
<i>prā lī</i>	Hodgson’s frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus hodgsoni</i>
<i>prā lísūpū</i>	golden-fronted leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
<i>prā lū</i>	spangled drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentotus</i>
<i>prā lūālā</i>	green-tailed sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>
<i>prā lūālā ētāmà</i>	black-throated sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>
<i>prā màcì khīmīsù</i>	plumbeous water redstart	<i>Rhyacornis fuliginosa</i>
<i>prā mājī</i>	common myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
<i>prā mīā</i>	Eurasian jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
<i>prā ìmīsù hīṭucī</i>	firetail myzornis	<i>Myzornis pyrrhoua</i>
<i>prā lūālā ìmīsù</i>	firetail sunbird	<i>Aethopyga ignicauda</i>
<i>prā màndīkhrī</i>	greywing blackbird	<i>Turdus boulboul</i>
<i>prā mòsā</i>	house sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>
<i>prā ndrò(yē)</i>	hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
<i>prā pādù</i>	plaintive cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>
<i>prā pì</i>	white-throated fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>
<i>prā pōrhò</i>	white winged redstart	<i>Phoenicurus erythrogaster</i>
<i>prā pūdū shù</i>	scarlet finch	<i>Haematospize sipahi</i>
<i>prā prū shré</i>	purple cochoa	<i>Cochoa purpurea</i>

A subset of small animals marked by a common semantically based segment are the amphibians (Table 35). The segment *pá-* occurs in almost all frog or toad names, except those where the classifier *prá* for species of edible frog has been attached. Presumably at some point the element *pá* simply meant frog/toad, but this form does not occur in isolation synchronically. Most amphibians no longer take a numeral classifier.

**Table 35. A pa- prefix in Idu amphibian names**

Idu	Gloss
páhǎ	toad
pámbò	Asian toad sp.
pásùkrù	mountain horned frog
pátítì	Taipeh frog
cènè prá	small, black frog sp.
pàkà prá	frog sp.
páli	Indian hylid frog
páyì	frog sp.
àpàdà	two-striped pygmy tree frog
àpàtòó	tadpole

Interestingly, the words for the tadpole and the pygmy tree frog both have the *à-* diminutive prefix. The two-striped pygmy tree frog, *àpàdà*, is a transparent compound of *àdà* ‘squirrel’ and the amphibian root. The squirrel in question must be the Himalayan striped squirrel which has similar markings.

### 3.2 Pronouns

#### 3.2.1 Personal pronouns

The basic unmarked pronoun set is given in Table 36;

**Table 36. Idu personal pronouns**

No.	sg.		pl.	
	Gloss	Idu	Gloss	Idu
1	I, me	ngá	we, us	ĩnyĩ
2	you	nyū	you pl.	ēnē
3	he, she, it	āyā	they	āyà hrùzhĩ

Unlike many languages in this area, Idu does not distinguish inclusive and exclusive in the second and third persons.

When the pronoun is the object position it can be suffixed with the accusative marker *-gò*. This suffix can also be applied to ordinary nouns and proper names. However, it is optional and is only recorded in a small fraction of examples. Since it is identical with the conjunction *gò*, ‘with, and, also’ it may be an allomorph of this.

ngá.gò e àdē.mì mānā  
 I.ACC do irritate.NEG IMP  
 Don't irritate me!

ngá nyū.gò prā wū.jì  
 I you.ACC good think.PRES  
 I love you

ngá āyā.gò prā wū.jì  
 I her.ACC good think.PRES  
 I love her

### 3.2.2 Possessives

Possessive pronouns in Idu are marked by a *-ci* suffixed to the marked pronoun set (Table 37). Note tonal changes with respect to bare pronouns in the plural set. As in English, these can function both as pronouns and adjectives;

**Table 37. Idu possessive pronouns**

No.	sg. Gloss	Idu	pl. Gloss	Idu
1	mine	ngāci	ours	inyīcī
2	yours	nyūci	yours pl.	ènēcī
3	his, hers, its	āyāci	theirs	āyà hrùzhīcī
		ũ	pron.	third person possessive pronoun

For example;

ēcā ātārhù āyāci ātēgē mbrā  
 this hair-pin hers definitely very  
 this hair-pin is definitely hers

However, possessive adjectives precede the noun they qualify;

nga nyūci pàwú tándò híkòthò.là ĩcúbù wū.jì gūmì da  
 I your money too much unable to have.PERF more want.PRES not AFF  
 I have had enough of your money, I don't want any more

### 3.2.3 Reflexives

Reflexives in Idu are created by appending the affix *-yà* to the basic pronoun paradigm (Table 38). However, the distinction between second and third person singular has undergone merger and is only disambiguated in the plural.

**Table 38. Idu reflexive pronouns**

No.	sg. Gloss	Idu	pl. Gloss	Idu
1	myself	ngáyà	ourselves	ĩnyīyà
2	yourself	nyúyà	yourself pl.	ēnēyà
3	himself etc.	nyúyà	themselves	āyà hrùjī ēnēyà

Examples;

ngá ngáyá njò nē ha.ji  
 I myself work so eat.HAB  
 I work for myself and so I eat

nyúyá ce.kato.hĩbà  
 himself cut.x.PERF  
 he has cut himself

Table 39 shows an extended set of possessive pronouns which broadly correspond to ‘own’, emphasising possession;

**Table 39. Idu possessive pronouns ‘own’**

No.	sg. Gloss	Idu	pl. Gloss	Idu
1	I, me	ngāyàcì	we, us	ĩnyĩyàcì
2	you	nyūyàcì	you pl.	ēnēyàcì
3	he, she, it	āyà nyūyàcì	they	āyà hrūzhĩ ēnēyàcì

### Examples

-pà can be suffixed to reflexive pronouns to express the sense of ‘on their own’.

nyūyàpà he, she on their own

nga.gò baca la hi.ago nyūyàpà bā aba chì.yi  
 I.ACC ? ? ? on his own go ? walk.PERF  
 having asked me to come along, he has gone on ahead on his own

### Examples

### 3.2.3 Impersonal or indefinite pronouns

Table 36 shows the main indefinite pronouns used in Idu;

**Table 40. Idu impersonal or indefinite pronouns**

Idu	Gloss	Comment
ètágè	something	
ètágè.ā	somewhere	
ètākhē	everything	
ĩjĩ	something	
ĩjĩgúmì	nothing	
ĩjĩmá	anywhere	
ĩjĩngā	nothing	
ĩmú làhĩndò	anybody	
ĩmúgè	somebody	
ĩmúndò	anybody	
kēbā	everyone	
kēbā khē	everybody, everyone	
mĩ[cĩ]	others	
ngāmā	nothing, nowhere, none	used in answers

Examples are as follows;

ètágè something

nyu ètágò mú.yi khà wu.ji  
you something hide.PRES EVD think.PRES  
it seems you are hiding something

ètágò.ā somewhere

nyu ètágò.ā gə khà wu.ji  
you somewhere go EVD think.PRES  
it seems you went somewhere

ètākhě everything

ètākhě ndo lā.ke  
everything ? tell?  
tell everything

ījī something, anything

nyu ījī hā.là?  
you something eat.PERF + QM  
Have you eaten something?

ījī lā.wà?  
something say.FUT + QM  
will [you] say something?

dùwū.á ījī ahrũ.hi.mì.yi  
crowd.LOC something hear.able.NEG.PRES  
It is difficult to hear anything in the crowd

ījīgúmì of no value, of no importance

īmú ījīgúmì gu abe ārhūdà ī.yiyi  
person of no importance need be.  
a man of no importance may be useful in future

nga.gò ījīgúmì da ū.mì a  
I.ACC nothing ? think.NEG EVD  
don't undermine me [i.e. don't think I am nothing]

ījīmá anywhere

nyu wuji ījīmá i.ga gūmì  
you have anywhere be.HAB NEG  
there's nobody anywhere like you

ījīngā nothing

nga há.wè ījīngā jí.yi ma  
I give.PRES nothing sit  
I have nothing to give

īmúndō anyone

īmúndō mē là.là.wè  
anyone can say.FUT  
Anyone can say what they like

also;

īmú làhīndò anybody

īmú gə someone  
īmú àlòmbrò group of people  
īmú brāgə some people  
īmú àrū hordes of people  
īmú hrūnzhī those people

imū àlòmbrò gə.gá.bà  
group of people came and went.AFF  
a group of people came

kēbā everybody, everyone

ēnē kēbā ētānyì ngaga ijīya a  
you everyone today ? come EVD  
today, all of you come to my place

kēbā khē everybody, everyone

kēbā khē prada lane i hōnē prā.yi  
everybody good good  
it is good to befriend everybody

mī others

mī awu ma ēsòyā jiga la.himi  
other mind what tell.NEG  
you can't tell what is in others' minds

ngāmā nothing, nowhere, none,

ex.

### 3.2.3 Demonstratives

Distal demonstratives in Idu are marked for up/down directionality as well as number and use essentially the same set as the personal pronouns (Table 41).

**Table 41. Idu demonstratives**

sg.	Gloss	pl.	Gloss	Semantics
ēcā	this	ēcā hrùjī	these	neutral
But;				
āyā	that	āyā hrùjī	those	neutral
àhíyā	that	àhíyā hrùjī	those	level
ātúyā	that	ātúyā hrùjī	those	upwards
àmàlā	that	àmàlā hrùjī	those	downwards

The demonstratives usually precede the noun they qualify;

ēcā ó ābrā lō mitar mǎngá yi  
 this house width ? metre five is  
 this house is five metres wide

ēcā yū àkā taci pùmà  
 this beer be strong very really  
 this rice-beer is very strong

More rarely demonstratives can follow the head noun;

yū ēcā hō àkā taci pùmà  
 beer this INT be strong very really  
 this rice-beer is very strong

àpā ēcā dī kōlā mbrā puma  
 spear this pointed very is  
 this spear is very pointed

However, the same sentence with the demonstrative preceding the head noun is also acceptable;

ēcā àpā hō dī kōlā mbrā puma  
 this spear INT pointed very is  
 this spear is very pointed

The demonstratives *ēcā* and *āyā* also have a pronominal function;

ēcā mò álíwe prōō yi  
 this INT that probably is  
 this might be like that

àhí there

àhí ma ìsēyā mē dè.gà?  
 there LOC who DET stand.PP  
 Who is standing there?

āyā that

āyā īmú hābrū mbrā  
 that man eat too much very  
 that man is a glutton

The same is true for the demonstratives marked as directionals;

àhíyā yākū  
 that woman

àhíyā āsīmbó ābrīlī cè.ga hō duba.yi  
 that tree lightening cut ? ?  
 that tree was hit by lightening and split

īmú bu àhíyā khō mē bùtsúlà bra.hībà  
 man that over there be angry DET very ?  
 that man is very angry

àmālā Mayu ati mē khà.ga  
 down there Mayu village DET lie.HAB  
 Mayu village is down there

mācímē like that

álí mācímē hò  
 like like that AFF  
 it is like that

### 3.3 Verbs

#### 3.3.1 Basic verb morphology

Despite their complex surface morphology, all Idu verbs can be analysed as underlyingly V(V) or (V)CVV in structure (Table 42);

**Table 42. Structure of Idu verbs**

Idu	Structure	Gloss
ī	V	to live
ōō	VV	to shoot
dá	CV	to feel
cèè	CVV	to tease
āwū	VCV	to scoop out water
ànōō	VCVV	to beat s.o. severely

Core verbs can have any of three tone heights;

dá to feel  
 dā to borrow  
 dà to fix bamboo to a mat or a wall



hú	to dig with the hand vertically
hū	to beat with stick
hù	to put hand horizontally in a hole to search

There is no evident preference for a specific tone height.

Idu has a restricted set of V(V) verbs, which can be nasalised (Table 43);

**Table 43. Idu V(V) verbs**

Idu	Gloss
à	to give birth
è	to do
ī	to live
ī̃	to push with shoulder
ōō	to shoot
ú	to pluck s.t. below you
ū	to think
ũ	to bend

Idu has a small number of verbs with a long stem vowel, as shown in Table 44. Two are nasalised, two have C<sub>1</sub> modified with -r and one has an a- prefix.

**Table 44. Idu (V)C(r)VV verbs**

Idu	Gloss
ànōō	to beat s.o. severely
brōō	to shoot up straight
cèè	to tease
dùù <sup>2</sup>	to take revenge
hrōō	to be wet
kàà	to cut out a required shape
piì	to leave a child under someone's care

It is notable that none of these have been recorded with the extensions common to many CV verbs. Idu has just three verbs where the stem-tone changes between repeated vowels.

cāà	to slow down (of rainfall)
hrṑṑ	to empty out (of people)
khā̀ā̀	to smell pungent

The V- initials in VCV structures are restricted to /a/, /e/, /i/ and /u/. In these verbs, only low and mid tone is attested. All uCV verbs can be accounted for by compounding of CV and single segment verbs. However, this is not evident for the other three vowels. Of VCV verbs, aCV is by far the most common (Table 45);

**Table 45. Idu CV verbs with a- prefix**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
àbà	to throw down		
àbí	to sell		
àbrà	to burn s.t.		
ābr̄è	to swallow	br̄è	swallowing
àcà	to suspend, hang	cà	to be suspended
ādzī	to prepare a corpse for a funeral		
ādū	to throw up and down in the hands		
āgū	to walk		
āhr̄ū	to hear		
àbū	to drop s.t.		
àdé	to ignore	-dè	verbal suffix
àdè	to make s.t. stand	dè	to stand
àdē	to be intentionally unresponsive		
àdz̄è	to interrogate		
àḡō	to give s.t. to s.o. to deliver		
àhē	to let loose (e.g an animal)		
àhī	to teach		
àhù	to shake s.t.	hù	to make sound of water etc.
àjì	to burn s.t.		
àjū	to inform		
àkà	to mix liquids together		
àyú	to melt s.t.	yú	

One example of a verb with the formula aCCi has been recorded;

átī to kick

Table 46 and Table 47 show verbs respectively with /e/ and /i/ prefixes. They show little semantic unity and differ in tone. The origin of these V- prefixes is currently unexplained.

**Table 46. Idu CV verbs with an e- prefix**

Idu	Gloss
ēbā	to slap down dough
ēbò	to fall
ēcō <sup>2</sup>	to wear (upper body)
èkē	to show
èkhrà	to inform s.o. who will be going on a journey
èlà <sup>2</sup>	to hold out hand to receive s.t.
ènjō	to act generously

**Table 47. Idu CV verbs with an i- prefix**

Idu	Gloss
īcī	to sting
ìdī	to scrub
īlū	to replace s.o.
īnú	to grieve
ìpr̄ē	to show the buttocks

One example of a verb with the formula iCCu has been recorded;

ĩttũ to come up

The number of verbs with a uCV structure is very restricted (Table 48), and they all can be explained as compound verbs, conjoining either ú ‘to pluck’ or ũ ‘to think’ plus another verb.

**Table 48. Idu CV verbs with a u- prefix**

Idu	Gloss
ú	to pluck
ũkà	to remove parts by plucking
ũkrè	to prick and pluck
ũlà	to pluck
ũ	to think
ũti	to recollect, remember
ũtimi	to forget
ũtō	to think

In the Tawrã language, a- prefixes are also common on VCV verbs, while the other vowels are apparently absent or rare.

### 3.3.2 Idu post-verbal morphology

Verb roots can have up to three CV extensions in addition to TAM marking, and be compounded with secondary verbs. All Idu verbal morphology follows the stem verb. The approximate ordering of the suffixed morphology is as follows;

Verb stem + EXT1/2/3 + Pronominal number agreement + TA marker(s) + [Compound element] + Evidential

Some evidentials can be considered bound morphology but others are clearly free elements. See §3.9 for further discussion. This structure provides a consistent means of distinguishing phrasal verbs, where the compounded element follows the TAM and agreement markers, from verbal extensions, where this morphology is appended to the extended form.

### 3.3.3 Categories of extended verbs

Idu has a variety of ways of adding either suffixed or following elements to verb roots to extend their meaning, in addition to the TAM system. These can usually be distinguished but in practice can merge into one another. Table 49 presents a categorisation of strategies for extending verbs in Idu;

**Table 49. Idu strategies for extension of verb semantics**

No.	Category	Description
1.	Serial verbs	Two or more distinct core verbs follow one another. The sequence is not lexicalised
2.	Phrasal verbs	A core verb is followed by a noun, adjective or locative which can stand as an independent word
3.	Compound verbs	Two core verbs are compounded and lexicalised. Post verbal morphology follows the second verb
4.	Verb plus one or more extensions	A core verb is followed by a CV(CV) extension, with further extensions permissible. The extension elements cannot stand alone
5.	Paired collocations	Two verbs are conjoined in an idiomatic echo expression. Sometimes their phonology or tonology is adjusted for euphony. Both verbs take tense/aspect morphology independently

Of these, most remarkable is the verbal extension or applicative system, which allows stacked and nested extensions, in a very similar manner to Bantu. In addition to these, Idu has an extensive set of paired verbs used in idioms, where the two verbs show rhythmic equivalences or segmental pairing in the same manner as ideophones (§3.11). These collocations are not restricted to verbs, so they are not strictly an exclusive feature.

As an example of the analytic problems these verbs raise, Table 50 gives the example of *cè* ‘to cut’. All the forms are evidently related to the CV stem, but some are bound morphologically, some are compounds with existing verbs with an independent existence. Some of the elements which follow *cè* can be etymologised, while others seem to be specific to this verb. The challenge is thus to assign them to a class of extended verb in a logical fashion.

**Table 50. Extended forms of the verb *cè* in Idu**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>cè</i>	to cut
<i>cēbrā</i>	to cut down a tree
<i>cējì</i>	to cut uniformly
<i>cēkù</i>	to cut and clear jungle
<i>cēnggērē</i>	to cut all over the place
<i>cēpā</i>	to cut and make a hole
<i>cēsà</i>	to make a mark on trees made while cutting a jungle path
<i>cēsù</i>	to slash wildly
<i>cētā</i>	to cut into pieces

Apart from the analytic issue, there is a related orthographic issue, which is whether such words are written as one word or two, since this affects literacy and alphabetisation of lexical materials.

### 3.3.4 Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are verbs where a core stem, in the case of Idu (V)CV is followed by another element which may be a noun, adjective or locative and which extends the meaning in a not necessarily predictable manner. Thus in English, ‘wash’ + ‘up’ creates an expression whose semantics are idiosyncratic, while ‘go’ + ‘around’ is entirely predictable.

**Table 51. Examples of Idu phrasal verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ālū	to revenge	ālū sàsà	to insult severely
bā	to touch softly, pat	bā shà	to feel around, grope
cǎ	to fall on top of s.t.	cǎ mbūtū	to have s.t. fall on you and have your body swell up
		cē ālǒ	to hiccup
cē	to tie, knit	cè wūtū	to level off the stumps after clearing
dè	to stand	cé tútè	to tie up with a rope
dò	to jump	dē phàà	
		dò māgá	to jump competitively
		dò pī	to jump aside
		dò yūgā	to jump around
èná	to observe taboo	èná cō	to break a taboo
gè	to carry on the back	gè ùpā	to carry and throw away
hǎ <sup>2</sup>	to give	hǎ ágè	to give s.t. to s.o. to deliver
ī	to live, be in	ī pàgā	to live separately (i.e. in different places).
jò	to be woven in a pattern	jò ūtè	to design
lā	to say, speak, talk	lā àhitò	to learn how to talk
lhi	to fly	lhi īpà	to fly over
mrà	to writhe after eating s.t. poisonous	mrà sùkù	to writhe in agony
nè	to be exhausted, be tired	nē kāsī	to be exhausted, tired out
nyā	to fan, flutter	nyà yūgā	to flutter in air
phrē	to set fire, burn	phrē sētō	to die by fire
sǎ	to be dry	sǎ kālā	to be chapped (applies to body parts)

cē tútè to cut into two

### Examples

ànjì tápúmè bòstā ma cé tútè.a ba  
 stuff everything bag LOC tie up IMP  
 collect everything and tie it up in a bag

ēnē, kànyì ī pàgā jì.mì  
 you pl. two live separately live.NEG  
 you pl., don't live in different places

kēbā nē thùwě jò ūtè.himì  
 everyone by skirt design.NEG  
 not everyone can design the weaving patterns

ìntsī hā.téné mrà sùkù gānē khà.gāyí  
 chili eat.PST writhing then lie.PRES  
 this person is writhing after eating chili

nyú brāā prà sǎ kālā.bà?  
 you sole of foot be chapped.INT  
 are the soles of your feet chapped?

### 3.3.5 Compound verbs

As in many languages with a large set of CV verbs, sequences of two or more verbs can be lexicalised. Two core verbs are compounded, though only bound morphologically when the second verb has a deleted V-prefix. These are termed compound verbs. These can be distinguished from phrasal verbs and extended verbs because they are lexically transparent, consist only of verbs and are unique, i.e. the individual elements of the compound are not generalised. Idu has a number of such compound verbs, for example those shown in Table 52;

**Table 52. Idu compound verbs**

Verb	Gloss	Eymologies
ānōnjī	to scold and chase away	ānō ‘scold’ + njī ‘chase away’
ànyúbà	to deceive, trick, confound	ànyú ‘cheat’ + bà ‘whisper’
cālā	to fall on and kill	cà ‘to fall on’ + là ‘be killed by s.t. falling’
cātú	to fall on and break	cà ‘to fall on’ + tú ‘break’
cēlā	to cut and fall down dead	cè ‘cut’ + là ‘be killed by s.t. falling’
cēpā	to cut and make a hole	cè ‘cut’ + pè ‘to reach’
cēsē	to cut and kill	cè ‘cut’ + sē ‘kill’
chíkà	to split s.t. in two lengthways (bamboo)	chí ‘divide’ + kà ‘tear off’
grálá	to shout and call	grà ‘shout’ + ālā ‘search’
hājī	to stay overnight	hā ‘eat’ + jī ‘sleep’
hākē	to eat alone (while s.o. is present)	hā ‘eat’ + ēkē ‘show’
hāsē	to tie and kill	hā ‘tie’ + sē ‘to murder’
rètā	to tear apart by twisting	rè ‘wring out’ + [?] tā ‘block’
sèlà	to be murdered	sè ‘to murder’ + là ‘be killed by s.t. falling’
thúkà	to split s.t. in two lengthways (tree)	thú ‘divide’ + kà ‘tear off’
yōtā	to be blocked by something thrown or falling	yō ‘throw’ + tā ‘block’

Verb	Gloss	Components
āmā	to frown	
āmāmbù	to turn away in anger	āmā ‘frown’ and ‘close’
āmātsī	to show anger	āmā et. ‘frown’ and ‘rot’
īgà	v. to have come	
-nyú	v.suff. suffix, uncertainty unsatisfaction	indicating <i>ngàpító nám.nyú</i> I don’t care if I don’t have it <i>áli</i> or <i>lami prā na.yim.nyú</i> there’s no need to say it like that

### 3.3.7 Verbal extensions

#### 3.3.7.1 Verbal extensions overview

The meanings of core verbs in Idu can be extended by CV and CVCV suffixed elements. Extensions might be described as semi-productive; it is possible to add them to a variety of verbs, but in practice, many are

lexicalised, having developed specialised semantics (especially in the case of ‘speak’, ‘sleep’, ‘eat’ and ‘drink’). A small number of core verbs carry the burden of extended forms. Many less common verbs, especially VCV forms, do not usually take extensions. Speakers are not consciously aware of the sense of many extensions, which have to be inferred from the synchronic meanings of the verbs. As the number of extended forms is very large, the initial difficulty is in distinguishing between true extensions and verbal compounding. Three criteria can be applied;

1. Extensions are bound to the verb stem, as –(n)do, –(a)pa
2. Extensions are not bound morphologically, but TAM marking follows the extension, not the stem
3. The element following the core verb is otherwise unattested

Once they are pointed out, more examples of the same extension can usually be cited. The list of extensions given here is probably not exhaustive, but those so far identified are listed in Table 53.

**Table 53. Idu verbal extensions**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Approximate gloss</b>
-acã	additive	denotes doing s.t. extra
-àdé	ignoro-irritative	to ignore in an irritating way
-àndā	penetrative	denotes entering with verbs of physical force
-(à)pā	sequential	denotes sequential action completed
-athà	expectative	denotes expecting a result
-dò	passative	denotes passing on s.t.
-hā	errative	denotes doing s.t. in error
-hí	causative	
-hī	indirect imperative	denotes telling someone else to do something
-hímìcīcī	negative conative	to do s.t. multiple times and not succeed
-jì	imitative	denotes acting like s.t. or s.o.
-kà	incompletive	to partly do s.t.
-kō	incapacitative	to be unable to do s.t.
-kōlòtò	patient	denotes being the victim or passive object of an action
-kù		denotes doing s.t. thoroughly
-là		marks valency change
-lāhā	errative	denotes doing s.t. in error
-lako	incapacitative	to be unable to do s.t.
-lāmpā	repetitive	denote doing s.t. a second time
-lyū	replacive	denotes replacing s.o.
-mānétò	temporo-negative	denotes purposelessness, time-wasting
-mbrè	participative	
-mbūtū		denotes swelling or fitting s.t. tightly
-mì	negative	denotes not doing or being s.t.
-mīmù	expectative	denotes strong expectation, tendency
-mīsī	desiderative	denotes wanting to do s.t.
-mū	perseverative	denotes doing s.t. continuously
-mūjì	occupative	denotes being busy doing s.t.
-mūthrúyì	occupative	denotes being busy doing s.t.
-ndò	completive	denotes completion of an action
-ŋgērē		denotes careless repeated action
-ŋgó	provocative	denotes dare s.o. to do s.t.
-ŋgō	politeness	denotes request s.o. to do s.t. politely
-nū	evitative	denotes an actor is avoiding or refusing to do s.t.
-pòmì	negative actant	denotes experiencing something never previously experienced
-rē	anti-purposive	denotes s.t. done aimlessly
-rè	provocative	denotes s.t. done to provoke or irritate
-tá	incompletive	denotes s.t. partly achieved

Idu	Category	Approximate gloss
-tà	incompletive	denotes being stopped halfway through
-te	intensifier	denotes intensification of an action
-thù	disturbative	denotes feeling disturbed, uneasy
-tō	reflexive	denotes doing s.t. to oneself
-tòsī	incompetitive	denotes doing s.t. in an amateurish or incompetent way
-úsà	indiscriminative	denotes doing s.t. indiscriminately

As the listing under individual extensions shows, there is a small core of verbs to which most extensions are attached. These include;

**Table 54. Core verbs attracting extensions**

Idu	Gloss
dò	to jump
è	to do
hā	to eat
hī	to have
jì	to sleep
là	to fall
lā	to speak
tó	to drink

Table 53 shows an approximate meaning of the extension, based on a semantic analysis of the attested forms. However, the semantics can sometimes be quite diverse, and the analysis is presented in the discussion. I have assigned names to the extensions, sometimes based on pre-existing terminology. Others are constructed based on typical Bantuist practice and a mildly humorous subtext. These are only proposals and can be adapted and changed, as research advances.

Where the extension has a prefixed nasal it is usually preserved, while nasalisation on a verb stem is then assimilated. Whether the final vowel of the verb stem assimilates to first vowel of the extension in ca VCV structures is highly variable. Outcomes are noted under the description of individual extensions. An analytic problem with Idu extensions is why the tone appears to be stable in some and is mobile in others (e.g. Table 50). For the present, tone is considered underspecified on some extensions and not marked in the table. Individual extensions are discussed in the examples below.

In terms of the global typology of verbal extensions, Idu has a remarkably high number of attested forms, by comparison with Bantu, for example, the language family it most resembles (Guthrie 1962). Verbal extensions are found across much of Niger-Congo as well as in some branches of Afroasiatic. The likely reason for this is that extensions have arisen historically in Idu by a quite different route from Bantu. Many extensions in Idu have a transparent etymological origin (see e.g. discussion under *nū*) and were originally Verb + Verb compounds, where the second verb has been grammaticalised and its meaning extended. Extended verbs can be identified, because they have been lexicalised, i.e. they are now treated by speakers as indivisible lexical units, and TAM markers thus follow the extended stem.

A significant problem in the tonology of extensions is the problem is their impact on the tone of the core verb to which they are attached. In some cases, the tone of the verb is preserved, but in others it is raised. The example of *cè* ‘to cut’ (Table 50) shows that when compounded, the low tone is raised to mid. Other



verbs, such as *lā* ‘speak, say’ maintain their citation tone. This suggests strongly the presence of a floating mid-tone after the verb root, thus *cè*. Since some verbs do indeed have doubled vowels which change level (), this is a possible solution.

### 3.3.7.2 Stacking of extensions

As with Bantu, Idu permits stacking of extensions. This does not seem to be a highly productive system but nevertheless, verb roots with up to three extensions have been recorded. As an example of this, consider;

*pīkōlòtò* to hurt oneself while using a tool

This is composed of a root and then a composite extension composed of three elements, interpreted as follows;

*pī* to bite, hit  
*-ko* incapacitative suffix  
*lò* ? no known meaning  
*tò* reflexive

Since other verbs can take a *-kōlòtò* extension (see below), this can be regarded as a lexicalised composite.

The rules by which extensions are ordered remain to be explained, once a larger sample of extended verbs can be etymologised.

### 3.3.7.3 Checklist of identified extensions

This section provides an annotated list of Idu verbal extensions or applicatives, with attested examples, and comparisons with the simplex verb. In some cases, the semantics are transparent, but elsewhere an apparently stable extension results in a wide range of meanings.

*-acà* denotes doing s.t. additional or extra to the primary action

**Table 55. Idu verbs with the additive suffix *-acà***

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>è</i>	to do	<i>èācā</i>	to repeat, to do s.t. in addition
<i>hā</i>	to eat	<i>hāācā</i>	to eat extra
<i>hī</i>	to have	<i>hīācā</i>	to have more
<i>lā</i>	to speak	<i>lāācā</i>	to speak in support of s.o.
<i>njò</i>	to work	<i>njòācā</i>	to work extra

The extension has no effect on the tone of the core verb

*-àdé* denotes acting to ignore others in an irritating way

Used when the person who is the object of an action ignores the intention of the actor with an intention to irritate (Table 56).

**Table 56. Idu verbs with the ignoro-irritative suffix *-(à)dé***

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>āhrū</i>	to hear	<i>āhrūàdé</i>	to listen and ignore
<i>āthú</i>	to see	<i>āthúàdé</i>	to look but pay no attention
<i>chì</i>	to walk	<i>chìàdé</i>	to walk and ignore with intention to irritate. For example, you order someone to go somewhere, but they ignore you and go in their own time
<i>è</i>	to do	<i>èàdé</i>	to act but ignore, in practice to irritate

lā	to speak	lāàdé	to speak but pay no attention, i.e. in an irritating way
njò	to work	njòàdé	to do s.t. sloppily with intention to irritate

-àndā penetrative, denotes entering with verbs of physical force

**Table 57. Idu verbs with the penetrative suffix -àndā**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cō	to punch	cōàndā	to punch and go in
hū	to beat	hūàndā	to hit s.o. and to
lū	to poke	lūàndā	to poke s.t. and to enter

-(à)pà denotes the completion of an action referring to the first verb in a sequence, sequential

**Table 58. The sequential suffix -(a)pà on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
dò	to jump	dòapà	to jump
hā	to eat	hāapà	to eat sequentially
jì	to sleep	jìapà	to sleep
lā	to speak	lāpà	to speak sequentially
là	to fall	làapà	to fall sequentially
si	to die	sīapà	to die
thrā	to write	thrāapà	to write
thrū	to run	thrūapà	to run
tó	to drink	tóapà	to drink

The -(a)pà extension is applied only to the first verb in constructions where the main verb is repeated. Thus;

nyu lapa nga la.we  
 you speak I speak.FUT  
 I'll speak after you

The -(a)pà extension always precedes the TAM marker.

nyu shiapa.go nga shi.we  
 you die.PERF I die.FUT  
 After you have died, I'll die

-athà expectative

**Table 59. The Idu verbal extension -athà**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāthà	to expect to get s.t. to eat
hi	to have	hīathà	to expect to get s.t.
tō	to drink	tōathà	to expect to get s.t. to drink

-dò denotes passing s.t. on

**Table 60. The passative suffix –dò on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hà	to eat	hàdò	to eat from s.o. else's portion
há	to give	hádò	to pass on s.t. to s.o. else
hí	to have	híadò	to take s.t. from s.o. else's share
lā	to say	lādò	to tell s.o. s.t. you heard from s.o. else, to pass on information

gəne by doing s.t.

mētà.gənè	by tearing
la.gəne	by saying
ha.gəne	by eating
hã.gəne	by giving

-dú denotes asking ot do s.t.

bri.dú marry.ask

-gana

īgánà	to have returned, be back [many people]
jagana	to have come down
itugana	to have come up

-hā errative, denotes doing s.t. in error

**Table 61. The errative suffix –hā on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cǎ	to fall on top of s.t.	cāhā	to be missed (by s.t. falling)
chì	to walk	chīhā	to go to the wrong place
cō	to punch	cōhā	to punch s.t. and miss, to punch s.o. in error
dē	to stand	dēhā	to stand up by mistake
è	to do	ēhā	to do s.t. mistakenly
grǎ	to get	grāhā	to try and receive s.t. and miss
hù	to grope	hùhā	to grope at s.t. in error (inside s.t.)
hū	to beat	hūhā	to strike at s.t. and miss, to beat s.o. in error
lā	to speak	lāhā	to regret saying s.t.

The extension *-lāhā* (Table 72) is used in most daily speech, but this is used in formulaic expressions

-hòjà v.e.

thrū.hòjà	run
do.hoja	jump
li.hoja	fly
la.hoja	speak
gra.hojashout	
yo.hoja	slide

yo.hoja throw

The extension -hi has two tonal forms which appear to be distinct. These are;

-hí causative and hī indirect imperative

The -hí suffix is a classic causative, widely attested in the languages of the world (Table 62);

**Table 62. Idu verbs with the causative suffix -hí**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ásà	to know	ásàhí	to cause yourself or s.o. else to learn
lā	to say	lāhí	to say s.t for the sake of speaking

Examples of hī, the indirect imperative, are shown in Table 63. The general sense is to tell someone else to do something or to send someone to do something.

**Table 63. Idu verbs with the suffix -hī**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ākā	to warm s.t. or s.o. by the fire	ākāhī	to tell s.o. to place s.t. by the fire
lā	to say	lāhī	to send on an errand, to say s.t. on behalf of the sender
ājī	to make (object)	ājīhī	to order s.o. to make s.t.

-hī has a negative form -hīmì,

**Table 64. Idu verbs with the suffix -hīmì**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āthú	to look	āthūnjīhīmì	to be unable to see clearly

as attested in *āthū.hī.mì*, ‘to be unable to see’

-hímìcīcī conative, to do s.t. multiple times and not succeed

This is a compound extension, constructed from a number of elements. The *-hīmì* element is the same as the causative -hí + negative suffix *-mì*. The mid-tone *cī* is probably the verb *cī* ‘to get, obtain’, which is reduplicated, with the final vowel lengthened for emphasis, an iconic process common for adverbs and ideophones in Idu. (Table 65)

**Table 65. Idu verbs with the negative conative suffix -hímìcīcī**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chì	to walk	chihímìcīcī	to try to walk but fail
dè	to stand	dèhímìcīcī	to try to stand but fail
è	to do	èhímìcīcī	to try to do s.t. over and over again
hà	to eat	hàhímìcīcī	to try and eat even though one can’t eat anymore
khà	to lie down	khàhímìcīcī	to try and lie down even though one can’t
lā	to say	lāhímìcīcī	to try and explain s.t. but not succeed

-(n)dòhōlā denotes recent completion

<i>hāndòhōlā</i>	eat all and complete
<i>lāndòhōlā</i>	speak everything and complete

-jì imitative, denotes acting like s.t. or s.o.

Verbs with -jì extension denote someone performing an action in imitation of someone else (Table 66).

**Table 66. Idu verbs with the imitative suffix -jì**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>cè</i>	to cut	<i>céjì</i>	to cut like s.o.
<i>dò</i>	to jump	<i>dòjì</i>	to jump like s.o. or s.t. (animal)
<i>ndà</i>	to laugh	<i>ndàjì</i>	to laugh like s.o.
<i>khò</i>	to be angry	<i>khòjì</i>	to be angry like s.o.

Note that *céjì* ‘to cut uniformly’ is not an example of this extension but a compound verb (Table 50).

-kà incomplete, denotes partly doing s.t.

The -kà suffix marks doing something partway or incomplete (Table 67).

**Table 67. Idu verbs with the incomplete suffix -ka**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>cè</i>	to cut	<i>cèkà</i>	to cut partly
<i>hū</i>	to beat	<i>hūkà</i>	to partly beat and break
<i>mē</i>	to tear	<i>mēkà</i>	to spread (as the legs), to split apart s.t. vertical
<i>ngró</i>	to catch hold of (e.g. animals)	<i>ngrókà</i>	to try to catch hold of (as eagle and prey)
<i>pí</i>	to hit with an axe	<i>píkà</i>	to cut partly through with an axe
<i>thū</i>	to bite	<i>thūkà</i>	to partly bite into
<i>ú</i>	to pluck s.t. below you	<i>ūkà</i>	to partly break in two (as a nut)

The raising of the tone to mid in *ngrókà* is unexplained.

-kō incapacitative, denotes being unable to do s.t.

This suffix can take on the sense of a reversive, for example in the case of *hālā*, ‘to remember’. The suffix –lako (Table 73) apparently has a similar meaning.

**Table 68. Idu verbs with the incapacitative suffix -kō**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>chì</i>	to walk	<i>chìkō</i>	to be unable to walk
<i>dzi</i>	to wear bangles	<i>dzikō</i>	to not fit ornaments for wrist and fingers (rings, watch etc.), to not want to
<i>hā</i>	to eat	<i>hākō</i>	to be unable to eat (for physiological reason), to not want to eat (bored with food)
<i>hālā</i>	to recall, remember	<i>hālākō</i>	to forget
<i>jí</i>	to sit, live	<i>jíkō</i>	to be unable to sit, to be tired of waiting for s.o.
<i>lā</i>	to tell, speak, say	<i>lākō</i>	to keep telling s.o. s.t. but they don’t listen, to be unable to speak (sore throat etc.)
<i>nè</i>	to dress, wear	<i>nèkō</i>	to not fit (upper-body clothes or necklaces), to not want to
<i>sò</i>	to wear trousers, sock	<i>sòkō</i>	to not fit (lower-body clothes)

	etc.		
tó	to drink	tókō	to be unable to drink (for physiological reason), to not want to drink (bored with drink)

The verb *wūcīkō*, ‘to hesitate’, is a compound verb with an extension, composed as follows;

wū to think + cī to get + kō incapacitative suffix

-kōlòtò denotes being the victim or passive object of an action

This is a compound extension, similar to *-hīmìcīcī* (Table 65). A proposal for the origin of this extension is presented in §4.1.

**Table 69. Idu verbs with the patient suffix -kōlòtò**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chì	to walk	chìkōlòtò	to achieve s.t. by walking
hā	to eat	hākōlòtò	to achieve s.t. by eating
pí	to hit with an axe	pìkōlòtò	to hurt oneself while using a tool
thò	to speak	thòkōlòtò	to achieve s.t. by speaking

kòthò denotes ;unable to

hí	to have	híkòthò	unable to have
hì	to sleep	hìkòthò	unable to sleep
hā	to eat	hākòthò	unable to eat
tó	to drink	tókòthò	unable to drink
de	to stand	dèkòthò	unable to stand

-kù denotes doing s.t. thoroughly

The suffix -kù indicates the action is performed thoroughly (Table 70).

**Table 70. The thoroughness suffix –ku on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ànyū	to wash	ànyūkù	to wash thoroughly
àṛē	act of weeding	àṛékù	to weed thoroughly
cè	to cut	cèkù	to cut and clear jungle
cì	to cut hair, snip off	cìkù	to shave s.o. bald
cō	to remove	cōkù	to remove s.t. from s.t. cylindrical, such as a shirt from the arm
ìdī	to scrub	ìdīkù	to scrub vigorously
mū	to burn off feathers, roast	mūkù	to burn off feathers completely
pì	to peel	pìkù	to peel off completely
pì	to dig with spade/shovel	pìkù	to clear away short grass
rē	to scratch	rékù	to remove by scratching
shrè	to dismantle (wall), remove	shrèkù	to dismantle (wall) thoroughly
thrò	to thresh grain	thròkù	to thresh grain fully

-kùlā

*ànyūkùlā* ‘to be washed thoroughly’ is an example of stacked extensions, with the valency-changing *-lā* following the extended stem *ànyūkù*.

*-kùlā* v.e. denotes finishing s.t. e.g. *cēkùlā*, *hākùlā*

*-là* denotes valency change

The extension *-là* marks valency change, increasing or decreasing the transitivity of the verb. The direction of change is not always consistent (Table 71).

**Table 71. The valency change suffix *-là* on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>iká</i>	to move s.t with stick/twig	<i>ikálà</i>	to move s.t. away from you with a stick
<i>āshū</i>	to be startled	<i>āshùlà</i>	to alarm, surprise
<i>brū</i>	to spring forth, spout water	<i>brūlà</i>	to ejaculate
<i>hā</i>	to eat	<i>hālā</i>	to go and around looking for food, scrounge
<i>kā</i>	to untie	<i>kālā</i>	to untie
<i>tō</i>	to pound into powder	<i>ātōlà</i>	to instigate trouble (with women or money)

The verb *āshùlàtò* ‘to be surprised, startled, frightened’ includes the passiviser *-tò*,

*-lāhā* errative, denotes doing s.t. in error

**Table 72. The errative suffix *-lāhā* on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>chì</i>	to walk	<i>chìlāhā</i>	to go to the wrong place
<i>cō</i>	to punch	<i>cōlāhā</i>	to punch s.t. and miss, to punch s.o. in error
<i>dò</i>	to jump	<i>dòlāhā</i>	to jump in error (often used by parents warning children to be careful)
<i>è</i>	to do	<i>èlāhā</i>	to do s.t. mistakenly
<i>grá</i>	to call out	<i>grálāhā</i>	to call out to s.o. in error
<i>grá</i>	to get	<i>grálāhā</i>	to try and receive s.t. and miss
<i>hā</i>	to eat	<i>hālāhā</i>	to mistakenly eat s.t.
<i>hà</i>	to give	<i>hālāhā</i>	to give s.t. in error
<i>hù</i>	to grope	<i>hùlāhā</i>	to grope at s.t. in error (inside s.t.)
<i>hū</i>	to beat	<i>hùlāhā</i>	to strike at s.t. and miss, to beat s.o. in error
<i>lā</i>	to speak	<i>lālāhā</i>	to regret saying s.t.
<i>tō</i>	to drink	<i>tōlāhā</i>	to drink s.t. in error

Words like *hālāhā* and *tōlāhā* are in common use because they apply to breaking restrictions on ritual prohibitions. For example, you are not permitted to eat meat in the house of your in-law and to eat such meat implies breaking a prohibition. In a more extreme example, if s.o. in a household has killed any member of your clan you cannot drink *yu* rice-beer (or even water) in that house.

*-lako* incapacitative, denotes being unable to do s.t.

cf. also *-kō* (Table 68), with a similar meaning.

**Table 73. The incapacitative suffix *-lako* on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>ālā</i>	to search	<i>alako</i>	to be unable to search

cō	to remove	cola	to remove s.t. from s.t. cylindrical, such as a shirt from the arm
dzi	to wear ornaments	hand dzilako	to be unable to find enough ornaments for wrist and fingers (rings, watch etc.)
hālā	to search for food	halako	to be unable to find enough food (e.g. an orphan)
hālā	to recall, remember	hālako	to forget
jí	to sit, live	jilako	to be unable to find shelter
lala	to call	lalako	to be unable to call
nè	to wear (necklace)	nelako	to be unable to find enough upper-body clothes or necklaces
sò	to wear trousers, sock etc.	sòlako	to be unable to find enough lower-body clothes
tólā	to search for drink	tólako	to be unable to find enough to drink

*hālā* and *tólā* are compound verbs, with *ālā*, ‘to search’, as the second element.

-lāmpā repetitive suffix

**Table 74. The repetitive suffix -lāmpā on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hālāmpā	to eat once again
jī	to sit	jīlāmpā	to sit down once again
lā	to speak	lālāmpā	to speak once again
tó	to drink	tólāmpā	to drink once again

ló denotes waiting (esp. children and animals)

há to wait    hāló to wait to eat  
 tó to drink    tóló to wait to drink

-līsā denotes ‘all around, everywhere’

là to throw    làlīsā to throw around  
 ce to cut    celīsā to cut all over the place

-lyū replacive, denotes replacing s.o.

**Table 75. The replacive suffix -lyu on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ha	to eat	hālyū	to eat in the place of s.o.
hi	to have, get	hīlyū	to get s.t. in the place of s.o.
la	to speak	lālyū	to speak together in support of s.o.
tó	to drink	tōlyū	to drink in the place of s.o.

-mànéto denotes purposelessness, time-wasting

**Table 76. The temporo-negative suffix -mànéto on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ē	to eat	ēmànéto	to be busy doing nothing
ī	to have, get	īmànéto	to just exist, waste time



lā to speak      lāmànéto to speak in a time-wasting manner

-mbūtū denotes swelling or fitting s.t. tightly

**Table 77. The bloatative suffix –mbūtū on Idu verbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ha	to eat	hambūtū	to swell up from over-eating
là	to fall down	lambūtū	to fall down and become sick
wū	to put a cloth on top of s.t.	wūmbūtū	to tightly cover s.t. with a cloth, wrap in a blanket

-mbrè participative

**Table 78. The participative suffix -mbrè on Idu verbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ājī	to make (object)	ājīmbrè	to work together with
hu	to beat	humbrè	to take part in a beating
la	to speak	lambrè	to speak together in support of s.o.
njò	to work	njombrè	to take part in work
tho	to speak	thombrè	to take part in speaking

-mì negative, denotes not doing or being s.t.

mì is a generalised negative suffix which occurs in other syntactic contexts.

**Table 79. The negative suffix -mì on Idu verbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ànjā	to cry	ànjāmì	to not cry
ásà	to know	ásàmì	to not know, be ignorant
dē	to stand	dēmì	not to stand
lā	to say	lāmì	not to say
ndà	to laugh	ndàmì	not to laugh

-mīmù denotes strong expectation, tendency

**Table 80. The tendency suffix -mīmù on Idu verbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ànjā	to cry	ànjāmīmù	to be near tears
hā	to eat	hāmīmù	to strongly expect to eat
tó	to drink	tómīmù	to strongly expect to drink

-mīsī desiderative, denotes wanting to do s.t.

**Table 81. The desiderative suffix -mīsī on Idu verbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ànjā	to cry	ànjāmīsī	to want to cry
dē	to stand	dēmīsī	to want to stand
lā	to say	lāmīsī	to want to say
ndà	to laugh	ndāmīsī	to want to laugh

ha.misi  
eat.want

-mū perseverative, denotes doing s.t. continuously

**Table 82. Idu verbs with the perseverative suffix -mu**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāmū	to eat continuously
hì	to sleep	hīmū	to sleep all the time
khà	to lie down	khāmū	to lie down all the time
lā	to say	lāmū	to continue talking
njò	to work	njōmū	to work continuously
tō	to drink	tōmū	to drink continuously

-mūjì denotes being busy doing s.t., occupative

**Table 83. Idu verbs with the occupative suffix -mūjì**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ājī	to make (object)	ājīmūjì	to be busy making s.t.
è	to do	ēmūjì	to do s.t. continuously on a large scale
lā	to say	lāmūjì	to be busy saying s.t.
ji	to sleep	jimūjì	to be sleeping to escape responsibility
njō	to wake up	njōmūjì	to be awake when others are asleep
thrā	to write	thrāmūjì	to be busy writing

-mūthrúyì denotes being busy doing s.t., occupative

**Table 84. Idu verbs with the occupative suffix -mūthrúyì**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ha	to eat	hāmūthrúyì	to be busy eating
lā	to say	lāmūthrúyì	to be incessantly saying s.t.
njò	to work	njōmūthrúyì	to be busy working
i	to live	īmūthrúyì	to be occupied somewhere

aho ahru ne nga jimū njōmūjì thru hoyi

without sleeping

on hearing the news I came running i.e. without sleeping

porika ma ā.àlōmbró thrāmūjì thragaga  
exam children busy writing  
In exams, every child is busy writing

-nā future (movement verbs)

īgānā to come (future)  
jana to come from the north  
ituna to come from the south  
ibina to come from east/west

*naba mē īgàṅā laḡayi* father is telling you to come

-ndò completive, denotes finishing or completing a task

**Table 85. The completive suffix -ndò in Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāndò	to finish eating
hí	to have	híndò	to have already had enough
hì	to sleep	hìndò	to finish sleeping
khò	to be angry	khòndò	to stop being angry
lā	to say	lāndò	to finish talking
tó	to drink	tóndò	to finish drinking

-ṅgērē denote doing s.t. in a scattered way

cè	to cut	cēṅgērē	to cut all over the place
ū	to pinch	ūṅgērē	to pinch incessantly

-ṅgo has two tonal allomorphs, with high and mid tones, denoting a request to perform an action, in one case in a challenging manner or in a polite request. These have Mithu forms, which are tonally identical.

-ṅgó Midu	-kó Mithu	dares s.t. to perform an action
-ṅgō Midu	-kō Mithu	requests s.o. politely to perform an action

-ṅgó provocative, to dare s.o. to do s.t., to attempt to do s.t., to do s.t. tentatively

**Table 86. The provocative suffix -ṅgó in Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
bā <sup>2</sup>	to touch softly	bāṅgó	to touch gently (s.o. with fever)
chì	to walk	chīṅgó	to try to walk
hā	to eat	hāṅgó	to dare to eat
hà	to give	hāṅgo	to press s.o. to give s.t. inappropriate

dote to jump dōtē.ṅgōà to try and jump down

-ṅgō to request s.o. to do s.t. politely

**Table 87. The polite request suffix -ṅgō on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāṅgō	to request s.o. politely to eat
hà	to give	hāṅgō	to press s.o. to please try and give
tó	to drink	tōṅgō	to request s.o. politely to drink

-nū evitative, denotes an actor is avoiding or refusing to do s.t.;

**Table 88. The evitative suffix -nū on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
-----	-------	-----	-------

chì	to walk	chīnū	to avoid s.o.'s home
hí	to have	hínū	to refuse to have s.t.
ī	to live	īnū	to refuse to live with
lā	to speak	lānū	to observe speech taboos in the house of the wife's family

The etymological origin of this extension is almost certainly *nū* 'to abstain from eating and drinking due to social restrictions' which has been generalised to an evitative.

-pòmì negative actant

Describes experiencing something never previously experienced

**Table 89. The negative actant suffix –pòmì on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ahrū	to hear	āhrūpòmì	to hear s.t. never heard before
àthū	to look	àthūpòmì	to look at s.t. never seen before
ē	to do	ēpòmì	to do s.t. never done before
lā	to speak	lāpòmì	to say s.t. never said before

āhrūlāpòmì things never heard before

àthūlāpòmì things never seen before

The extension -re has two tonal allomorphs. The probably meanings of these are as follows;

-pràjī denotes action for the sake of it, aimlessly

thrūtè	run	thrūtè.pràjī	run and reach.act
		lā.pràjī	speak
		wū.pràjī	think
		jī.pràjī	sit

-rē to do something purposelessly, anti-purposive

-rè to provoke or irritate, irritative, provocative

Table 90 shows examples of the -rē suffix;

**Table 90. The anti-purposive suffix – rē on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āgū	to walk	āgūrē	to roam around
è	to do	èrē	to play
thò	to speak	thòrē	to speak in a purposeless way
lā	to say	lārē	to talk in order to provoke
cò	to punch	còrē	to punch and provoke

Table 91 shows examples of the -rè suffix;

**Table 91. The provocative suffix – rè on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āgū	to walk	āgūrè	to go and provoke
è	to do	èrè	to provoke
thò	to speak	thòrè	to speak in order to provoke

tō to curse tōrè to tease  
lā to say lārè to talk in a purposeless way

-ta has two allomorphs, -tá and -tà, which mark different valency states of actions done partially or uncompleted.

-tá incompletive, denotes s.t. partly achieved, stopped partway through

**Table 92. The incompletive suffix -tá on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ājī	to make (object),	ājītá	to be incomplete
ásí	to grow	ásítá	to be not fully grown
cè <sup>1</sup>	to cut	cěkātá	to be incompletely cut
lā	to say	lātá	to have more to say after being interrupted
njò	to work	njòtá	to do a half-finished job

nga ò ājītá mu khaga  
I house be incomplete still lie  
my house is still incomplete

-tà to do s.t. incompletely

**Table 93. The partly achieved suffix -tà on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cì	to snip	cītà	to snip off
mē	to tear	mētà	to tear off (paper)
tū	to break (a twig)	tūtà	to break off (a twig)
lā	to say	lātàcì	to speak with the support of s.o.

Evidence for the extension status of -tà can be seen in the following;

ḡá àkhètā tūtà.jì  
I stick break off.PRES  
I am breaking the stick

-tà

**Table 94. The partly achieved suffix -tātá on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cì	to snip	hātātá	
mē	to tear		
tū	to break (a twig)		
lā	to say		

-te denotes intensification of an action

Idu has a verbal suffix -te which is realised with all three tone heights (Table 95).

**Table 95. The intensifier suffix -te on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cō	to put on by insertion	cōté	to take off garment with sleeves or legs

**Table 96. The intensifier suffix –tē on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āthú	to look	āthútē	to look after
ànè	to blame	ānētē	to pass on blame
hāndīndī	well-fed, well-dressed	hāndītē	to appear to have overeaten

**Table 97. The intensifier suffix –tè on Idu verbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ātō	to pound into powder	ātōtè	to beat severely
lā	to speak	lātè	to speak and make s.t. happen
là	to throw	làtè	to have been thrown
brū	to spring forth, spout water	brūtè	to splash out (as diarrhoea)
hāmū	over-eating to the point of reaching a strange mental state	hāmūtè	to over-eat to the point of reaching a strange mental state
ìkù	to beat s.o.	ìkùtè	to be beaten
Ìmbré	gift of grave goods	ìmbrétè	to put s.t. in the grave when s.o. dies
ūr	to jack up (car etc.)	ūrtè	to pour

-thù denotes feel disturbed, uneasy, being difficult

The meanings assigned to the –thù extension are quite various, although all are concerned with s.t disruptive, such as feeling uneasy, disturbed. The expression *gāñī thù* ‘uneasy’ contains the root, but *gāñī* is not otherwise attested.

**Table 98. The Idu disturbative verbal extension -thù**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ājī	to make (object), to do	ājīthù	to be difficult to do s.t.
bà	to whisper, murmur	bāthù	to talk in a low voice to prevent being overheard
chì	to walk	chīthù	to be disturbed while walking
hā	to eat	hāthù	to taste bad
ī	to live	īthù	to find it difficult to live
njò	to work	njòthù	to be disturbed while working
lā	to say	lāthù	to be disturbed while saying
khā	to lie down	khāthù	to be disturbed while lying down
āthú	to look	āthūthù	to be bad to look at

ayo ko a ò ājīthù yi  
difficult to build  
it's difficult to build a house on a rainy day

bāthū mē tándò  
it is very difficult to talk

-tō reflexive

As the example of ‘to teach’ shows, this can have a reversive or commutative effect on the root.

**Table 99. The Idu reflexive verbal extension -tō**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss	Etymology
ādē	to clean	ādē.tō	to clean yourself	dē ‘pure, clean’
āllà	to lick	āllà.tō	to lick yourself	
ānū	to wash	ānū.tō	to bathe, wash yourself	
āprā	to repair	āprā.tō	to apply make-up	
hàsē	to tie and kill	hàsē.tō	to commit suicide by hanging oneself	
àhē	to teach	āhī.tō	to learn	

tò separate, apart, different

ītò be different  
lato talk separately  
hato eat apart  
deto to stand apart  
chito walk apart

-tō ineffective suffix, denotes ineffectual action

There are two tonal allomorphs

**Table 100. The Idu ineffective verbal extension -tō**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ōō	to shoot	ōōtō	to shoot and not enter
cò	to punch	còtō	to punch ineffectively
pi	to hit with spade	pītō	to hit and bounce off
ce	to cut	cètō	

-tòsī denotes doing s.t. in an amateurish or incompetent way, incompetitive

**Table 101. The Idu incompetitive verbal extension -tòsī**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss	Etymology
ē	to do	étòsī	to have an inflated opinion of oneself, to do amateurishly	
lā	to speak	lātòsī	to speak in an amateurish way	
wū, ū	to think	ūtòsī	to think in a immature way	

-úsà to do s.t. indiscriminately, randomly

The initial high back vowel in this extension is never assimilated to the vowel in the verb stem (Table 102). No etymology has been identified.

**Table 102. The indiscriminative extension -úsà in the Idu verb**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āgū	to walk	āgūúsà	to walk randomly
hā	to eat	hāúsà	to eat indiscriminately
lā	to speak	lāúsà	to speak incoherently
là	to fall down	làúsà	to fall all over the place (like a drunk)
tō	to drink	tōúsà	to drink indiscriminately

### 3.3.7 Plural verbs

Plural verbs are widely described for African languages but are not reported for much of Asia. Idu seems to have a fragmentary system, attested in some verbs (e.g. Table 103).

**Table 103. Plurality in an Idu verb**

Idu	Gloss
īnà	to return, come back [one person]
īgánà	to have returned, be back [many people]
ìjīnà	to return, come back [many people]

The following shows the use of a plural verb.

njò    apa    ēnē    keba    ata    hawe    ìjīnà    a  
 work   after   you pl.   all   food   eat   come.   AFF  
 after work, all of you come for food

It seems plausible that the suffixed plural morpheme used in verbs has been incorporated into the stem of this word.

### 3.3.8 Paired verbs in idioms

A common element is heightened speech are paired collocations. This is a common pattern in SE Asian languages, although it remains under-described. Some expressions of these are closer to ideophones, expressing a category of experience, and these are described in §3.11. However, there are also expressions or idioms with a nominal sense and a (V)CVCV.(V)CVCV structure. Etymologically, these can be based on repetition of verbs, or verb + noun collocations. Sometimes these are not etymologically transparent, especially the second element, which can be added for euphony. The language of the *igu* shamans contains a great many more of these collocations. Table 104 presents some of the common expressions. ;

**Table 104. Idu paired collocations with nominal sense**

Idu	Approximate gloss	Possible etymology
àtómū	reserved place for hunting	? + grazing area
àprāmū		
àtáyī àlōyī	metalworker	blacksmithing + making hole
àyòjī ngājī	drizzle that stops and starts	
bəda gada	nook and cranny	
bràcí bràlí	drizzling rain	CFL round things -spreading repeat + ?
bràthā brālā	small amount of grain	CFL round things solid repeat small amount of liquid
jùí nǎĩ	person who knows, educated person	
kāsī kāmù	small things to do	
tāī rìì	person who is good at craft or weaving	one who weaves + one who pulverises

## 3.4 Adjectives and qualification

### 3.4.1 Morphology

Qualification in Idu is achieved either through adjectives or stative verbs. Adjectives in turn can consist of underived forms, adjectival phrases, ideophones of various classes and paired collocations. Adjectives can be distinguished from stative verbs when morphological suffixes are attached to them, but there are no evident distinctions in structural form.



ànāprà mā prá k̄ā mē tándò pùmà  
sauce DET salt bitter DET very COP  
the taste of the sauce is too salty

àhíyā ó k̄āchī.yì  
there house be big.PRES  
the house there is big

k̄ā salty, bitter e.g. taste of bitter gourd  
k̄āchī big  
mā ò ripe (only fruits)

### 3.4.2 Adjectives

True adjectives in Idu are extremely numerous, and are very commonly trisyllabic and underived, in other words, it is hard to discern their etymology. This is rather surprising in this type of language, where adjectives are often scarce.

àk̄ā² a. strong (alcohol)  
àk̄à a. muddy (water)  
àkhũ a. efficient at work  
álú a. remaining  
ānjì a. true  
àpà a. stupid, foolish  
àsì a. plenty

thriyā viscous

The canonical forms of trisyllabic adjectives are either CVCVCV or VCVCV

**Table 105. Idu trisyllabic adjectives**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
àcùgō	well-informed on the rules of Idu society
àgāsī	hungry
áhrúmi	mischievous, notorious
àjìjì	complete, full, replete
ākúsí	tired, exhausted, worn out
ālágá	sloppy (work)
àṅgōmá	very large, gigantic
āsēngā	fearless, brave, courageous
àtèkā	not straight, crooked
àthíngtò	cute, affectionate
básāsā	soft
bēcēlā	slippery
brātōlō	describes a small, rounded object
bùkáli	in doubt
bùsūsú	dishevelled (hair)
bùsūsú	inflamed due to scratching (skin)
bùtsúlà	very angry
gèrīcī	describes the feeling when s.o. touches you
hāndīndī	well-fed, well-dressed
hōkòcī	dried up and shrunken, withered (person)
hōndādāā	spacious (interior)
jògérē	mixed design
kálákù	bald
kèdrīdrī	black and shiny
kétrēdrè	spotted
khōmbōtū	state of extreme anger
kráhahā	shrunken look
kūphāndū	denuded (plain), naked (person)
lōnjíkhó	authentic, genuine
màchāndū	tasteless
màkúsì	very dark (soot in the ceiling)
mīcìprá	old (people and animals)
ngālāhā	hollow (cylindrical)
ṅáprácē	negligible, insignificant
ngáriríí	tearful
pīkūngṅgū	bent (person)
pòjōmā	protruding (teeth)
rhōgátà	equal
rōkápò	hollow (spherical)
sūmbībī	smooth
súmbūtù	congested, crowded, out of space
ùshímì	affectionate, loved

bā?úbā?ú id. spongy, springy àkōmbó bā?úbā?ú a soft pillow

Adjectives occasionally show tone sound-symbolic patterns. For example, the segment *mii* is used for ‘appearing uniform from a distance’. However, the tone will tell the hearer whether plants are animals are being referenced.

míí normally applied to plants  
 miì normally applied to small animals

Adjectives either precede the head noun or follow it in equative sentences. So;

khopo ímú  
 angry man

In equative sentences, the typical word order is;

S A COP  
 S COP A(A)(A)

as in;

injūsi āmū bayi  
 mango not yet fully ripe is  
 the mango is not yet fully ripe

Idu permits quite long strings of sequential adjectives, as in the following example;

āmra mē drōō aline atuga  
 tiger DET gleaming wide-eyed looking  
 the tiger is looking with wide gleaming eyes

pācā

Idu has a great variety of picturesque adjectival phrases, a sample of which is given in Table 106;

**Table 106. Idu adjectival phrases**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
à sú jākàmi	restless
àkrā khítōmī	describes someone who is hyper-active, constantly fiddling
ànjā mīmù	very sad, distressing, mournful
āthúyī pēgáhímī	difficult to distinguish
bē thrūhímī	countless, numberless
pòsú mbrèyìim	impassive, unresponsive
sūprā īprā	incredible, unbelievable
ūsò nō ìmì	unaware, without realizing

pòsú mbrèyìim a.p. impassive, unresponsive, *a àhíyā ajiji lagə bu pòsú mbrèyìimì mbrā* no matter what you say, the man is impassive  
 unreactive

In the following example, the adjectival phrase is intensified with mbrā;

īmú bu à sú jàkàmì mbrā pu ma  
 man that restless really it is indeed  
 that man is really restless

**More examples**

True adjectives in Idu have no distinctive morphology, probably because they have been adapted from a wide variety of nouns and verbs, compounded with affixes, and subjective to initial consonant erosion. This is contrast to stative verbs, the great majority of which are CV.

Adjectives in Idu can take a great many extensions, both as phrasal adjectives and ?. Table 107 shows a sample of the extended adjectives which can be created with sã;

**Table 107. Extended adjectives with the base form sã**

Idu	Gloss
sã	to be dry
sã kâlā	chapped (applies to body parts)
sã kùcī	dried out (single objects)
sã kùtù	completely dried out (especially edible things)
sã pīsì	dried out (multiple objects especially grass)
sã prà(cì)	thirsty
sã sùkā	completely dried up (riverbed, firewood)
sã tātē	shrivelled (plants, human beings, animals)
sã tókā	completely dried out

A typical use of the basal adjective would be as follows;

elikhə sã ka.ayi  
 soil dry is.DEF  
 the soil is dry

injusi sã kùcī bayi  
 mango dried out is  
 the mango is dried out

tambre sã pīsì ba  
 meat completely dried out is  
 the meat is completely dried out

However, in this expression, sã prà cannot qualify a head noun and functions as a verb

nga sã prà ga da  
 I thirsty am AFF  
 I am very thirsty

maci aphra sã sùkā khà.gayi  
 riverbed completely dried out lies.AFF  
 the riverbed is completely dried out

enobru sã kala ba.yi  
 lips chapped are.DEF  
 [my] lips are chapped

aɣe sã tate a bayi  
 grass shrivelled PERF is.DEF  
 the grass has shrivelled

**Table 108. Stative verbs connected with breaking**

Idu	Gloss	Commentary
bo	to be cracked	
brə	torn apart at the seams	applies to objects with joints such as cloth or rubber hoses
drā	torn	applies to flat objects such as cloth or paper
drō	broken but the pieces are still attached	applies to cylindrical hollow objects
drū	broken	applies to spherical hollow objects such as eggs and light-bulbs
du	to be broken, snapped	applies to long thin objects such as sticks, dao
gā	broken, fractured	applies to objects which smash such as glass or pottery, as well as soil. Also tube-light, despite their being cylindrical
gri	to become ragged	applies to the blade of a dao, or worn teeth
siphu	bo	ba
cauldron	cracked	is
the cauldron is cracked		

Use of the evidential particle

siphu bo bayi  
 cauldron cracked is definitely  
 the cauldron is definitely cracked

taphu hũ brə ba  
 cloth torn is

kagos dra ba  
 paper torn is

aɣətō dro ba  
 bamboo broken is  
 the bamboo is broken

eto cu drū ba  
 egg broken is  
 a broken egg

arisi ga ba  
 glass smashed is

e.ece gri ba  
 dao blade ragged is

ĩkhōthò to not be able to live somewhere, be unable to cope, live with s.o.

kǎcǒ be short

ata kǎcǒ bānē hǎyě.ga.jia  
 food be short because of cook.PRES  
 Are you cooking because there isn't enough food?

Ame iskul phis kǎcǒ.bādā la.ga ma  
 Child school fees shortage ? say.PRES EVD  
 The child says that he is short of school fees

ā.ālōmbró ata ha kǎcǒ.ba ehajimi loi  
 children food eat be short do NEG  
 Ensure that there is no shortage of food for the children

### 3.4.2 Comparatives

Idu has a small number of adjectives which have a broadly regular paradigm, used for comparisons. Unlike English, Idu has a four-term paradigm with two 'middle' forms. A sample of the main terms is given in Table 109. It can be seen that the general morphological processes are similar, but the tones and exact reduplication vary from one word to another. The second term comparative of 'good' is irregular. Some paradigms are defective, with the simplex of 'more' and 'small' having dropped out of use.

**Table 109. Paradigms of comparative adjectives**

Gloss	Simple	1 <sup>st</sup> comparative	2 <sup>nd</sup> comparative	Superlative
-------	--------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------

less, short	cō less	cōyā less still	cōcōyā even less	cōyāndò least
be so many	dū many	dūyā very many	dūdūyā even more	dūyāndò most
fast, quick	bì	bìyā faster	bìbìyā even faster	bìyāndò quickest
surplus	lū extra	lūyā even more	lūlūyā yet still more	lūyāndò most
more	—	prēyā more than	prēprēyā even more than	prēyāndò maximum
good	ēcā good	ēcāyā very good	ēcātī better	ēcāyāndò best
bad	èlè bad	èlèyā very bad	èlèlèyā worse	èlèyāndò worst
far	mrālò far	mrālòyā further	mrālòlòyā still further	mrālòyāndò furthest
near	mànyū near	mànūyā nearer	mànūnūyā nearer still	mànūyāndò nearest
small	—	ngāyā smaller	ngāyāyā smaller still	ngāyāndò smallest

The simplex *prē* is now only retained in the Mithu dialect.

Stative verbs functioning as quantifiers, can be reduplicated to indicate the extent of s.t. So

The syntax of comparisons incorporates the particle *mi ~ me* ‘than’. The following sentences show how this is expressed;

ēcā    ò        ahiya    ò        mi        ècāyā  
this    house    that     house    than     large  
this house is better than that one

ēcā    ò        atikō    ma    ècāyāndò  
this    house    village    in    biggest  
this house is the best in the village

àléló n. length

ngāci    ò        nyúci    mi    àléló    kālōya        màpū  
I        house    you        length    be tall.PRES    is  
my house is longer than yours

### 3.4.3 Quantifiers

Idu has a variety of quantifiers, shown in Table 110.

**Table 110. Idu quantifiers**

Idu	Gloss	PoS	Commentary
āṅgrōyà	larger portion, share of s.t.	n.	
cò	be less	a.	
dù <sup>1</sup>	be so many applies to living things	s.v.	
èbétēgè	part of	n.	
èdràgè	piece of s.t. flat	n.	
étēgè	half		
ìcígè	small bit of s.t., few, a little	a.	Also icúgè.
ìcúbù	more of s.t.		
īlīgè	this much		used to demonstrate the size of s.t. with the hands
īlīlī	this size	a.	
lāhíndó	all		(everything in the world)
mbrāgè	some		
ndùcī	whole, entire, complete (possessions)		
pācā	much, a lot of		
shāsápé	excessive amount of s.t.		extended metaphorically to extravagance
táándò	lots of s.t., abundant		
tápúmè	all (everything in view)		also tápúmè.
tèmámà	nothing remains		also tèmámá

āṅgrōyà

nyu āṅgrōyà àkhà hí.a  
 you more keep have.AFF  
 You keep the larger portion

kəbra āṅgrōyà pra ame ha.bayi  
 paddy more bird has eat.PST  
 The birds have eaten most of the grains

hōmwārk āṅgrōyà thrā.ā ji.mì khà.gayi  
 homework more write.x sit.NEG lie.PRES  
 Most of the homework is lying unwritten

cò

ēcā pàwú cò pùmà  
 this money less EVD  
 This money is short

mìting.ma īmú cò khàwújì āthú.yi ma  
 meeting.LOC people less it appears see.PRES EVD  
 It appears there are fewer people in the meeting



nyu èkjām.ma mār̀k cò cīhí.bàdā la.gaga ma  
you exam.LOC marks less get.PST say.PRES EVD  
they say you have obtained fewer marks in the examination

dù

apiya rē.ma īmú dù i.gayi  
brother Rē.LOC people many come  
Many people turned up in brother's Rē

miting.ma īmú dù cībū  
meeting.LOC people many QM  
Were there many people in the meeting?

dùwū.á iji ahrū hi.mì.yi  
crowd.LOC something hear able.NEG.PRES  
It is difficult to hear anything in the crowd

èbétēgè

ēcā pākū naba mē nga èbétēgè ha.ambayi  
this field father DET me half give.PAST  
Father gave me half of this field (before he died)

ēcā ròtì èbétēgè.ta ha.ji a  
this bread half.piece eat AFF  
Each one eat halves of this bread

ēcā ilikhi èbétēgè aliya gəba akha puyi  
this land half brother for keep IMP  
Keep a half portion of this land for your brother

èdràgè

āyā ajopra èdràgè mētà.gənè nga há lóyī  
that paper part by tearing I give RQ  
Tear that paper and give me a portion

ēcā roti èdràgè.ta ha nane ha jia?  
This bread partly eat for give ?  
Are you giving us this bread for us to have portions each?

étēgè

āyā alabra étēgè nga hābī chō  
that rope half I give here IMP  
Pass me half of that rope

āyā ànjì étēgè.ta hi.ji a  
that thing half.piece have.PRS AFF  
Have half of that thing

### ìcígè

nga ata ìcígè há loi  
I food little give RQ  
Give me a little food

ìcígè būdā la.mì.ne grǎ a  
little without say.NEG. recieve AFF  
Recieve it without saying it is little

ēcā yu ìcígè.ta to.ji a  
this beer liittle drink AFF  
Each of you drink a bit of this beer

### ìcúbù

ala.ma ata ìcúbù há ābā chō  
here.LOC food more give POL IMP  
Please give here some more food

ìcúbù ha.misi ba nga lākè.ji a  
more eat.want COND I tell AFF  
Tell me if you feel like eating more

nyu ìcúbù la.mi.na ahrū.ji.a?  
You more say.not.IMP hear.PRES.AFF  
Say no more, are you listening?

### īlīgè

īlīgè akha.la ai?  
this much keep.PST QM  
have you kept this much?

ànāprà.ma prǎ īlīgè ēthrò.a loi  
vegetable.LOC salt this much put in. RQ  
put this much salt in the vegetables

ēcā ilikhi īlīgè sòtē ābā a  
here soil this much shovel POL AFF  
shove this much soil here

### īlīlī

eto ɪlɪlɪ. cɪ asi.gə a  
chicken this size with ask.x AFF  
ask for this size of chicken

ɪlɪlɪ cibu?  
This size QM  
Was it this size?

marbol ɪlɪlɪ cibū ābrə.hiba.yi  
marble this size AFF swallow.PST  
he has swallowed a marble this size

#### lāhíndó

ɪmú lāhíndó jìgā prà  
people all same be  
all people are the same

pra lāhíndó li.yi  
bird all fly.HAB  
all birds fly

khənyu lāhíndó ele gūmi  
spirit all bad not  
not all spirits are bad

#### mbrāgè

ɪmú mbrāgè ɪtò mbrayi  
people some be different really  
some people are really different

mbrāgè abə ha.jiga akha ba  
some later eat.FUT keep IMP  
keep some for eating later

mbrāgè atunyu baga.ba mbrāgè amanyu thruga.mba yi  
some northward go.PST some southwards run.PST  
some went north while others ran south

#### ɪjɪngā ndùcɪcí nothing

pàwú àpílāndò nē ngā.mò ɪjɪngā ndùcɪcí bà ji.yi ma  
money distribute after I.EMP nothing happen sit.PRES AFF  
after distributing the money, I am sitting without anything

ā.àlōmbró haweku hando nē ɪjɪngā ndùcɪcí ji.gayi  
children rice eat all so nothing sit.PRES  
having eaten all the rice the children had nothing left

#### pācā

īmú asa.mì.mē pācā la.ga āhrū kàtōmì ye  
 people know.NEG.AG lot say hear bad is  
 it is bad to listen to ignorant people who talk a lot

ha cīpù gēbā pācā la pra.mì  
 eat for the sake of regarding lot say good.NEG  
 it is not good to say a lot for the sake of eating

yu pācā tō.yiga īmú pra.gūmì  
 beer lot drink person good.NEG  
 one who drinks a lot is a bad person

tándò

ahima īmú tándò īgà āthú.ji ma  
 there people many be present see EVD  
 I see a lot of people present there

iniyaga mraa kesa mē tándò  
 our hill beautiful DET so much  
 our mountain areas are very beautiful

idu cīpù mā la.gaga ahrū.pra mē tándò  
 Idu about AFF say hear.good DET so much  
 It is so good to listen to topics related to Idu

nga ōko ma njowe tándò khaga da  
 my house in work so much lie AFF  
 I have lot of work to do at home

tápúmè

ā.ālōmbró tápúmè ēcā ré.jigə chō  
 children all here invite.PRES IMP  
 Invite all the children here

ēcā tápúmè hando.ji aba a  
 this all eat.finish POL AFF  
 finish eating all these

īmú tápúmè gəga.ba ai?  
 People all come and go QM  
 Did all the people attend?

tèmàmà

tèmàmà hāndòhōlā ce?  
 nothing eat all QM  
 have you eaten everything up?

pàwú tèmàmà hano.ma e.a.gə.a?  
 Money nothing where.LOC do.x.QM  
 Where have you finished all the money?

nga pràge bu ngà tèmàmà ba.jiyi da  
I one rupee even not have nothing sit.PRES AFF  
I don't have anything, not even a rupee

### āngrōyà

nyu āngrōyà àkhà hí.a  
you more keep have.AFF  
You keep the larger portion

kəbra āngrōyà pra ame ha.bayi  
paddy more bird has eat.PST  
The birds have eaten most of the grains

hōmwārk āngrōyà thrā.ā ji.mì khà.gayi  
homework more write.x sit.NEG lie.PRES  
Most of the homework is lying unwritten

### cò

ēcā pàwú cò pùmà  
this money less EVD  
This money is short

mìting.ma īmú cò khàwújì āthú.yi ma  
meeting.LOC people less it appears see.PRES EVD  
It appears there are fewer people in the meeting

nyu èkjām.ma mār̀k cò cīhí.bàdā la.gaga ma  
you exam.LOC marks less get.PST say.PRES EVD  
they say you have obtained fewer marks in the examination

### dù

apiya rē.ma īmú dù i.gayi  
brother Rē.LOC people many come  
Many people turned up in brother's Rē

mìting.ma īmú dù cìbū  
meeting.LOC people many QM  
Were there many people in the meeting?

### èbétēgè half

èbétēgè is a quasi-nominal which can act like an adjective following the noun it qualifies, but also stand on its own as 'a half'. It is possible to attach the nominal suffix -ta, implying 'piece' or 'portion'.

ēcā pākū naba mē nga èbétēgè ha.ambayi  
this field father DET me half give.PAST  
Father gave me half of this field (before he died)

ēcā ròtì èbétēgè.ta ha.ji a  
this bread half.piece eat AFF  
Each one eat halves of this bread

ēcā ilikhi èbétēgè aliya gəba akha puyi  
this land half brother for keep IMP  
Keep a half portion of this land for your brother

#### èdràgò

āyā ajopra èdràgò mētà.gènè nga há lóyī  
that paper part by tearing I give RQ  
Tear that paper and give me a portion

ēcā roti èdràgò.ta ha nane ha jia?  
This bread partly eat for give ?  
Are you giving us this bread for us to have portions each?

#### étēgè

āyā alabra étēgè nga hābī chō  
that rope half I give here IMP  
Pass me half of that rope

āyā ànjì étēgè.ta hi.ji a  
that thing half.piece have.PRS AFF  
Have half of that thing

#### ìcígè

nga ata ìcígè há loi  
I food little give RQ  
Give me a little food

ìcígè būdā la.mì.ne grà a  
little without say.NEG. receive AFF  
Receive it without saying it is little

ēcā yu ìcígè.ta to.ji a  
this beer little drink AFF  
Each of you drink a bit of this beer

#### īcúbù

ala.ma ata īcúbù há ābā chō  
here.LOC food more give POL IMP  
Please give here some more food

īcúbù ha.misi ba nga lākè.ji a  
more eat.want COND I tell AFF  
Tell me if you feel like eating more

nyu īcúbù la.mì.na ahrũ.ji.a?  
You more say.not.IMP hear.PRES.AFF  
Say no more, are you listening?

### Īlīgè

īlīgè akha.la ai?  
this much keep.PST QM  
have you kept this much?

ànāprà.ma prā īlīgè ēthrò.a loi  
vegetable.LOC salt this much put in. RQ  
put this much salt in the vegetables

ēcā ilikhi īlīgè sòtē ābā a  
here soil this much shovel POL AFF  
shove this much soil here

### īlīlī

eto īlīlī. cī asi.gə a  
chicken this size with ask.x AFF  
ask for this size of chicken

īlīlī cibi?  
This size QM  
Was it this size?

marbol īlīlī cibū ābrè.hiba.yi  
marble this size AFF swallow.PST  
he has swallowed a marble this size

### lāhíndó

īmú lāhíndó jīgā prà  
people all same be  
all people are the same

pra lāhíndó li.yi  
bird all fly.HAB  
all birds fly

khənyu lāhíndó ele gūmì  
spirit all bad not  
not all spirits are bad

### mbrāgè

īmú mbrāgè ìtò mbrayi  
 people some be different really  
 some people are really different

mbrāgè abə ha.jiga akha ba  
 some later eat.FUT keep IMP  
 keep some for eating later

mbrāgè atunyu бага.ба mbrāgè amanyu thruga.mba yi  
 some northward go.PST some southwards run.PST  
 some went north while others ran south

ījīngā ndùcīcī nothing

pàwú àpílāndò nē ngā.mò ījīngā ndùcīcī bà ji.yi ma  
 money distribute after I.EMP nothing happen sit.PRES AFF  
 after distributing the money, I am sitting without anything

ā.àlōmbró haweku hando nē ījīngā ndùcīcī ji.gayi  
 children rice eat all so nothing sit.PRES  
 having eaten all the rice the children had nothing left

pācā

īmú asa.mì.mē pācā la.ga āhrū kātōmì ye  
 people know.NEG.AG lot say hear bad is  
 it is bad to listen to ignorant people who talk a lot

ha cīpù gēbā pācā la pra.mì  
 eat for the sake of regarding lot say good.NEG  
 it is not good to say a lot for the sake of eating

yu pācā tō.yiga īmú pra.gūmì  
 beer lot drink person good.NEG  
 one who drinks a lot is a bad person

tándò

ahima īmú tándò īgà āthú.ji ma  
 there people many be present see EVD  
 I see a lot of people present there

iniyaga mraa kesa me tándò  
 our hill beautiful are so much  
 our mountain areas are very beautiful

idu cīpù mā la.gaga ahrū.pra mē tándò  
 Idu about AFF say hear.good DET so much  
 It is so good to listen to topics related to Idu

nga ōko ma njowe tándò khaga da  
 my house in work so much lie AFF  
 I have lot of work to do at home



tápúmè

ā.àlōmbró tápúmè ēcā ré.jigə chō  
 children all here invite.PRES IMP  
 Invite all the children here

ēcā tápúmè hando.ji aba a  
 this all eat.finish POL AFF  
 finish eating all these

īmú tápúmè gəga.ba ai?  
 People all come and go QM  
 Did all the people attend?

tèmàmà

tèmàmà hāndòhōlā ce?  
 nothing eat all QM  
 have you eaten everything up?

pàwú tèmàmà hano.ma e.a.gə.a?  
 Money nothing where.LOC do.x.QM  
 Where have you finished all the money?

nga prəge bu ngà tèmàmà ba.jiyi da  
 I one rupee even not have nothing sit.PRES AFF  
 I don't have anything, not even a rupee

### 3.4.4 Colour and colour intensifiers

Idu has the following basic colour terms;

**Table 111. Idu colour terms**

Idu	Gloss
lò	white
mà	black
shù	red
prù	green/blue
mì	yellow

These are usually adjectives following the noun they qualify, but they can take on a nominal aspect in compounds. Thus

lòprà fish sp. white + flat

These can be qualified by a series of intensifiers, which follow them directly. Some of these are common to several colours, others are unique to individual colours. Sometimes the colour itself is not stated, as it is implied by the intensifier.

**Table 112. Idu intensifiers for ‘white’**

Idu	Gloss
lò	white
lò dúgù	dark white
lò pàlī	bright white
lò sùsù	off-white

**Table 113. Idu intensifiers for ‘black’**

Idu	Gloss
mà	black
màndí kì kátálá	pitch black

There is an additional term for ‘black’, *tĩ*, which is only used to describe clothes and in the expression *tĩnggĩrĩ* ‘very black’ (hair).

*alaphra mà* black stone

**Table 114. Idu intensifiers for ‘red’**

Idu	Gloss
shù	red
shù bráli	dark red (objects)
shù hēàà	reddish (e.g. sunset)
shù jāā	describes things spread widely, such as blood
shù grōò	red and glowing like fire
shù dàgrù	medium red
shù màkò	dark red

imudu jāā ba puma  
 sky bright red ? is  
 the sky is bright red

iyū ca a jaa ba tàmbè celisa te.gaba  
 blood blood-red meat ? ?  
 so much meat has been cut that all you can see is blood-red everywhere

**Table 115. Idu intensifiers for ‘green/blue’**

Idu	Gloss
prù	green/blue
prū càlì	very green
prū cēyā	pale green
prū màkò	dark green

*mì* ‘yellow’ has a single intensifier, *mì càlì* ‘bright yellow’, corresponding to green/blue (above).

### 3.4.5 Tastes and odours

#### 3.4.5.1 Tastes

Idu has a small repertoire of terms for tastes and odours, probably comparable to most regional languages. Blench (2016) has reviewed terminology used in the neighbouring Kman language, together with a review of

the literature. The taste terms of Idu are apparently all stative verbs. Those identified are listed in Table 116 together with foods given as examples of that taste category.

**Table 116. Idu taste terms**

Idu	Gloss	Part of speech	Example
kā	salty, bitter	stative verb	bitter gourd
khū	hot	adjective	chili
pò	to be sour	stative verb	unripe jackfruit
shrū	sour, fermented	adjective	rice-beer
shū	sweet	adjective	sugar
yā	tingling		vegetable marsa

*kā* qualifies *prá* ‘salt’, suggesting a type of bitterness.

ànāprà ma prá kā mē tándò puma  
 sauce it salt taste salty DET too much does  
 the sauce is too salty

intsi mibu khū mē tándò yi  
 chili hot DET too much is  
 the chili variety is extremely hot

*pò* is a stative verb, indicated by the auxiliary suffix

ēnjūpū li a pò.yi  
 jackfruit be unripe it sour.PCONT  
 the unripe jackfruit is sour

Both *shrū* and *shū* are adjectives.

yū shrū yū shū  
 beer sour beer sweet

Idu also has an adverbial form *thùthù* ‘tasteless’ compounded in phrasal verbs to express tastelessness, *hā* *thùthù* ‘to be slightly tasteless (food)’

ēcā ēnjūpū hā thùthù būdā.yi  
 this jackfruit eat tasteless is.PCONT  
 this jackfruit is very tasteless

Similarly with the verb *tó* ‘to drink’;

*tó* thùthù slightly tasteless (drink)

ēcā yū tó thùthù būdā  
 this beer drink tasteless is  
 this beer is tasteless

### 3.4.5.2 Odours

Similarly, Idu odour terms describe a limited subset of smells. Table 117 shows the main terms with examples of the experiences to which they apply. The basic terms are followed by the verb *nò* ‘to smell’.

**Table 117. Idu odour terms**

Idu	Gloss	Example
cicikhə no	muddy smell	
khāā̀ nò	s.t. smelling, pungent	
khə nò	foul	faeces
mba no	musky	civet cat
sū nō	pungent smell	tiger, other animals, armpit
take no	sweaty	unwashed body
thē nò	smell of urine	
tsi no	rotten, putrid	meat, fish, fruit

ēcā ēsòyā mē khāā̀ nò o ga?  
 this what DET pungent smell  
 what is this smelling khāā̀?

khə nò e!

there's a smell of faeces

ēcā ma sū nō ga puma  
 this pungent smell is

### 3.5 Adverbs

#### 3.5.1 Temporal adverbs

Idu has a wide range of temporal adverbs, collected together in Table 118. Examples of their use are given below the table.

**Table 118. Idu temporal adverbs**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
ābā	later
ábé ìmtā	afterwards
ābābālī	a bit later
ābābwēyā	a bit later
ābānē	forever
ābūnyì	tonight
ādrēdrē	instantly
āhānyì	few days back
ānā yáṅá	day after tomorrow
ànàyā	tomorrow
àsīnyī	two days from now
āyāhō, āyāsō	then
bàgè nyī	sometimes
bàgèbò	once again
būnyī	yesterday
būnyī ìnyīgō.ā	day before yesterday
bwè thrū hími	countless times
bwēyā bàhá	long ago
ēcā cāndō	often
ēcācā	at once
ēcāhō	now
ēhéhéyá	a bit before
ēhéyá	before
ēsè.à sōndō	anytime
ētā	now (Mithu dial.)
ētānù	this year
ētānyì	today
ēyānù	last year
hó, só	at the time when
īmítá	after
īmítátá	a bit after
īmítáyándō	last
īsì	always
kàjì hōnè būgūmì	never
kāndū	always
lāgá	again
lāmpā	again
līlīyā	sooner
lōnō	yesterday evening
mòò	suddenly
mù, mò	still now, even now
pà	after in time
únìnyà	a bit earlier
ūnyì	earlier

A process of reduplication operates in some temporal adverbs to reduce the amount of time specified (Table 119).

**Table 119. Reduplication in Idu adverbs**

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ēhéyá	before	ēhéhéyá	slightly earlier
īmítá	after	īmítátá	a bit after
ūnyì	earlier	úninīyà	somewhat earlier
īmítá	after	īmítátá	a bit after

The process is not so regular that the reduplicated element can be reliably predicted.

īnyí ha.ga.i sō nyú hano i.i.ci  
 we eat.PRES while you where stay.QM?  
 Where were you while we were eating?

Reply;

āyàsō nga khètākrū jī.ici  
 then I toilet sit.PAST  
 Then I was on the toilet

bàgè nyī sometimes

bàgèbò once again

nyú bàgèbò la.natu co  
 you once again speak.from down come!  
 Say it once again! [hearer is below speaker]

īnyí Idu bəyā ne Roing ma khaga ja  
 we Idu long time Roing  
 we Idu have settled in Roing for a very long time

būnyī yesterday

ex.

būnyī inyīgē.ā day before yesterday

ex.

būnyī lōnō yesterday evening

būnyī lōnō īnà ayi?  
 yesterday evening return ??  
 did you come back yesterday evening?

bē thrūhīmī countless times, so many times

nyu álí emi na lane b̄ thrūhímī lala  
you that ? so many times call ?  
I told you so many times not to do that

bwèyā bàhá long ago

ex.

ēcā cāndō often

ex.

ēcācā at once, right now

ex.

ēcāhō now

ēcāhō ēlā ndā mbúnyí ga.yi  
now full-moon is.  
now it is full-moon

ēhéhéyá a bit earlier

ēhéyá before

nga nyú mi ēhéyá ba.we  
I you than earlier go.FUT  
I will go earlier than you

ēsè.à sōndō anytime

nyu ngāgā ēsè.à sōndō iga himi a  
you anytime  
you can come to my place anytime

ētā now (Mithu dial.)

ex.

ētānù this year

ex.

ētānyì                    today

ex.

ēyānù                    last year

hó also só            at the time when

Unlike many other temporal adverbs this comes in clause-final position

nyú    me    laga                    hó  
you            speak.PERF    when  
At the time when you were speaking

īmītá                    after

ŋa    nyú    imita    iga.we  
I    you    after    come.FUT  
I will come after you

īmītátá                    a bit after

īmītáyándō            last

īsì                    always

ene    īsì    álí    njō.ji  
you pl.    always    like that    work.HAB  
You always work like that

kàjì hōnè bŭgūmì    never

ex.

kāndū    always

Aya    ikhipito    kāndū    la    ne    pra.gūmì    bà  
He    lie    always    speak    because    good    ?  
He always lied, so things turned out badly

lāgá                    again

ex.



lāmpā again

īnyí iliso ha lāmpā ga.ji  
we pork eat again PRES  
We are eating pork again

līlīyā soon

ēcā mīngə līlīyā balawe khàwúji yi  
this patient soon ??? perhaps  
perhaps this patient will die soon

mòò suddenly

mòò dote ho.yimu bu?  
suddenly ? ??? ?  
did it jump in suddenly?

mù also mò still now, even now

Nyu mù jiji.ya sa?  
you still sitting ???  
are you still sitting?

pà after in time

nga nyú pa hōnē ba.we  
I you after then go.FUT  
I will go after you

úninīyà a bit earlier

ūnyì earlier

### 3.5.2 Adverbs of manner

Idu has quite a small inventory of adverbs of manner, a sample of which is given in Table 120, followed by sentence examples;

**Table 120. Idu adverbs of manner**

Idu	Gloss	Commentary
ājī	in detail	
āmrā	straight, directly	
ārūjī	happily	
ātāmī	easily	
dūkūmī	quickly	
īcū thrē	nearly	
mūlī	simply	
sàà	slowly	

Adverbs seem to have no consistent morphology, but pairs such as the following illustrate the interaction of tone and semantics.

móó stock-still  
mòò suddenly

móó de.jiga è aba  
stock-still stand.x do  
s.t. made me stand stock-still

mòò dote ho.yimu bu?

did it jump in suddenly?

Idu exhibits Shakespearean grammar by (usually) placing the adverb at the head of the clause or sentence. Compare 'Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown'.

ājī lake.mana  
in detail tell.  
[please] tell me in detail

ōko.a āmrā ba.na.ba  
at home directly go.x.IMP  
go straight home

nyu āmrā la.na, ahrū.jiya?  
you straight speak.x listen.  
you must speak straight, are you listening?

dūkūmī bana  
quickly go.  
go quickly

kāyū idly

meya.a mē kāyū ji.ga àthú.kàtōmì  
boy idly not good to see  
it is not good to see a boy sitting idly

? < nēkētòmì not appropriate

īcū thrè nearly

īcū thrè hiàgò còpò biwe ci da  
nearly then fall ? ? AFF  
I nearly fell down

mūlī simply

ex.

sàà

sàà chì  
slowly walk  
walk slowly

shāsápé

haya shāsápé eprami  
ration waste doNEG

it is not good to waste ration

kebambo ren ma pàwú shāsápé ejimi  
general ren in money waste doNEG

do not waste money in general Rē festival

tatange.ma tayem shāsápé e.ji.mì  
useless.LOC time waste do.NEG  
do not waste time in useless activities

ànggècē at an angle, bent

nyu esoya bane ànggècē ne chì.ji.a?  
you why at an angle LOC walk.PRES  
Why are you walking at an angle?

ànggècēló sideways, crabwise

nyu esoya bane ànggəc̄lóló ch̄i.ji.a?  
 you why sideways walk.PRES  
 Why are you walking sideways?

ànggəc̄lónyū sideways, crabwise

nyu esoya bane ànggəc̄lónyū ch̄i.ji.a?  
 you why sideways walk.PRES  
 Why are you walking sideways?

pèlhō horizontal

āsīprā pèlhō s̄ō.ne akha aba  
 plank horizontal lay.EVD keep IMP  
 keep this plank horizontal

pèlhónyū on the flat

pèlhónyū thru.mi.ne atu etonyu hano.a thru.yine e.jia?  
 on the flat run.NEG.EVD up there upwards where.LOC run.PRES do.QM  
 why are you running upwards instead of running on the flat?

### 3.6 Locatives and directionals

#### 3.6.1 Locatives overview

Expression of location is in two forms, a series of nominal (and verbal) suffixes which correspond to less-well-defined English locatives such as ‘at, in, on’ and distinct lexical items which indicate place in quite specific terms. Generalised locatives are expressed with the nominal suffixes

#### 3.6.2 Nominal suffixes

Idu has a series of nominal suffixes which attach to nouns, all of which have a broadly similar range of meanings, as shown in Table 121;

**Table 121. Idu nominal locative suffixes**

Idu	Approximate gloss
-á	in, at
-ca	on, above, on top of
-gā	place
-ko	at, from, by
-ma	on, at
-nyū	edge, side

-á

bōjārī.á  
 market.LOC  
 in the market

āyā.á jí  
x.LOC sit  
sit there

õ.kò  
house.LOC  
at the house

Intriguingly, this has become such a fixed expression that it can be used with a new locative suffix;

nàbā òkòá jí.ga?  
father at home.LOC sit.QM  
is father at home?

-cá on, above, on top of

átò.cá  
tray.LOC  
on the tray

àtà.cá  
elephant.LOC  
on the elephant

-gā place

ngā.gā  
I.LOC  
my place

-ko from, by

nyú āmrùhù.ko ndone dāā jí  
you fire.LOC from further sit  
sit further away from the fire

-mā

ájópò tèbùl.mā khà.gayi  
book table.LOC be on.PRES  
the book is on the table

ngā Abali.mā jí.ji  
I Abali.LOC live  
I live at Abali

-nyū edge, side

rá(dù)nyū sharp edge

eece rá(dù)nyū ne alaphra.a ce.ha.mi loi  
 dao sharp edge x stone.LOC cut.give.NEG RQ  
 don't cut the stone with the sharp side of the dao

ānggōnyū blunt edge of the dao

tambre rhumbo eece ānggōnyū ne kǒ.gāji wā  
 meat bone dao blunt edge LOC hit.PRES IMP  
 the bones should be hit with the blunt side of the dao

The independent lexeme *rhū* can also express 'on, over' or 'on top of'.

āyā rhū yū ūrlò mī  
 he over beer pour NEG  
 Don't pour beer over him

### 3.6.3 Verbal suffixes

Location can also be expressed with the verbal suffix *-mù*, denoting the place where s.t. happened.

nyú ī.mù hānwà  
 You live.LOC where  
 Where do you live?

Where a compound or serial verb construction is used, the *-mù* suffix must be copied on both verbs;

rèkō īnyí kēbācī thò.mù bà.mù  
 community hall our we all speak.LOC whisper.LOC  
 Our community hall is where we hold discussions

### 3.6.4 Independent locatives

Apart from the bound morphology, Idu has a wide range of independent locatives expressing where an event occurs. I distinguish these from directionals, since, like other regional languages, Idu expresses direction with extreme precision. Directionals are deemed to have a demonstrative element. The mountainous environment where the Idu live requires that the relative heights of speakers or places be denoted.

Table 122 shows the locatives in Idu that has so far been identified;

Table 122. Idu locatives

Idu	Gloss
ābrāmè	everywhere
āmárí	underneath
àmùkū	outside house
àndōṅgō	below
àndōrù	below platform
àtúdrī	above, far
àyācá	outside
débālā	deep down
ècálō	above
ēhényá	ahead (of)
ēkānūtá	in front of house
ēlá, ēcá	here
ètālīmū	above, on top of
ètālūpù	above, on top of
īmítá	behind
ìpīndō(lō)	behind
kōkó	inside
lēwēwē	all around, from all sides
mrálò	far
prògá	beside

ābrāmè everywhere

ābrāmè    ìmú    kāndū  
 everywhere person only  
 everywhere is full of people

kākóprà ābrāmè    lālīsā    tēnè akha.mì  
 paper everywhere throw around then keep.NEG  
 Don't throw papers all about and let them lie around

āmáyī underneath, down, below, in    Plains dialect. cf. *āmárhí*. āmárí

ājōkhrē    āmárí    ébò.bà    è.mì    á  
 pen down fall.CAUS do.NEG EVD  
 Don't let the pen fall down

eca    ájópò    āmárí    tándò    àkhà    ābā    á  
 this book down most keep RQ EVD  
 keep this book down most

ìlhīkhè    āmáýī    tōmō    ābā    á  
 soil below dig.hide RQ AFF  
 dig and hide it in the soil

àmùkū outside

ahi    àmùkū    èsēyā mè    iga.ba    āthú    ābā    á  
 there outside who come.CAUS see RQ EVD  
 see who has come outside there

ám̄bōtò.á àmùkū ba.mì á  
dark.LOC outside go.NEG EVD  
Don't go out in the dark

àndōngō

ama àndōngō nē la hātu lōi  
there below from throw give IMP  
Throw it up from down there

āsīmbó àndōngō ēsòyā e.yine de.jí á  
tree below what do.PRES stand.PRES EVD  
What are you doing under the tree?

àndōrù

aya àndōrù ēsòyā e.yine jí.jí á  
there below what do sit.x EVD  
What are [you] doing, sitting there below the platform?

ama àndōrù ili khā.gà.dō.à cò krē.mì á  
there below pig lie.PART.LOC poke.NEG EVD  
Don't poke the pig lying there below the platform

àtúdrī

àtúdrī adu li.gà āthú.yi mā  
up eagle flying see.PRES AFF  
I see an eagle flying up there

Àtúdrī.ne do.mì á  
up.LOC jump.NEG EVD  
Don't jump from up there

àyācá

īnjā bā àyācá i.mì  
evening till outside be.NEG  
Don't be outside till evening

àyācá jí.jí chō  
outside sit IMP  
Let's sit outside

dèbālā

ama dèbālā megra āti dā la.gaga mā  
there deep down dead village EVD say AFF  
deep down there is said to be the village of the dead



dèbālā igu.mē hōnē āgū.ga la.gá.gà  
deep down igu.AG only walk.PRES say.NUM.PRES  
it is said that only igu can go deep down

nyú àmā débālā bā.ba  
you down deep place go.IMP  
go to a deep, dark place

sā mē àmā ájú débālā.mā ébòtē.hībà  
mithun down cliff deep place.LOC fall.PERF  
mithun has fallen from a cliff into a deep place

ècálō above (close)

Kēbālī hē Ròyìng ècálō khà.ga  
Kebali it is Roing above lie.PRES  
Kebali lies above Roing

aya tǎpūhù ci ècálō àpáhā aba loi  
that cloth with above cover POL RQ  
Cover that up with a cloth

ēhēyá

nyú.mì ēhēyá isēyā.mē ba aba  
you.COMP in front of who.AG go QM  
who went before you?

nyú.mē ēhēyá la.gə chō  
you.AG first say IMP  
You speak first

èkànùtā before

aya nyú èkànùtā isēyā.mē agu.ga?  
that you before who walk  
who is that walking in front of you?

èkànùtā āthú.mì.ne hano.a āthú.jia  
in front see.NEG where see.PRES  
where are you gazing instead of looking in front of you?

ālā ~ēcá [ēlá in Upper dialects]

ālā ja a  
here come down AFF  
come down here

ēcá dõtē.ngōà mana  
here try jumping RQ  
try jumping here

àtúdrī ‘up, above (far away)’ has a quite similar meaning, but is usually placed in sentence-initial position.

àtúdrī ìmūdù.mā prā lhī.gāyí  
up sky.LOC bird fly.PRES  
up in the sky, a bird is flying

A set of three words are used for the sense of ‘above, on top of, atop’

ètālīmbo

àtà ètālīmbo a còhō.ne.ji  
elephant on top LOC straddle.sit.PRES  
straddle the elephant and sit on top of it

ètālīmū

eca ethre aya ajopra ètālīmū akha aba a  
this comb that paper top of keep RQ AFF  
keep this comb on top of that paper

nyú ēsòyā bānē swētār ètālīmū.a kombol late.ō.nē agu.jia?  
You why because sweater top of.LOC blanket throw walk,x  
Why are you walking around with a blanket thrown on top of your sweater?

ètālūpù atop

àtà màwāt hē àtà ètālūpù jí.gá  
mahout EVD elephant on top of sit.PRES  
the mahout is sitting atop the elephant

àtú ó ètālūpù ēsòyā eyine jí.jia?  
there house on top what do.PRES sit.x  
What are you doing sitting on top of the house?

ēhēyá ahead

nyú ēhēyá bā.ba  
you ahead go.?  
you go ahead

hìrhù Mithu dial. cf. ìrhù. up

àtú āsī hìrhù.ma prā tándò ji.gayi  
up tree up.LOC bird many sit.PRES  
many birds are sitting up there in the tree

This sentence is notable for the redundancy of locative expressions. The independent locative hìrhù has the locative suffix –mā attached and another locative, àtú precedes the whole sentence.

àtú āyā hìrhù.ma hōnē āmí cī.yi  
up there are up.LOC only red goral find.x  
we find red gorals only high up

nyú ó àtú hìrhù.ma khà.mbrāgā pùmà  
you house there up.LOC lie.really EVD  
Your house is located high up there

behind ìpīndō(lō), ìmītá

ìmītá behind lit. ‘end of tail’

nyú ìmītá ìsiyā mē āgū.ga?  
you behind who EVD walk.PRES  
who is walking behind you?

Nga ìmītá ja dú  
I behind come AFF  
I will come behind

ìpīndō(lō) behind lit. ‘near buttocks’

nyú nga ìpīndō(lō) la.me.ji ayi?  
you I behind speak.x QM  
are you speaking behind my back?

but could be used in the same place as ìmītá

nga ìpīndō ètágè agu.yi khàwújì  
I behind something walk seems  
something seems to be walking behind me

lēwēwē all around, from all sides

pūlīs.mē àkūyá lēwēwē debə.ga.aba  
police.AG thief from all sides stand.x.EVD  
the police surrounded the thief from all sides

ópitá behind the house

aya ópítá isiyā mē njo.ga nē ī.ga  
there behind house who EVD work.PRES and be there.PRES  
who is working there behind the house?

ama ópítá ànāprà lí.à nē khà.gayi  
there behind house vegetable grow and lie.PRES  
the vegetable grown is there behind the house

āmárhí underneath, down, below

ó āmárhí ili àdè.ga.ji  
house below pig rear.HAB  
we rear pigs below the house

IO LOC O V

below àndōngō can be used in identical contexts to āmárhí

àndōrù below platform

āyā àndōrhù nē ngá eece hatu loyi  
there down there I dao give (upwards) RQ  
please pass my dao from down there (below the platform)

kōkó inside

ó kōkó ìbī.ji.na chō  
house inside come.x IMP  
come inside the house

kācīnggō pi kōkó tabu cibū yote.hibayi  
rat hole inside snake ? crawl  
A snake has crawled into the rat's hole

mrálò far, distant, remote

nga ó mrálò khà.ga  
my house far lie  
my house is distant

mrálò ci kàrhú pra.a nē āthúte ji.a  
afar of guest good and look after  
look after the guest from afar well

prògá be touching

ene kanyi aya.ma prògá nē de.ji.mì á  
you two there.LOC be in contact and stand.NEG EVD  
you two don't stand there touching each other

ó.bu mòcá prògáprògá aji.a.mbraga.la puma  
 house near so close build.x.really.PERF EXC  
 the houses have really been built so close to each other!

### 3.6.5 Directionals

Idu has an extensive set of directionals, adverb-like forms which include a demonstrative element. These are reported for Tani languages (Post 200x) and are likely to be prominent in cultures living in steep environments, where ‘up’ and ‘down’, ‘north’ and ‘south’ are more relevant than conventional cardinals. Table 123 summarises the Idu directionals so far recorded.

**Table 123. Idu directionals**

Idu	Gloss
àdrí	straight up e.g. if you are on the ground
àhí	over there East or West
àhílā	there
àhínyū	that side
àhíyā	there East or West remote from speaker
àló	North
àmá	straight down e.g. if you are in a tree
àmāyā	there South, downwards
ànó	downstream
àṅgōcá	towards the upper part of the village
àṅgōpó	towards the low-lying part of the village
àpí	on the south side, down there South
àṛó	upstream
àthúyā	there North
àtú	up there North
àtúdrí	up there on top
ātúyā	there upwards
àyùmànyū	downwards
ēcānyū	right side
ēlānū	on this side (originally of a river) cf. ēwānyū
ètònyū	upwards
ēwānyū	on the other side (originally of a river) cf. ēlānū.
īlīnū	on my side (originally of a river)
īlīnyū	this side
lākēnyū	left side
yààló	North
yààlónyú	northern side

àdrí straight up e.g. if you are on the ground

*àdrí acapu akha*

Keep [it] there on the shelf

àhí over there East or West

*àhí īmú khegə dega*

One man is standing there

*àhí ma isiya mē dega?*

Who is standing there?

àhíyā, àhílā      there East or West very remote from speaker

*àhílā ikū khegə shi tene khà ga ma*

There's a dead dog over there

àló                      North

*ngá àlō Anini ne ja*

I have come from Anini.

*Anini àlō khagayi*

Anini is up there

*àló mra ne ja?*

Have you come down from the hill?

àmá                      straight down e.g. if you are in a tree

*āsīmbōa ne àmá andongo do aja*

[You], jump down from the tree!

āmáyī      underneath, down, below      Hill dialect. cf. *āmárhí*.

### Examples

àhínyū                      that side

*àhínyū baba hi miya*

go over to that side

àhíyā                there East or West remote from speaker

*àhíyā āsīmbó a pra a khege ndo ga*

A bird is perching on that tree over there

*àhíyā isiya ga ó òa?*

Whose house is that over there?

āmáyā                there downwards

**Examples**

ànó                    downstream

**Examples**

ànggōcá              towards the upper part of the village

*ngá ó he Ejengo atiko ànggōcá dunyu kagayi*

my house is in the northern side of Ejengo village

ànggōpò              towards the low-lying part of the village

**Examples**

àpí                    on the south side, down there South

*àpí nyu ne itu*

[He] came up from the South

àrhǒ                   upstream

Examples

ātú                    up there North

*àtú anggoca jiga*

[He] lives up there in the North

àtúdrī               up there on top

*àtúdrī ìmūdù ma pra ligayi*

up in the sky, a bird is flying

ātúyā                there upwards

Examples

àyùmànyū           downwards

*āyā mane àyùmànyū eboaja go chì pra.yi*

it is pleasant to walk down from the mountain

ēcānyū              right side

*Imehi ci nyuko ēcānyū khaga*

Imehi's room is on the right side

ēlānū                on this side (originally of a river) cf. ēwānyū

*nyu èlānú ibilo*

come this side

ètònyū              upwards



*ètònyū shu himi yi*

it is hard to climb upwards

*ēwānyū* on the other side (originally of a river) cf. *ēlānū*.

### Examples

*īlīn(y)ū* on my side (originally of a river)

*nyu īlīn(y)ū nga mbrōmrò ji*

you sit this side with me

*lākēnyū* left side

*ēcā nga lākēnyū dega*

this is on my left side

*yàló* North upwards

*Hunli yàlō khaga*

Hunli is high up there

*yàlónyú* northern side

### Examples

## 3.7 Interrogatives

### 3.7.1 Polar questions

Polar questions require a positive or negative answer in contrast to interrogatives which seek information. Typically, in Idu discourse, plain responses of yes/no are not used. Indeed, modern ‘yes’ is borrowed from Hindi *am*. The person who replies uses a declarative sentence containing the relevant information. Question markers divide into those which are incorporated into verbal morphology, and those which are independent and which take on partly the status of evidentials.

āī

òò álí āī?  
 Oh! like that QM  
 Oh! Is it like that?

cè

āyā mājì lā.ga cè  
 she truth say.x QM  
 Is she telling the truth?

Polar questions referring to the present use the interrogative marker *-gàà* with plural *-gá.gáā*. They also affect the tone on the object, thus in this case, *àmbó* ‘maize’ has the high tone lowered to mid. However, the tone on the verb stem remains the same as the citation tone, unlike various forms of the declarative statement.

āyā ngā ikū ī.gàà  
 that I dog stay.QM  
 Is that my dog there?

āyà àmbō hā.gàà  
 he maize eat.QM  
 is he is eating maize?

*-gājīyà* v.aux. verbal suffix marking present question for plural subjects

ēné àmbō hā.gā.jīyà?  
 you pl. maize eat.PL.PRES.QM  
 You pl. are eating maize?

āyà hrùzhī àmbō hā.gágáā  
 they maize eat.QM  
 are they eating maize?

A negative reply to the question concerning the dog might be;

nyū ikū ēcā ī.gà gūmì pò  
 you dog here stay.PRES NEG EVD  
 Your dog isn't here

Note the short *gà*, which is the auxiliary marking the third person present declarative, and the negative evidential *pò*, which confirms the absence of something. Interestingly, the whole sentence can be shortened to;

ngá pō  
No! EVD  
No, it isn't

where *pō* acts as a pseudo-verb. Some Tani languages have a similar negative in *po*, and this could be a borrowing.

Polar questions in the perfective for first and second persons are marked with a verbal suffix *là* pl. *gā.là*. Verb stem tones drop a level from citation forms, so *hā* 'eat' becomes *hà*.

nyū àmbó hà là  
you sg. maize eat QM  
Have you sg. eaten maize?

ēnē àmbō hà gā.là  
you pl. maize eat NUM.QM  
Have you pl. eaten maize?

For third person the question marker is *hībà* pl. *gá.hībāà*;

āyā hà hībà  
he eat QM  
has he eaten?

āyà hrùzī àmbō hā.gá.hībāà  
they maize eat.NUM.QM  
Have they eaten maize?

In an affirmative reply, the evidential particle *ì* follows the core verb and the question marker *bà* is raised to *bā*;

āyā gē.ì bā  
he come.AFF QM  
yes, he came

The incompletive is unmarked in the second person;

ēnē Roying má gè.gā  
you pl. Roing to go.NUM  
did you pl. go to Roing?

āyà hrùzhī Roying má gì.gā.gè bà  
they.PL Roing to NUM.come QM  
did they go to Roing?

Questions relating to the future use the suffix *-wà*, *-wéā* pl. *-gá.wéā*;

nyū mǎcī tō.wà  
you sg. water drink.QM  
will you drink water?

nyū ata ha.wà  
you sg. food drink.QM  
will you eat food?

or;

nyū ata hā.wéā  
you sg. food drink.QM  
will you eat food?

The plural is marked with the infix -gá-.

ēné àmbō hā.gá.wéā  
you pl. maize eat.NUM.QM  
will you pl. eat maize?

āyā he agere ēgā?  
he ? gun have  
did he have a gun?

am āyā agere ēgā.m  
yes he gun has.EVD  
yes, he has a gun

-cè is a sentence final question marker which is independent of the tense/aspect status of the verb.

yōō álí.a cè  
yōō like that QM  
yoo, is it like that?

āyā gəba cè  
she come and go QM  
has she come and gone?

āyā mājì laga cè  
she truth speak QM  
Is she speaking the truth?

hātā hàprà bū  
food tasty is  
Is the food tasty?

hātā hàprà cī(à)bū  
food tasty was  
Was the food tasty?

### 3.7.2 Question words

Idu has a set of interrogatives of WH-questions broadly similar to those in English (Table 124). Morphologically they are quite diverse, though some contain a ka- element. The typical clause structure is;

S-INT-V

**Table 124. Idu interrogatives**

Gloss	Idu
who?	èsēyā, isēyā
where?	hānò, hānòā
when?	kājīhō
what?	ēsòyā, èsòwēyā
which?	kājīyā (mē)
why?	èsòwēyā dānē
how?	kājī wújī

Examples of their use are given below;

who? èsēyā (mè)

When followed by a verb, followed by mè

èsēyā mè là.ga  
who is say.PR  
Who is saying that?

èsēyā hrūnji mè là.gaga  
who they are say.PR  
Who are they saying that?

This one is asking s.o. a question in quest of an answer

If you think it is one person

èsēyā bū?  
who is  
Who is that?

If you think it is several people

èsēyā hrūnji bū?  
who they are  
Who is that?

The following two imply speculation or guesswork, like a rhetorical question.

This implies worry

èsēyā òò?  
who EXCL  
Who is that?

This implies surprise

èsēyā ò.à?  
who EXCL  
Who is that?

The ga marks 3P

ex.

where? hānò, hānòā

hānò where? present

hānòā bà.w[è].à  
where go.FUT  
Where are [you] going?

becomes

nyú hānò bawa?  
you where go.x  
where are you going?

hānò.ā where? past and future

nyú hānò.ā gə  
you where go  
where have you been?

can also be expressed

**nyú hano gə.a**  
**you where went**  
where have you been?

future

nyú hano.a ba.we ana.ya  
you where go.FUT tomorrow  
where will you go tomorrow?

when? kājīhō

kājīhō bà.w[è].à  
when go.FUT  
When will you go?

nyu kājīhō balanà wā?  
you when return QM  
when will you return there?

what? ēsòyā, ēsòwēyā

ēsòwēyā àjòpò à  
what book QM  
What book is that?

nyū āmū ēsòwēyā.[lā]  
you name what.say  
What is your name?

which? kàjìyā (mē)

īkū kàjìyā mē nyū gò thù.à bà  
dog which DET you to bite.CPAST QM  
Which dog bit you?

nyu sò īmú sē mà kàjìyā mē de.ga?  
you with person black who is stand.PRES  
who is that black person standing with you?

why? ēsòwēyā dānē

nyū ēsòwēyā dānē ī.gà  
you why come.QM  
Why have you come?

ex.

how? kājī [wújī]

nyū īkū kājī.à cī prāyāndò wù.jī.à  
you dog which.QM COMP best like.PRES.QM  
Which dog do you like best?

ex.

nyū kājī wújī.à  
you how.QM  
How are you?

nyū āyā kājī wújī nē è.jī.à  
you that how ? do.PRES.QM  
How do you do that?

### 3.8 Conjunctions

#### 3.8.1 Overview

Co-ordinating particles or connectives are usually divided into two classes, co-ordinating and subordinating, according to whether the items joined together are dependent on one another or are distinct. Thus ‘I went to the market and I bought oranges’ represents co-ordination, whereas ‘I went to the market so that I could buy oranges’ represents subordination, since the purchase of the oranges depends on the action in the primary clause. There is a relationship with discourse particles, since some conjunctions are used to introduce new elements in a narrative (§3.13).

#### 3.8.2 Co-ordinating conjunctions

The co-ordinating conjunctions in Idu are shown in Table 125;

**Table 125. Idu co-ordinating conjunctions**

Idu	Gloss
gò	with
gumiba	or
hiago	then, if
mbrōmrò	together with
nē	and, then
òdōnē	and, also, as well
sò	together with
sō	while
tēnè, tēènè, tégēnè	then, marks sequentiality between two verbs

It is possible when two or more items constitute a list to have no connecting morpheme, even where one would be more natural in English. For example;

thùwě jo.ma      mà, prù      kãgã.a      shù màkò ci      ete.gə      hōnē      kesa.yi  
 skirt design.LOC    black, blue    between    red.?            put.when    if        beautiful.PRES  
 the skirt design is beautiful if we put red between black and blue

Examples of these are given below;

gò      with, together with (cf. also *mbrōmrò*, *sò*)

this conjunction follows the two nouns it links;

S      O      CONN V

āyā ikū gò tārḥō.ga  
 he dog with play.PRES  
 he is playing with the dog

āyā Mite gò gə.ba  
 he Mite with go.PST  
 he went with Mite

mbrōmrò      with, and, together with



nyū ngā mbrōmrò jī.gà  
you I with sit.PRES  
you and I are sitting together

āyā nyu mbrōmrò isēyā mē agu.ga?  
he you with who is walk.PRES  
Who is that person walking with you?

āyā nuya nānyī mbrōmrò ba.a.nabayi  
he his mother with go.PAST  
He went back with his mother

ahiya maji mbrōmrò macu mē deyi khawuji athuyi.ma  
there buffalo with cow DET stand like see.PRES  
it appears a cow is standing there with the buffalo

Where the subject is dropped;

āyā mbrōmrò gə  
he with go and come  
[you] go and return with him

Where the conjunction is part of an interrogative question, the secondary noun is fronted;

ā.ālōmbró mbrōmrò isēyā mē ba.a.ba?  
children with who DET go  
who has gone with the children?

nē and

òdōnē and, also, as well

*òdōnē* is used with pronouns to mean ‘including’ or ‘as well as’ as a workaround for a dual.

Nyu òdōnē isēyā?  
You also who  
Who else beside you?

nga òdōnē nga aliya gəba ha.loi  
I and my brother for give  
give [me] something for me and my brother

aya òdōnē āyā angonge gə.ga.bayi  
he with his friend come.PL.PST  
he came and went with his friend

āyā òdōnē as well as him, her, it, also

āyā òdōnē      āyā    ālīyā              bu    lā.la  
as well as him   his   younger brother   that   call  
call him and also his younger brother

òthò      because ?

pàwú      nga      òthò.ne      la.loyi      hone  
money      not                              say

I am saying that because I don't have any money

pàwú      nga      òthò.da      la.ga      ma  
money      not      also              say      AFF  
he also says that he doesn't have any money

sò      together with

### Examples

sǒ, hǒ      while

Conjoins two verbs marking simultaneous actions;

īnyí ha.ga.i      sǒ      nyú      hano      i.i.ci  
we eat.PRES      while      you      where      stay.QM?  
Where were you while we were eating?

tēnè, tēnènè, tégānè then, marks sequentiality between two verbs

ēcā pàwú      thrū      tēnè      àkhà  
this money              then      keep  
count this money and keep it

àhílā ikū      khegə      shi      tēnè      khà.ga      ma  
there dog ?      ?      then      lie.PRES      AFF  
There's a dead dog lying over there

### 3.8.3 Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions mark the dependence of a secondary clause on the content of a primary clause. Many of these are related to conditionals (Table 126).

**Table 126. Idu subordinating conjunctions**

Idu	Gloss
alibə	but
alibwiya future alibane past	so, because
áyápā[gò]	after that
ba	if
bānē	because of
bēnē	then
bwē.à	if so
cīmē	although
gēnē	then
gumiba	or
hiago	then
hōnē	since, because

Examples of these are as follows;

ālib̄̄ but, but still, even so, still

In most cases, *ālib̄̄* joins two declarative clauses, and is placed between them.

aya pra la.pra.ga ālib̄̄ nga la towe  
 he good say.good.PRES but still I speak myself  
 what he is saying is fine, but still I will speak for myself

ōnà lando.hībàyi ālib̄̄ īcíbù lawə dānē ji hogayi  
 earlier speak still again say in order to sit still  
 [he] spoke previously but still he is sitting in order to speak again

īmú kəba jiga pra ālib̄̄ īkū àwù tota.yi  
 people all same like that yet nature be different.x  
 people are all the same yet their characters can be different

āyā hembre.gayi ālib̄̄ ba.wə da la.gayi  
 he be sick.PRES although go.FUT AFF say.x  
 Although he is sick, he says he will go

nga ijibu nga jiji ālib̄̄ ēcā emba loyi  
 I nothing not have sit.x but this take IMP  
 I don't have anything [living here] but take this

However, as in English, it can be placed at the front of a sentence, implicitly joining it and responding to a previous statement.

ālib̄̄ īcíbù ha.ji á  
 even so again eat AFF  
 Even so, eat again, OK

áyápā[gò] after that, and then

This conjunction has two forms, *áyápā*[gò], although the longer form appears to be more common. It typically joins two argument, typically declarative clauses. It is virtually equivalent to *hōnē*, ‘then’, and the two can be used in many of the same contexts.

ene ata ha.ji a. áyápā hōnē agure.ji.ci  
you pl. food eat AFF after that then walk around  
you eat [first] then let us go and walk around

aya lando.hībà áyápāgò nga mē lala  
he speak.finish.PST after that I DET speak  
He finished speaking and after that I spoke

álánū.gaga āthú.yici áyápāgò khō.ga mbayi  
joking.PRES see.PST and then quarrel.x begin  
[I] saw them joking around and then the quarrel began

ēhényá khògò jā āthú.ji áyápāgò tándò thrūgá.hòjà.yi  
first one come down see.PRES after that many run.PL.come.PRES  
I saw one [person] coming, after that many came running

ā.àlōmbró nnà.ga.hībà áyápāgò āsē.ga.hībàyi  
children dance.x and then sing.PAST  
The children danced and then they sang

The following would mean exactly the same;

ā.àlōmbró nnà.pa hōnē āsē.ga.hībàyi  
children dance then sing.PAST  
The children danced and then they sang

However, it can be fronted in a sentence with a single argument, like *ālibā*, where it constitutes a response to a previous statement.

áyápāgò ēsòyā la.wə.a?  
after that what say.FUT.QM?  
What will [you] say after that?

i.e. someone has used up all their arguments

ba if

This has an alternate form *bàyà* (*bāya* in Upper dialect)

Nyu álí laji ba nga ba ana weya  
You like that speak then I go FUT AFF  
If you speak like that I'll leave

Naba kho.ji ba pii ahrū aba  
Father angry if quiet listen IMP  
If father is angry then be quiet and listen

manjo iga athuhi ba o.mì a  
deer come see if shoot.NEG AFF  
If you see a deer coming, then don't shoot it, OK?

maci mbrū.ga āthú.ji ba ilana a  
water flood.FUT see.AFF then return AFF  
If you see the river rising, then come back, OK!

bānē because of

nyu ēsò.yā bānē ò.ko a ji.jiya?  
you sit.x because at home x x  
why are you sitting at home?

áyápā after that

bēnē, gēnē then, a marker of sequential action

bēnē goes with singular subjects

nyú ata ha bēnē ba  
you food eat then go  
you eat your food and then go

āyā ata ha bene ba.bayi  
he food eat then go  
he eats his food and then goes

gēnē

agrees with plural subjects, though *bēnē* is also heard

ene ata ha gēnē ba.ji.aba  
you pl. food eat then go  
you pl. eat your food and then go

nyú mē la bēnē áli.ba  
you say because happen  
it happened because of what you began to say

nyú mē la gēnē ali.ba.m̀  
you say because happen  
it happened because of what you said

gēnē Eje apra ma piknik hā.gāyí mi ba  
so Eje bank at picnic eat.PRES not go  
So Eje won't go to the riverbank to eat a picnic

cīmē

Nga álí laji cīmē ahru.ga gūmì  
I like that saying but listen. NEG  
I am speaking like this, but no-one is listening

Nanyi iisi la.ga cīmē a nyuya.mē ahrū.yi gūmì ne álí ba  
Mother daily say but son himself listen not and like that happen  
Mother has been saying [this] every day, but the son did not listen and now it has happened

Apiya.mē ba.mina la.pra.ga cīmē nga i.praga.yi  
Brother go.NEG said but I came  
My brother said not to go but I came anyway

Nga álí lawə gūmì da u.la cime āthú ko.thone laji  
I like that speak not EVD think.PST but look unable to see saying  
I did not want to speak out but I'm fed up and now I am saying that

gúm[i]bā if not

Nyu bawe gúmibā lakə.na  
You go if not tell  
If you are not going, tell [me]

Pawū hāwe gúmibā ikhipitomi  
Money give if not lie.NEG  
If you are not giving money, do not lie [about it]

Himisi.ga gumiba porí.aja chō  
Sleepy.PRES if not study IMP  
If you are not sleepy, then study

Iskul bawə gumiba pākū ba  
School go if not field go  
If you are not going to school, then go to the field

Ata hawe gumiba acapu ada  
Food eat if not shelf keep  
If you're not eating the food then keep it on the shelf

hiàgò

ata ha.te hiàgò hībà  
food eat.FUT then sleep  
after eating the food then [you] go to sleep

Ata hando híàgò hiba a  
Food eat.finish then sleep AFF

Nu álí la.gə híàgò apiya. mē kho.yiwe  
You like that say then brother angry.FUT  
If you speak like that your brother will be angry

mī.go la.ye híàgò pii ahrũ.pra matō  
others.to irritate then quiet listen IMP  
[After] irritating other people, now listen quietly

pàwú ci híàgò thrupi.mì a  
money get after run away.NEG AFF  
After getting money, don't run away

A.weya bamba la híàgò nyu ēcā ēsòyā eyine jijia?  
Child go tell then you here what do sit  
What are you doing sitting here when you have told the child to go

nga naba kholeba hiago pra gūmì da.  
my father angry if good NEG AFF  
if my father gets angry it is bad

hōnē

A consequential particle, with meanings such as if, only if, because, since etc. always placed between the two clauses making up the sentence. Examples;

Ali lagə hōnē pra.we  
Like that say then good  
If you say it like that then it will be good

Ajo jugə hōnē aja sa.wə  
Letter write only if officer become  
Only if you study will you become an officer

Paku njogə hōnē ha hiwe  
Field work if eat can  
Only if you work in the fields you will eat

àná'āmā njogə hōnē njota be pra.yi  
Morning wake up only if body good.PRES  
Only if you wake up early will your body be good

Kəba gəba njogə hōnē prawe  
All for work if good  
It is good if we work for everyone

Tamako hōnē hembre pra e.gaga  
 Hospital only [in] disease good do.HAB  
 Only in hospitals are diseases cured

cūũ ji hōnē ahrũ hiyi  
 Quietly sit if hear able  
 Only if you sit quietly can you hear [anything]

ne is a sequential marker, similar to ‘then’, placed between two verbs;

nyú ata ha gene pākū bā ne njò a  
 you food eat then field go then work EVD  
 you eat your food then go to the field to work

### 3.9 Evidentials

Idu has a wide range of evidential particles, which allow speakers to affirm and hearers to assess the truth-value attributed to a statement. These are summarised in Table 127;

**Table 127. Idu evidential particles**

Idu	Function	Approximate Gloss
būthūlà		I saw it
dà	affirmative evidential particle	
cím	maybe, perhaps	
hò	affirmative evidential particle	
khà, khàm	marker of indirect knowledge	
hũũ	affirmative particle	
làmpū	affirms positively the statement of speaker	
pùmà	affirmative particle	really, definitely

būthūlà

āyā mānjì la.mbrā.yi būthūlà  
 that person true say.really.PERF EVD  
 that person spoke the truth, for certain

Examples of their use are given below;

dà an affirmative evidential particle always placed in clause-final position, to assure the listener of the truth or seriousness of intent of the speaker;

álí la.ga dà  
 like that say.PRES EVD  
 it is said like that

nga ata hawə gūmì dà  
 I food eat.FUT NEG EVD  
 I won't eat food



ngá bú aya bawe dà  
I also there go.FUT EVD  
I will also go there

dā in response to a query)

ālīyā dà  
younger brother! EVD  
Brother! What?

cím maybe, perhaps used in clause-final position;

khənyu mē bú àshúyì è.jì, cím  
spirit DET that shock do.PST maybe  
maybe the spirit shocked the child

hǒ is an affirmative evidential particle used in clause-final position;

álī mācímē, hǒ  
like this EVD  
Yes, it's like this

khà, khàm marker of indirect knowledge used in clause-final position;

ha pra.yi khà  
eat good.PRES EVD  
[someone has told me] it is good to eat

āyā álí khà ye  
it thus EVD ?  
that's so [as you have told me]

khàm is the form common in folktales and narrations, corresponding to 'it is said that'

lāmpū

āī, ngā.mē lā lāmpū  
yes I.AG say EVD  
yes, I have said it

While in the past it becomes pūcī.bú

nyū Tezu gē pūcī.bú hǔù  
you Tezu go and come should.COM AFF  
You should have gone to Tezu

The affirmative particle hǔù allows the sentence to be complete.

pùmà

Usually in sentence or clause-final position, it represents an affirmative, something like ‘really’, ‘definitely’, ‘assuredly’.

a bu jī sú jākàmi mbrá hò pùmà  
 child ? wriggling definitely present really

ēcā manji la.mbrā.yi pùmà  
 this person true speak really

It can also stand on its own following an exclamation;

àámbrā pùmà  
 yes really  
 Yes, really

### 3.10 Numerals

Idu basic numerals are shown in Table 128 and those of Tawra and Kman are presented for comparison;

**Table 128. Idu lower numerals**

Gloss	Idu	Tawrã	Kman
One	khègè	khin	kə̃mu <sup>m</sup>
Two	kà.nyì	kayin	kə̃ni <sup>m</sup> n, kə̃yi <sup>m</sup> n
Three	kà.sō	kasəŋ	kə̃sə <sup>m</sup> m
Four	kà.pri	kaprayk	kə̃mbrə <sup>m</sup> n
Five	màngá	maŋa	kə̃le <sup>m</sup> n
Six	tāhrō	tahro	kə̃ta <sup>m</sup> m
Seven	í(r)ũ	wē	nə̃ <sup>m</sup> n
Eight	ilhú	lim	grə̃ <sup>m</sup> n
Nine	khriṅī	kɨŋəŋ	nə̃tmù
Ten	hũũ	hálaŋ	kyēpmu <sup>m</sup>

Tawrã clearly presents related forms, although they do not seem to be in any regular correspondence with Idu, while those of Kman seem to be quite unconnected.

For Idu lower numerals with a ka- first syllable, this is often deleted in various count expressions, especially after numeral classifiers. Thus

sha ba'nyi two mithuns

Idu numerals above ten are shown in Table 129. Idu has a fairly regular decimal system, although due to some assimilation, forms cannot always be reliably predicted.

**Table 129. Idu higher numerals**

Numeral	Idu
11	hōlōkè
12	hūlūnyī
13	hōlōsō
14	hūlūprī
15	hōlōmā
16	hōlōhrō
17	hūlūù
18	hūlūlū
19	hūlūkhrīnī
20	ānyīhū
30	àsōhū
40	kàprīhū
50	màngāhū
60	tāār.hū
70	īūhū
80	īlūhū
90	khōnyī hū
100	mālō

Table 130 shows the Idu cardinal numbers.

**Table 130. Idu cardinal numbers**

Gloss	Idu
Once	b̀̀g̀̀
Twice	b̀̀nỳ̀
Thrice	b̀̀as̀̀
Four times	b̀̀pr̀̀
Five	b̀̀m̀̀ǹ̀á
Six	b̀̀(̀̀t̀̀)áhr̀̀
Seven	b̀̀í̀̀r̀̀
Eight	b̀̀ì̀̀l̀̀ú
Nine	b̀̀khr̀̀ǹ̀
Ten	b̀̀h̀̀

ngá Teju b̀̀g̀̀.g̀̀  
 I Tezu  
 I went to Tezu once

Idu also has special numeral forms to express days and nights of twenty-four hours, shown in Table 131. These are generally used to express day or nights away from the home. They are clearly related to the basic count forms given in column 1 but are not completely predictable, especially the tones.

**Table 131. Idu numerals and compound forms**

Gloss	Numerals	Days	Nights (i.e. 24 hrs)
one	khə̀gə̀	ĩnyĩgə̀	éyágə̀
two	kà.nyì	ányínyĩ	ínyí
three	kà.sǎ̃	àsónyì	ēsó
four	kà.pri	káprínyĩ	ĩprĩ
five	màngá	màṅányì	jímàṅá
six	tāhrō	tàhrónyì	éhrò
seven	íù	íùnyì	jíù
eight	ìlú	ìlúnyì	jílú
nine	khriṅ	khínyínyĩ	jĩkhōnyĩ
ten	hũũ	hũũnyì	ĩsũ, jíhũũ

### 3.11 Ideophones and expressives

#### 3.11.1 Overview

Idu has a wide range of sound-symbolic words, often called ideophones or expressives in the literature. These can be summarised as follows (Table 132);

**Table 132. Categories of Idu expressive**

Category	Form	Comment
onomatopoeia	near-reduplicated, typically CVCV CVCV	conventionally reproduces a characteristic sound but reduplicated form is culturally determined
onomatopoeia	most examples single syllable, CV(V)	
onomatopoeia	paired echo words, typically CVCV CVCV	
onomatopoeia	animal noises, typically CV(V)	
imitative	noises to call animals, diverse	
expressives	reduplicated	
expressives	paired echo words, typically CVCV CVCV	

#### 3.11.2 Onomatopoeic or sound-symbolic words

Within the category of sound-symbolic words, there are direct imitations of sounds, usually monosyllabic. This class of words has its own name, *khra*, a general term for conventional expressions of noise. A partial listing of these is given in Table 133.

**Table 133. Idu words imitating sounds directly**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Sense</b>
bàà...	describes the sound of a tree or a person falling
bò	sound of gunshot noise
cùù	sound produced while crunching
d.hà	sound produced by a foot stamping
d.hì	sound produced by a foot stamping
hù	sound produced by water <i>mācī hù</i>
īī	sound of heavy engine
jíhrò	sound of snoring
khṛò	sound of hitting with a knife
ndī	sound produced by a vertical movement of hand or foot against surface
pāā	sound produced by foot stamping
phàà	sound of tree falling
phàà	sound of object falling, a thump/thud
phī	sound of gunshot
phūn	sound of a twelve-bore cartridge or other noisy gun
rāā	sound of clearing jungle
rōō	sound of a landslide
tēe	sound of twigs snapping
tīī	sound of a metal ringing

cùùcùù id. sound produced while crunching

Generally speaking, there is no relationship between segmental phonology and semantics. The sort of relationship between vowel and size does not seem to apply in Idu. Nonetheless, the following pair of words are clearly related.

phàà sound of tree falling  
 phàà sound of object falling, a thump/thud

In the context of a sentence, the sound-symbolic word usually precedes the verb to which it applies as, in this example;

āsīmbó bàà là.ba āthú.ji  
 tree bàà fall.CONT see.PRES  
 [I] see the tree falling *bàà*

However, there is a second category of sound-symbolic word, which is more conventional, usually with the formula CVCV.CVCV where the two halves of the formula reflect one another, rather like English ‘hocus-pocus’ or ‘helter-skelter’. A sample of these are given in Table 134;

**Table 134. Idu conventional sound-symbolic formulae**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Sense</b>
gūndū gārā	noise made by vessels falling down and rolling around
kṛì kòrò	noise of constant activity
khṛì khòrò	noise of wild animal walking on pebbles or gravel
pīī pēē	noise made when the fishes are jumping or two people are exchanging blows
phṛì phàrà	noise of the wings when two chickens are fighting
pùtù pàrà	noises produced by two boys wrestling each other

phù phà	noise made in sleep by someone else
rīrō rīrō	noise of stones falling down the mountainside
sīrī sārā	noise of someone walking on dry leaves

### 3.11.3 Animal noises

Like most languages, Idu has a set of words to represent the noises made by animals. These can be divided into conventional and actual. A similar distinction occurs in English; we do not suppose a cock actually makes the noise ‘cock-a-doodle-doo’, this is merely a literary representation. In Idu narratives, animals make conventional sounds, but in everyday speech, they make ‘actual’ sounds. A sample of these noises is given in Table 135;

**Table 135. Conventional and actual animal noises**

Species	Idu
cow or mithun, conventional	gū
pig, conventional	grà
pig = noise of vomiting	èr
pig (actual)	ɽēēē
dog, conventional	ɽũ
tiger, conventional	khú
tiger (actual)	hũũ...
leopard, conventional	ngā
jackal, conventional	grá
jackal (actual)	wāā
barking deer, conventional	hɽō
cock, conventional	ɽũ
cock when you grab it	wāā
hen, conventional	ātā
chick, conventional	cī
hen during laying egg	àkhò

Apart from the noises which imitate animal sounds, Idu has a set of words or noises which are used to call animals. These are given in Table 136;

**Table 136. Noises used to call animals**

Animal species	Noise
chicken	trrrr
dog	e.e
cat	mi.mi.mi
pig	eh.eh.eh
pig	u.u.u.
mithun	ah.ah.ah

### 3.11.4 Reduplicated expressives

Apart from representations of sound, Idu has numerous reduplicated or near-reduplicated expressions which describe experiences, states or visual appearances. Those with CV(N) structures can be repeated ad libitum. Those where the initial element is CVCV are usually repeated once.

**Table 137. Idu reduplicated expressives**

Idu	Sense
brēm-brēm-brē	describes vibrating vigorously
cōmbrō-cōmbrō	describes a tall person walking as if he is bouncing along
dàhùdàhù	describes how a fire burns in puffs
dàmbrú-dàmbrū	describes a heavy and short person or a tall person with bowed shoulders walking swiftly
démrà-démrà	describes people walking in a line
dríndrà-dríndrà	describes flashing colours and lights
dùhù-dùhù	describes a person walking swiftly seen in dim light or far away
grē-grē-grē	describes pursuing aggressively
jō.òò	describes looking like an owl
jōdā-jōdā	describes leaping fire or a tall person walking swiftly
jōlòlò	describes looking like an owl
khòyá-khòyā	describes walking wobbling from side to side
lēwēlēwē	describes going round and round
lè-lè-lè	describes non-stop downpour of rain
mílū-lùù	describes a low flame or a distant light
pāhù-pāhù	describes a heavy and short person walking swiftly
shūmbī-shūmbī	describes s.t. very slippery
tsù-tsù-tsù	describes boiling in anger

### Examples

brēm-brēm-brē describes vibrating vigorously

### Example

cōmbrō-cōmbrō describes a tall person walking as if he is bouncing along

### Example

dàhùdàhù describes how a fire burns in puffs

### Example

dàmbrú-dàmbrū describes a heavy and short person or a tall person with bowed shoulders walking swiftly

### Example

démrà-dēmrà describes people walking in a line

Example

dríndrà-dríndrà describes flashing colours and lights

Example

dùhǔ-dùhǔ describes a person walking swiftly seen in dim light or far away

Example

hihu tene nyu jōlōlō ba puma

you have slept so much that you look like an owl

àlòkòprà wu.ji khòyákhòyā agu.m(i) mana

don't walk in a wobbling way like a big cockroach

lēwēlēwē round and round

nyu esoya bane āsīmbó lēwēlēwē agu jia?  
you what happen tree round and round walk QM  
why are you walking round and round the tree?

āmruhù mílùlù mo kō gane khaga yi

the embers of the fire are still glowing, *mílùlù*

atuya nàbā Nàmjī mē pāhùpāhù e deyi

there goes father Namji walking heavily



khomẽ mẽ tsù-tsù-tsù embra ga

I am boiling with anger

Ideophones with a simple CV(V) structure do occur, but they are apparently rarer.

châà without any difficulty, at one go

nyú abrato tãpà châà ceta.ba  
you bamboo cut down châà cut  
You cut down the bamboo with one stroke

Sometimes a single and reduplicated form of ideophones exist, with marginally different semantics.

rāārā sound of stepping on dry leaves in the jungle

ahima rāā ē.ga ma  
raa do.PRES AFF  
something is making the noise rāā

rāārā chī.m mana  
raaraa walk.x  
don't walk making the noise rāārā

drōō unblinking and gleaming (such as the eyes of a tiger)  
dròòdròò describes intermittent light

ām̄rā mē drōō àlhī.ne āthú.ga  
tiger drōō gaze. look.  
the tiger is gazing with wide gleaming eyes

tūcì dròòdròò kō.gayi  
sprak dròòdròò emit light  
the sparks are emitting light, *droodroo*

### 3.11.5 Paired collocations

SE Asian languages are well-known for echo expressives, where the second half an expression approximately matches the first, but not so precisely as to constitute reduplication. These are typically CVCV.CVCV, but the two halves of the expression are not exact mirrors, segmentally or tonally. An approximate parallel in English might be expressions such as 'hurly-burly', 'namby-pamby' or 'hocus-pocus'. These are provisionally named paired collocations although a more consensus term for the region is obviously desirable. Despite their commonness, I can find no detailed study of their morphology or syntax in any SE Asian language.

Idu has a rich repertoire of such expressions which range from semantics similar to ideophones (Table 137) to nominal and adjectival phrases (Table 138). Their contexts of use are often the same as exactly reduplicated expressives except where they are quasi-nominals. Etymologically, they are most commonly verb strings, either two compound verbs in sequence, or verb stems plus negation. However, the form of the

verb does not always match that in the lexicon, as they may have been normalised, segmentally or tonally, to create a euphonious expression. It is notable that many of the expressions in the shamanic register (Table 143) also consist of paired collocations. However, the structure of these is far more diverse than those in Table 138 and importantly, the second term in many collocations has no clear etymology. Nonetheless, the *igu* lexicon draws on the same underlying structure.

Table 138 shows possible etymologies of the paired collocations, although tonal changes to verb roots means these cannot always be identified with certainty.

**Table 138. Idu expressives as paired collocations**

Idu	Sense	Possible etymology
bádá gādā	nook and cranny, everywhere	
càci lápē	annoying things	undermine + throw
céi ngéi	describes not needing to include everyone	cut-ter + saw-er
chímì dēmī	doing nothing serious	
chīpā chīlò	reaching somewhere by searching	walk + reach and walk + ?
chītā chihà	walking at random and reaching somewhere	walk + half (= accompany)
		walk + by mistake
chīthū chimrà	making walking difficult	walk + feel uneasy and walk + poison
ēcōmī àthāmì	not providing drink and food	not offer drink + not offer food
émrò lālò	doing and saying wrong things	do habit + speak come out
hākū hàrhù	act of stealing/snatching, etc.	'eat + steal + eat + snatch'
hāmī tómī	being very engaged	not eating + not drinking
hāprā hāsā	eating well	eat good + eat undisturbed
hàsù tósú	describes freeloading	
hāyū hāmā	eat and finish up	eat always + eat disappear [ayu and ama]
hīmì àthāmì	coming home late	sleep.not +
hūkú hùlī	describes waving a stick around at random	strike
īdù ēkhrà	making noise	dropping + making noise
īlīngā āyāngā	soul (in the context of being frightened)	
kālī kālā ~	s.t. loose which is about to fall	
kājī kālā		
kālī kālē	s.o. constantly restless (like a monkey)	
kāti kālī ~ kāti	s.t. small	
kāri		
kútò jītò	describes becoming destitute after helping s.o.	
lākhè wùkhè	act of talking a lot without saying anything	lit. 'speak + defecate + think + defecate'
lākhè lāwè	talk nonsense	lit. 'speak + defecate + think +
lāmì wùmì	not behaving appropriately	speaking not + think not
lōtá dátā	from one end to the other, all over the place	rising + setting
ndāyù ndājè	waxing and waning of the moon	decline + decrease decline + rise
núsù nūlhù	mix things into a jumble	
nūsū nūpē	trying to hide s.t. by shoving it in s.t.	push in + ?
píci pili	describes blinking repeatedly	
prākū còkù	describes inserting the penis	
rhúmì dūmì	emergency situation	
sòké sòlí	describes how a person or animal walks when they kick	lit. 'wrong not + quick not'

Idu	Sense	Possible etymology
súpà sùlò	their feet out blindly (e.g. an elephant) describes snaking through a crowd	insert put on wall + insert insert finger
sūprā īprā	incredible, unbelievable	lit. urinate + salivate
thèprā thèyà	put every effort into s.t.	not speaking not whispering
thòmì bà mì	being entirely silent	lit. bend left + bend right
túpè tūlè	moving from side to side, flexible	pluck remove + tear remove
úkrè mèkrè	touching quickly and lightly many times	pluck repeatedly + tear repeatedly
ūngēre	touching quickly and lightly many times	
mēngēre		

Examples of these expressions in use;

bódá gādā nook and cranny, everywhere

àhí bódá gādā mama trake.mi mana!  
 there nook and cranny ? poke.not  
 Don't poke in every nook and cranny!

cāci làpē annoying things

ēnē cāci làpē ji.mi  
 you pl. annoying things ?  
 you pl. should not do annoying things

céi ngèi describes not needing to include everyone

### Example

chímì dēmī doing nothing serious

### Example

chīpā chilà reaching somewhere by searching

### Example

chītā chihà walking at random and reaching somewhere

### Example

chīthū chimrà making walking difficult

Example

ēcōmī àthàmì not providing drink and food

Example

émrò lālò doing and saying wrong things

Example

hākū hàrù act of stealing/snatching, etc.

mīcī hākù hárhù ewe u.ji.mì  
others' stealing ? think.x.NEG  
don't think of stealing others' [property]

hāmī tómī being very engaged

Example

hāprā hāsā eating well

Example

hàsù tósú to freeload

īmú hàsù.ya tósù.ya àlōmbró i.gayi  
people many  
The freeloaders have arrived

hāyū hāmā eat and finish up

Example

hīmì àthāmì coming home late

hūkú hùlī describes waving a stick around at random

a àhíyā átōpó gəə nə hūkú hùlī è.ga āthú.ji.ma  
child there stick ? waving a stick do.PRES see  
I see that child is waving a stick around hūkúhùlī

īdù ěkhrà making noise

### Example

īlīngā āyāngā soul (in the context of being frightened)

a hō īlīngā āyāngā ba asu ega la cipə da!

s.o. shocked the child and his soul might have left his body

kālī kālē constantly moving from side to side and watching every side

ame àhíyā āthú, kālīkālē è.ga ne ji.ga.yi  
monkey there look sitting watching do.  
look at that monkey, sitting watching everywhere

kālī kālā ~ kēnjī kālā s.t. loose which is about to fall

### Example

kəti kəli ~ kəti kəri s.t. small

### Example

kútò jītō describes becoming destitute after helping s.o.

### Example

lákḥē wùkhē act of talking a lot without saying anything

lákḥēwùkhē ndō la.m̄ mana  
rambling ? speak.NEG  
don't speak in a rambling way

lāmi wùmì not behaving appropriately

Example

lōtá dàtā from one end to the other, all over the place

Example

ndāyù ndājè waxing and waning of the moon

Example

nūsù nūlhù mix things into a jumble

Example

nūsū nūpē trying to hide s.t. by shoving it in s.t.

Example

píci pìli describes blinking repeatedly

píci pìli è.m mana  
blinking do.NEG  
don't blink píci pìli

prākū còkù describes inserting the penis

Example

rhúmì dūmì emergency situation

rhúmì dūmì doa īnyīyā īmú mē hōnē āthúte.yi  
emergency  
only our own people come to assist in an emergency

sòkà describes how a person or animal walks when they kick their feet out blindly (e.g. an  
sòlì elephant)

ata bu sòkàsòlì cho dene agu deyi

the elephant is walking sòkàsòlì

súpè súlò describes snaking through a crowd

hanyo ma súpè súlò ete yine eji a?

where are you going that you are snaking through the crowd like that?

sūprā īprā incredible, unbelievable

a bu sūprā īprā embra ho.i puma  
child surprising ?  
this child is behaving in a surprising way

thèprā thèyà put every effort into s.t.

### Example

thòmì bàmi being entirely silent

### Example

túpè tūlè moving from side to side, flexible

### Example

úkrè mēkrè touching quickly and lightly many times

**Example**

ūṅgēre mēṅgērē touching quickly and lightly many times

**Example**

**3.11.6 Other expressive behaviour**

Idu can also express intensity or degree using lengthening of the stem-vowel in a way quite similar to English. For example;

bwèyā long ago

If the è is lengthened, e.g. bwèè..ya this will emphasise the length of time in the past.

**3.12 Interjections**

Idu has a fairly standard set of interjections which can precede or follow a sentence or can stand alone. These are shown in Table 139 with sentence contexts given below.

**Table 139. Idu interjections**

<b>Idu</b>	<b>Sense</b>	<b>Position</b>
á	OK, yes	
āhīmī.à	OK	
āī	yes of agreement	
āīi...	expressed sadness	Sentence final
dōà	like that!	Sentence final
ht	expresses irritation	Sentence initial
hñ	expresses annoyance	Sentence initial
hō...	expresses request	Sentence final
í	expresses fear or being cold or hot	Goes at both ends of the sentence.
kùú	call of children	Standalone. in hide and seek
làà..., lāā	exclamation of surprise	Sentence initial
m̄m̄	expression of doubt	Sentence initial
nā.ē, nā.ē	Ouch!	often repeated ad libitum
nādā	Ouch!	Sentence final
ṅà	No!	Standalone.
óhò	expression of regret	used when you hear tragic news or when you apologise or express regret. Often followed by clicking the teeth
òò	exclamation of surprise	Sentence initial
yōō....	exclamation of surprise, sadness	Sentence initial

á

**Example**



āhīmī.à

**Example**

āī

**Example**

āī...

sentence-final

ārḥũ shímì d āī...

I don't want to hear this

dōà

ēcā alí gūmì dōà  
this that not like like that  
It's not like that!

h't

h't! ārḥũ shímìdā

Grr! I am tired of hearing this

hñ

precedes sentence.

Hn! nyú mē laga.ca ēsòyā dane ārḥũ we

Huh! Why should I listen to what you are saying?

hō...

goes at the end of sentences.

nyú pa.ung nga ha.lo

Give me the money

a che.o.mì ne, ho!

Yes, accept not this, so! i.e. I refuse

hō...

goes at the end of sentences.

òmtírà ha mana, ho!

Give me an orange please

í

Goes at both ends of the sentence.

ìbìshì dá, í!

I feel fear

kùú

in hide and seek

làà..., lāā

precedes sentence

̀m̀m̀

̀m̀m̀, nyú ikipito.i po

Hah! You are lying!

nā.ē, nā.ē

often repeated ad libitum

nādā

or in *ha.gəsi, da!*

I am feeling hungry lit. 'eat potato'

ngà

óhò

used when you hear tragic news or when you apologise or express regret. Often followed by clicking the teeth

òò

yōō....

precedes sentence

dā<sup>1</sup> excl. what? (in response to a query)

### 3.13 Discourse particles

cīpù

for the sake of

ha cīpù gēbā pācā la pra.mì  
eat for the sake of regarding lot say good.NEG  
it is not good to say a lot for the sake of eating

## 4. Syntax

### 4.1 Basic word order

Word order in Idu is extremely flexible, probably because the post-verbal morphology plays such a significant role in establishing the parameters of individual sentences. As the examples in this grammar attest, not only are many syntactic orders possible, but ancillary qualifiers, adjectives, adverbs and ideophones can vary in their placement. Additionally, because the pronouns are frequently dropped in natural speech, this creates a wealth of possible structures. It can be assumed that the unmarked word order in Idu is SOV;

ngā.mē ba.we  
I.x go.FUT  
I will go

ngá àmbó hā.i  
I maize eat  
I eat maize

ngá ìbìshì dá  
I fear feel  
I feel fear

However, word order in Idu is very flexible despite lack of nominal morphology and many sentences also have OSV, a word order which is very rare globally, and is characteristic of the Amazon basin (e.g. Xavante).

āyā ngā.mē yela  
it I.x do  
I have done it

īmú lópù īgū.mē b̀.̀gà  
person humanity shaman.DET protect.PRES  
the īgū safeguards humanity

sā āmbā àtù mba lo.yi  
mithun jungle take ? ?.  
take the mithun to the jungle

SOV is also attested;

ini īmú ētānyì coro.ga.la  
we man today meet.PAST  
The man we met today

All verbal auxiliaries follow the verb and are bound to it.

## 4.2 Other structures

### 4.2.1 Accusative

The object of a sentence or clause can be marked with the same accusative marker applied to pronouns;

pulis mē akuya.gò àj̀̀ ga.yi  
police DET thief.ACC interrogate do.PRES  
The police are interrogating the thief

Where the subject pronoun is omitted, the object is fronted in the sentence;

a.gò ēsòyā dane ācī ji.a?  
child.ACC why ? scolding do.QM  
Why are you scolding the child?

The accusative marker -gò is also used for some expressions of 'with'.

āyā ikū.gò tār̀h̃.̀ga  
he dog.ACC play.PRES  
he is playing with the dog

Instrumental is marked with a postposed marker *cī* following the noun;

ngā èpā cī āsīmbó pí.we  
 I axe with tree cut.FUT  
 I shall cut the tree with an axe

Note the unusual word order where the second argument precedes the first.

S O<sub>2</sub> DAT O<sub>1</sub> V

Benefactive or purposive is expressed by a range of markers in clause-final position;

*geba* and *ci aba* (feels a bit archaic)

ēcā nyū ci aba  
 this you for  
 This is for you

Can be replaced with this contracted form;

àhíyā àngā nyū.cii  
 that fish you.for  
 That fish is for you

àhíyā àngā nyū geba  
 that fish you for  
 That fish is for you

With a third person pronoun, the –ci becomes short;

ēcā àngā āyā.ci  
 this fish he.for  
 This fish is for him

ēcā àngā nga.ci da  
 this fish I.for EVD  
 this fish is mine

‘from’ is *ne*, *gane* or *mane*

nyū kàjìyā mane ba.we  
 you where from go.FUT  
 Where will you leave from?

ngā Anini ne ja  
 I Anini from come down  
 I came down from Anini

ēcā Lìngī cī ìkū  
 this Linggi of dog  
 This is Linggi’s dog

ebəya nyu jíhrò ahrū.himi mbrā bũthùlà  
 yesterday you snoring listen.bear.NEG really EVD  
 yesterday night the sound of your snoring was difficult to bear

āyā mājì la.mbrā.yi būthūlà  
that person true say.really.PERF EVD  
that person spoke the truth, for certain

nyū āājì la.ne bu nga.we  
you whatever say.  
Whatever you say it is not possible

nānyī ālū gida.ne sè daga hi.naba  
mother vengeance ? murder ?  
they have avenged the murder of the mother

## 4.2 The verb phrase

### 4.2.1 Tense/aspect marking

#### 4.2.1.1 General

Idu is strongly verb-final and tense/aspect is marked with suffixes on the main verb, and in certain constructions on secondary verbs. Idu places strong emphasis on flagging the evidential status of a statement. In discourse, the respondent frequently repeats the statement, adding an evidential marker. Thus the response often includes the bound affirmative evidential marker *-ī* as well as other free evidentials (§3.9).

#### 4.2.1.2 Generic present

Where the bare verb has no TAM markers or pronominal agreement marks a generic present;

ngā ìbishì dá  
I fear feel  
I'm afraid

ngā hà gīshī dá  
I hungry feel  
I feel hungry

The pronoun is often dropped, especially when preceded by an exclamation;

I! ìbishì dá  
Oh fear feel  
Oh! I'm afraid

nyū āājì la.ne bu nga.we  
you whatever say.  
Whatever you say it is not possible

nānyī ālū gida.ne sè daga hi.naba  
mother vengeance ? murder ? ?  
they have avenged the murder of the mother

4.2.1.2 Present continuous

Singular present continuous for first and second persons in both singular is marked with a *-jì* suffix and in the plural with infix *-gā-*.

-jì

ngá tǒ.jì  
I drink.PCONT  
I am drinking

-gā.jì

īnyí àmbō hā.gā.jì  
we maize eat.NUM.PCONT  
we are eating maize

ngá tǒ.yì  
I drink.PRES  
I drink (normally)

nyú tǒ.yì  
you drink.PRES  
you drink (normally)

āyā tǒ.yì  
he drink.PRES  
he drinks (normally)

āyā hrūjì tǒ.gā.yì  
they drink.PRES  
they drink (normally)

**Tones not explained**

An affirmative reply to a question about the truth value of a question adds the evidential *ī*;

ngā tǒ.jì.ī  
I drink.PRES.AFF  
Yes, I am drinking

āyā tǒ.jì.ī  
He drink.PRES.AFF  
Yes, he drinks habitually

Another meaning

āyā tǒ.jì.ī  
He drink.PRES.AFF  
Yes, he is drinking

āyà hrūzhī tǒ.gā.ì.ī  
They drink.PRES  
Yes, they drink habitually

For second and third persons, the evidential suffix  $-ī$  is also used in natural speech though this is not obligatory.

nyū tō̄.jì.ī  
you sg. drink.PRES.AFF  
you are drinking

The affirmative suffix can also be used with the first person, but it is not obligatory;

ŋá àmbó hā.jī.ī  
I maize eat.PRES.AFF  
yes, I am eating maize  
**Tones look wrong here**

Third person with  $gà.ī$

āyā tō̄.gà.ī  
he sg. drink.NUM.AFF  
he is drinking

Note that the tone of the verb  $tō̄$  ‘to drink’ [high tone in citation form] is lowered to mid. Exactly how these tone rules are applied will require testing with a large number of verbs of different tone heights.

But;

āyà àmbō hā.gā.í  
he maize eat.PRES.AFF  
he is eating maize

**Check tones here**

For third person plural subjects,  $-gágá$

āyà hrùjī àmbō hā.gá.gá  
they maize eat.NUM.PRES  
they are eating maize

The first and second plural pronouns are marked with  $jì.ī$  preceded by the number marker  $gā$ ;

īnyī tō̄.gā.jì.ī  
We drink.NUM.PRES.AFF  
we are drinking

ēnē tō̄.gā.jì.ī  
you pl. drink.NUM.PRES.AFF  
you pl. are drinking

The third person plural has the same  $gà.ī$  suffix as the singular. The number marker  $gā$  can be optionally dropped.

āyà hrùzhī tō̄.[gā.]gà.ī  
they drink.NUM.PRES.AFF  
yes, they are drinking



Verbal negation in Idu is marked with a final *-mì* and the tone of the *-jì* and *-gà* suffixes is raised from low to mid. The evidentials usually given in positive statements are dropped. Otherwise the structure is the same, as in the examples;

ngā tǒ.jī.mì  
I drink.PRES.NEG  
I am not drinking

and in the plural;

īnyī tǒ.gā.jī.mì  
we drink.NUM.PRES.NEG  
we are not drinking

Also in the second person;

nyū tǒ.jī.mì  
you sg. drink.PRES.NEG  
you are not drinking

However, in the third person, the *jī* is dropped and *gā* is substituted;

āyā tǒ.gā.mì  
he sg. drink.PRES.NEG  
he is not drinking

But in the plural, an additional *-gā-* can be optionally inserted;

āyà hrǔjī tǒ.[gā.]gā.mì  
they drink.NUM.PRES.NEG  
they are not drinking

In responses to a negative question a new evidential, *-gū-*, is introduced, preceding the final negative marker.

ngā tǒ.jì.gū.mì  
I drink.PRES.EVD.NEG  
I am [definitely] not drinking

#### 4.2.1.3 Present habitual

Idu distinguishes generic present, present continuous and present habitual. The present habitual singular is marked with a *ì.ī* suffix and plural with *gā.ì.ī*. The homophony with the evidential *-ī* described above suggests this is the same underlying morpheme which has been further lexicalised in the habitual. In addition to the affirmative habitual, Idu has a reported habitual.

ngā tǒ.ì.ī  
I drink.PRES  
I drink habitually

nyū tǒ.ì.ī  
you sg. drink.PRES  
you drink habitually

āyā tǔ.ì.ī  
he drink.HAB  
he drinks habitually

For plural pronouns, the number marker *-gā* is inserted after the verb stem;

īnyī tǔ.gā.ì.ī  
we drink.NUM.HAB  
we drink habitually

For the second person plural, the marker *hrùzhī* (normally associated with the third person plural) can be optionally inserted after the pronoun;

ēnē [hrùzhī] tǔ.gā.ì.ī  
you pl. drink.NUM.HAB  
you pl. drink habitually

āyà hrùzhī tǔ.gā.ì.ī  
they drink.NUM.HAB  
they are drinking

āyà hrùzhī àmbō hā.gá(gà).yī  
they maize eat.NUM.HAB  
they are eating maize

## Negatives

As with the present continuous, the affirmative *-ī* suffix is deleted and the negation marker *-mì* placed at the end of the extended lexeme;

ngā tǔ.ì.mì  
I drink.HAB.NEG  
I do not drink habitually

However, in a response form, the reply can delete the habitual marker and replace it with the affirmative evidential. Thus;

ngā tǔ.ī.mì  
I drink.AFF.NEG  
I am not drinking [now]

### 4.2.1.4 Recent past/incompletive

The marker of the recent past or incompletive is *-hībà* pl. *-gā.hībà*

nyū mācī tǔ.hībà  
you sg. water drink.RPAST  
you drank water

ēnē mācī tǔ.gā.hībà  
you pl. water drink.NUM.RPAST  
you pl. drank water

## Negation

Negation of statements about the recent past introduce the suffix *-gūmì* as in the habitual;

nyū      mǎcī      tǔ.hībà.gūmì  
you sg.   water   drink.RPAST.NEG  
you did not drink water

However, Idu also has an unusual construction where the two elements of *hībà* bracket the shortened negative *-mì-*, giving a meaning of incapacity;

nyū      mǎcī      tǔ.hī.mì.bà  
you sg.   water   drink.RPAST.NEG.RPAST  
you could not drink water

## More examples

### 4.2.1.5 Continuous past

The marker of the continuous past is *-[ī].cì*, which can bracket a negative. So;

ngā      mǎcī      tǔ.īcì  
I      water   drink.PSTCONT  
I was drinking water

nyū      mǎcī      tǔ.īcì  
you sg.   water   drink.PSTCONT  
you were drinking water

However, in the third person, the *ī* is omitted;

āyā      mǎcī      tǔ.gā.cì  
he      water   drink.NUM.PCONT  
he was drinking water

Plurals are similar with the infixing of the number marker *-gā*;

īnyī      mǎcī      tǔ.gā.ìcì  
we      water   drink.NUM.PCONT  
we were drinking water

In the third person plural, an additional *-[g]à* is introduced after the number marker, which is the same as the marker occurring in present tense affirmative statements and is presumably a relic of pronominal agreement. The initial *-g-* can be omitted in fast speech.

āyà hrùzhī      mǎcī      tǔ.gā.[g]à.cì  
they              water   drink.NUM.3P.PCONT  
they were drinking water

## Negation

In negative statements, *gūmì* is bracketed by *ì* and *cì*;

ngā mǎcī tǒ.ì.gūmì.cì  
I water drink.PCONT.NEG.PCONT  
I was not drinking water

In the third person the -ì is replaced by -gà;

āyā mǎcī tǒ.gà.gūmì.cì  
he water drink.NUM.NEG.PCONT  
he was not drinking water

#### 4.2.1.6 Habitual past

The habitual past is very similar to the continuous past except that the mid-tone ī is lowered to ì. So in the singular;

ngā mǎcī tǒ.ì.cì  
I water drink.PHAB  
I used to drink water

The plurals are formed with the addition of -gā as elsewhere;

īnyī mǎcī tǒ.gā.ì.cì  
we water drink.PHAB  
we used to drink water

āyā hrùzhī mǎcī tǒ.gā.ì.cì  
they water drink.NUM.PHAB  
they used to drink water

The negative past habitual inserts *gūmì* between -ì and -cì and is thus identical to the past continuous;

ngā mǎcī tǒ.ì.gūmì.cì  
I water drink.PCONT  
I did not use to drink water

#### 4.2.1.7 Perfective

The perfective in Idu is marked with -là and a lowering of tone on the stem verb;

nyū àmbō hà.là  
you sg. maize eat.PERF  
You sg. have eaten maize

However, when the statement becomes a question, the verb retains its citation tone;

nyū àmbō hā.là  
you sg. maize eat[QM].PERF  
have you sg. have eaten maize?

**We need more examples of this with different pronouns. Check tones**

-gáhíbā verbal suffix marking definite recent past for third person plural subjects

āyā hrùjī àmbō hā.gáhíbā  
they maize eat.PERF

they have eaten maize

#### 4.2.1.8 Pluperfect

The pluperfect in Idu is marked with *là.cī*, which can be split when negation is introduced;

ngā ikù khōgō àthú.là.cī  
I dog one see.PLPST  
I had seen one dog

The negative assertion brackets *-gūmì-*;

ngā ikù khōgō àthú.là.gūmì.cì  
I dog one see.PLPST.NEG.PLPST  
I had not seen one dog

Another form is;

āyà hrùzhī gì.gāgè.bà  
they come.PL.x.go  
they had come

āyà hrùzhī gì.gāgè.bà  
they come.PL.x.go  
they had come

Affirmative

āyà hrùjī gè.gá.bà.gūmì.ē  
they.PL go.NUM.CPAST.AFF  
yes, they had come

or;

āyà hrùjī gè.gá.bà.m  
they.PL go.NUM.PLPST.AFF  
yes, they had come

āyà hrùjī gè.gá.bà.mì  
they.PL go.NUM.PLPST.AFF  
so, they had not come

#### 4.2.1.9 Future

Idu marks the future with the suffix *-ì.yà.wè*;

nyū mācī tō.ì.yà.wè  
you sg. water drink.FUT  
you sg. will drink water

A plural subject is marked with infix *-gā-* directly following the verb stem;

ēnē mācī tǒ.gā.i.yà.wə  
you pl. water drink.NUM.FUT  
you pl. will drink water

and negation inserts *gūmì* between *yà* and *wə*;

nyū mācī tǒ.i.yà.gūmì.wə  
you sg. water drink.FUT  
you sg. will not drink water

eca rùmāl lò dùgù bā ànyū.lābà a  
this handkerchief very white become wash.FUT AFF  
wash this handkerchief till it becomes very white

#### 4.2.1.10 ‘may, might’

The concept of ‘may, might’ is expressed by the verbal auxiliary *wēsà*, following the main verb.

nyū èlè la.hito wēsà dā  
you bad accused might AFF  
someone might accuse you of s.t. bad, so

Another construction is;

a mē hā.lō.ga.wə  
child DET eat.wait.FUT  
the child might be waiting to eat

#### 4.2.1.11 Facilitative

Idu has a facilitative, *-yìgā*, expressing the notion that something can be done, that it is possible. This is homophonous with the verbal extension *-yìgā* ().

āyā tǒ.yìgā  
that drink.FAC  
that is drinkable

### 4.2.2 Imperatives

#### 4.2.4.1 Positives

Idu has a variety of markers indicating the imperative (Table 140). The majority are suffixed to the verb, but some are independent morphemes, such as *chō*, which is always in clause-final position.

**Table 140. Imperative marking in Idu**

Category	Morpheme	Person
Plain	no marking	any
Direct order	-na	
Less polite	chō	any
Jussive	há	
Future (more polite)	pūcī mā	
Future (less polite)	pūyí	
Perfective	pūcī bú	

The simplest form of the imperative has no overt marking, and consists of a simple OV structure with no subject pronoun;

mācī há  
 water give  
 Give [me] water

A restricted subset of verbs can take an imperative suffix *-na*;

e.nane Do it!  
 la.na Speak up!  
 tō.na Drink!  
 ha.na eat

A less polite imperative uses the verb *chō* ‘come!’ as a clause-final auxiliary;

nyū bə̀gə̀bò la. natu chō  
 you once again speak from down come!  
 Say it once again! [hearer is below speaker]

*chō* can also mark first person imperatives or jussives;

àngā hò.jīyà chō  
 fish catch.PRES IMP  
 let [us] catch fish

First person imperatives mark the verb for tense.

In the present they use the verbal auxiliary *há* ‘allow’.

ngā mācī tó.ji.ga há  
 I water drink.PRES allow  
 Let me drink water

The future imperative uses the suffixed *pūcī mā*;

nyū Tezu bā pūcī mā  
 you Tezu go should AFF  
 You should go to Tezu

This is stronger, more like an order;

nyū Tezu bā pūyí

nyū Tezu gō should  
You should go to Tezu

nyū Tezu gō pūyí  
you Tezu go and come should  
You should go to Tezu and return

The perfective imperative, ‘should have’, is *pūcī.bú*.

nyū Tezu gō pūcī.bú húù  
you Tezu go and come should.COM AFF  
You should have gone to Tezu

The evidential particle *húù* marks the status of the imperative.

īgàná v. to be present imp

mānā imperative marker [implies irritation or sadness]

*áli emi mānā* don’t behave like that

rāārāā chī.mì mānā  
raaraa walk.NEG IMP  
don’t walk making the noise *rāārāā*

#### 4.2.4.2 Negatives

Negative imperatives are created with the negation marker *-mì* suffixed to the main verb;

nyū Tezu bā.mì pūcī.bú  
you Tezu go.NEG should  
You should not go to Tezu

However, there is also a reduced form with effectively the same meaning;

nyū Tezu bā.mī.[á]  
you Tezu go.NEG.[]  
You should not go to Tezu

With reference to a third person, when they are in proximity, the following is used;

āyā Tezu bā.mī.na la[bā]  
he Tezu go.NEG.3pPRES tell  
He should not go to Tezu

Tezu bā.mī.na la[bā]  
Tezu go.NEG.3pPRES tell  
They should not go to Tezu

The negative perfective uses the same structure;



āyā Tezu bā.mī.à pūcī mā  
 he Tezu go.NEG.3pPERF should AFF  
 He should not have gone to Tezu

In the third person plural;

āyà hrùzhī Tezu bā.ji.mī.à pūcī dā.yi  
 they Tezu go.CONT.NEG.3p should AFF.CONC  
 They should not have gone to Tezu

nyu álí ena ahrũ.jiya  
 you like that do.x are you listening?  
 you behave like that,

The negative imperative *ēm* is probably an allomorph of the suffixed *-mī*.

álí ēm na  
 like that NEG do  
 don't do that!

#### 4.2.3 Relative clause

Relative clauses in Idu are marked with *cā*;

ini īmú ētānyì coro.ga.la cā bā.na.ba  
 we man today meet.PST who go.AFF.PST  
 The man who we met today has now left

ini mē la.ga.i ca la ku.we  
 we DET speaking that say maintain.FUT  
 What we discussed [today], we will keep [for the future]

#### 4.2.4 Conditionals

The usual expression of the conditional corresponding to English 'if' is *bwē.à* placed after main clause. Thus;

nyú bōjārīá ba hi.we bwē.à ngá geba ilisò lo.i.na  
 you sg. market go FUT if so I for pork buy.REQ  
 If you go to the market, please buy me some pork

nyú hātā hā.we bwē.à njò.a jā  
 you food eat if work must  
 If you want to eat you must work

lamisi bwe.a laa jā, chō  
 speak.desire to if speak start yes  
 If you want to speak, go ahead!

Conditionality can also be expressed by the conjunction of two clauses without an explicit marker.

nyú bōjārī.à āgū.híbà àjibrū lō.yina  
 you market.to go. banana buy  
 If you go to the market, buy bananas

nyū àmbō hando.híbá lake  
 you maize eat enough.PERF say.x  
 If you sg. have eaten enough maize, say so

Another way of expressing the conditional is with the verbal suffix *-jībá* [also *-jībúyā*]. In the second person, there is no indexing to the subject pronoun.

nyú álí lā.jībá ngá nyú ikùtè.wèyā  
 you like that talk.COND I you beat.FUT  
 If you talk like that, I'll beat you

nyú álí lā.jībá ngá nyú ikùtè.wèyā

If you talk like that, I'll beat you

But in the third person, it is obligatorily marked on the subsidiary verb.

āyā álí lā.jībá ngá āyā ikùtè.là.wèyā  
 he like that talk.COND I him beat.FUT  
 If he talks like that, I'll beat him

Similarly with the third person plural;

āyā hrūji álí lā.gá.jībā ngá āyā hrūji ikùtè.là.wèyā  
 they like that talk.COND I them beat.FUT  
 If they talk like that, I'll beat you

#### 4.2.5 Copulas, equative sentences

Idu does not have a single strategy for marking copulas or equative sentences.

the dog is red

ètōwē lò baci ha.loi  
 shirt white which give.RQ  
 give me a shirt which is white

khà to live, sit, reside

lò kədā

màpū de

hè

lò kədā it is

ālī lò kədā  
 this it is  
 that's how it is

ālī ābrā lò kèdā.yì  
 this really it is.x  
 it's really like this

màpū de it is

á lí màpū de  
 like that it is  
 it is like that

āyā hè ikipito kandu layi da lagaga ma  
 he is lie always speak AFF speak.PRES EVD  
 It is said that he always tells lies

ngá hè?  
 I it is  
 is it me?

pàwú aya khaga ca hè ngaci da  
 money that lie.PRES there is mine AFF  
 the money lying there is mine

#### 4.2.6 Negation

The principal method of negation in Idu is the suffix *-mì* following the verb. In constructions where the subject pronoun (present or implied) is singular *-mì* follows directly.

krē.mì ā  
 be jealous.NEG FOC  
 [you sg.] don't be jealous

However, where is a number-marking suffix index a plural subject, *-mì* follows the pronominal suffix.

krē.jí.mì ā  
 be jealous.AUX.NEG FOC  
 [you pl.] don't be jealous

In some idioms and in rapid speech, *-mì* can be reduced to *-m̄*, as in the following example;

lákhwùkhā ndō la.m̄ mana  
 rambling ? speak.NEG  
 don't speak in a rambling way

Idu also has negative verbs, to 'not do' s.t. which are lexically distinct.

ànè to not do s.t. or go somewhere

ngá ētānyì òpìs ma njowe khaga cime ànè la  
 I today office work  
 today I had work to do in the office but I didn't go

#### 4.2.7 Serial verb constructions

Idu permits limited serial verb constructions (SVCs) where the two verbs in question are co-dependent. In general, such V + V pairs are better analysed as compound verbs, which are lexicalised (§3.3.5). However, in some cases of sequential action, none of the typical conjunctions are used. The post-verbal morphology is attached to the second verb, but implicitly applies to both.

ēhéyá khègè jā āthú.jì áyápāgò tándò thrūgá.hòjà.yì  
 first one descend see.PRES after that many run.PL.come.PRES  
 I saw one [person] coming, after that many came running

There are cases where both verbs exhibit suffixes.

In this example, two verbs are in sequence and joined to a third verb with a sequential marker;

ìntsī shù jāli ba cī kǎ gānē há lōi  
 chili red get choose and give IMP  
 choose a red chili and give it to me

#### 4.3 Associative construction

The normal genitive construction is reversed when preceded by a demonstrative. Thus;

ēcā Lìngī cī ìkū  
 this L. of dog  
 This is Linggi's dog

ngá cī ó nyu cī mì àlǎlǎ kālō.ya màpū  
 I of house you of NEG length be tall. is  
 my house is longer than yours

#### 4.4 Qualification

Qualification of nouns in Idu is through either true adjectives or stative verbs. Adjectives usually precede the noun they qualify;

īmú khòpò  
 man angry

mācī cīnī  
 water big  
 big river

āsīmbó kālō  
 tree tall  
 tall tree

Where more than one adjective is required, these are usually joined by a connective such as òdōnē 'also';

āsīmbó kālō òdōnē shù  
 tree tall also red  
 a tall, red tree

Where a numeral is included in the qualification string, it is placed immediately after the head noun and different connectors are used for the other adjectives;

amaya ikū màngá ìcìkhè ā nē mà ndè pùmà  
those dog five small FOC also black like COP  
those five small black dogs

When a numeral classifier is also required it is inserted between the head noun and the numeral;

ājōprā ná shu ālhà màngá  
paper piece red CLF five  
five pieces of red paper

The ná could be omitted without any change of the meaning

It is possible to have adjectives in sequence without a connecting particle but does not sound very natural;

āsīmbó shù kālō  
tree red tall

But the following sounds natural;

ikū mà ìcìkhè  
dog black small  
a small black dog

Idu has a variety of multi-lexeme adjectival phrases, which appear in a similar slot to single-word adjectives;

*à sú jàkàmi* ‘restless’

īmú bú à sú jàkàmi mbrā puma  
man that restless really COP  
the man is really restless

*dī hùhù* imposing

īmú āyā mo dī hùhù āthú.yiga puma  
man this imposing look.PCONT COP  
that man looks very imposing

Adjectives also occur in the *īgū* vocabulary.

mìpī ārhù erudite person

mìpī ārhù ìgù.mrābā ma táshà.yī  
erudite person shaman.area of expertise in be knowledgeable  
an erudite person will be knowledgeable in the igu’s areas of expertise [in Yā]

## 5. Language registers

### 5.1 Overview

Despite its small size, the Idu have a remarkably complex system of language registers that operate outside the realm of everyday speech (*àngá'lıyā*). These can be divided into two major subtypes, those which operate through lexical substitution and those which draw on a repertoire of fixed expressions, phrases and utterances. These latter are often delivered in a particular tone of voice, with a specific rhythm. The most common expressions are known to everyone, but often people find it difficult to interpret the vocabulary used, as it may be archaic, borrowed from another register or compressed in respect of the everyday lexicon. In addition, tones may be altered to create patterns, which given the large number of homophones in Idu, it can often be difficult to assign the correct meaning.

Table 141 shows the principal recognised registers in Idu which are opposed to everyday speech (*àngá'lıyā*).

**Table 141. Idu language registers**

Category	Idu name	Comment
<b>Lexical substitution</b>		
Hunters' language		Only known to hunters
<i>igu</i> (shaman) language		Known to <i>igu</i> , but many people know commoner expressions
Babytalk language		Known to all adults
<b>Formalised utterances</b>		
Angry register	<i>àshúbà</i>	Known to most adults
Mediators' register	<i>àhālā, abāla</i>	Known to mediators
Cursing and scolding register	<i>ìpwā [=ìpū]</i>	Known to most adults
Humorous register	<i>álánū</i> <i>àshrhèè</i>	Known to most adults
Mourning register	<i>ànjà</i>	Known to <i>igu</i> who perform the ritual

### 5.2 Hunters' language

A feature of hunting among all three Mishmi groups is the use of a special register during hunting. Sun (1999) first drew attention to this among the Daruang [i.e. the Tawrā] but it is used in all three 'Mishmi' groups and also the neighbouring Meyor in the Walong area. The underlying idea is that animals will be warned by the use of everyday speech (*àngá'lıyā*) and so circumlocutions are used. Hunters use specialised circumlocutions to refer to animals while on the hunt, which draw on the same lexical reservoir as the language of shamans. Among the Tawrā and Kman, the terms for many everyday lexical items are replaced by special forms. This seems to be less common among the Idu, where the names of animals are the main substitutions. The following names have been recorded (Table 142);

**Table 142. Animal names in hunters' register**

English	Idu	Comment
marble cat	<i>ācāngú</i>	<i>ŋu apwə</i> (also applied to <i>ākōkó</i> )
bear, generic	<i>āhū</i>	<i>àmbrè njòótò</i> wild huge and awkward (walks from side to side). Plains term <i>damba hū</i> (Hill term)
yellow-throated marten	<i>ākōkó</i>	<i>ŋu apwə</i> (also applied to <i>ācāngú</i> )
takin, Mishmi	<i>ākūrū</i>	<i>àmbrè kàcì</i> animal + big
deer, Alpine musk	<i>àlà</i>	<i>àmbéshù</i> 'small animal'
monkey, generic but usually macaque	<i>āmē</i>	<i>tambre</i> i.e. 'meat'
red goral	<i>āmí</i>	<i>àjùshù</i> deep and high gorge small (Plains)

tiger	āmṛā	<i>tambre mra aci, aju tambre</i> (Hills) <i>àngócì</i> ‘from the highlands’ <i>àngó</i> montane region. (Plains)
wild pig	āmṵé	<i>aṅgo kūyi</i> (Hill) <i>enàmbòn òì</i> nose + sharp (Plains) <i>asopra</i> (Hills)
serow	māàṵy	<i>àmàdrò</i> + split in two (because it has a divided hoof).
deer, generic but refers usually to the barking deer	mānjō	<i>àphù áci</i> from the field (deer come and eat crops in the night) (Plains) <i>manjo pi ami mweya</i> (Hills)

### 5.3 Shamanic register

As among many populations in this region, the chanting of shamans, *īgù*, is essential to individual, house and clan welfare and accompanies major celebrations such as Rē. The language of the chants is problematic to interpret, though not in principle secret. Many of the well-known lexical substitutions are widely known and are sometimes used in everyday conversation (*àngá’līyā*). Table 143 shows the existing shamanic lexicon which has been recorded to date. The first column has the English gloss, arranged by approximate semantic fields, the second shows everyday Idu lexicon, and the Igu column the terms used in shamanic recitation. Most of these are not etymologically transparent, but where the meaning is known, this is given. Some lexical items, such as ‘dog’ have attracted a variety of terms.

**Table 143. Idu shamanic register compared with everyday language**

English	Idu	Igu
agriculture	pākū	khànjé ēndō
bad	èlè	āpūmīrù
child	ā	īdūmīrī
daughter	aya	īdūmīlī
son	ameya	īdūmētā
dead body	īthū	īpēthūtá
deer	mānjō	àthí ījīdō
dog	ikū	àbrí ànà, àbí tòmbo, kùbū mēyī
earth	īlīkhè	ètō yí dèbàlà ‘deep inside the earth’
edible beetle found under stones in the river in winter	pāhū	Mētā lōpù phrì àgrā ‘clan name’ + ‘origin’ + ‘burn’ + ‘consequence’.
father	nàbā	jìnù mētā
female	yākū	ànù mīlī
fire	āmṛhù	lōhù
food	āthā	thāyī
drink	ecō	àlōlī èṛò
good	prá	àpū kàyù, kīyū kèsà
home	ó	gòlò àwā
male	mēyá	ambi mele
mithun	sā	èmbro mítù, lātā mèlò
monkey	àmē	mālō, àyicī
moon	ēlā	īmūshidú [waning moon]
mother	nànyī	ānī zìnù
night	yāmá	àndó bùmàyì
old	mīcìprá	pòlò àtōndō, lòmè ānīnà
person	īmú	mìpī
pig	ìlì	àshālì āmāyā
pig for Rē	ìlì	dōndō prūchù, āmā prōkà
rat	āsàngó	ìpità àtsòtsí, ēlōyā àmālì
road	ālò chì	lānī lākā

English	Idu	Igu
shaman	īgū	āshū mīpí, àmrà pènē
shaman	igu	mīpí pènē
sky	īmūdù	mūdù àti, mūdù lihrù
soul	maṛa	āthūthró àmērū
ghost	mègrā	āthūthró
star	āndīkrū.	kāndī àkrú
sun	īnyī	àdè àgè
today	ētānyì	ādēlō yà ētānyì
tomorrow	ānāyà	ādēyà ānāyà
village	āṭkō	āmūnó kōlāā
water	màcì	ìrù cìnì
wind	āmwēyà	ārūyā
yesterday	būnyī	ādē būnyì
part of wall near the entrance of house	?	àsū
erudite	?	mìpī ārù
snow	pó	àgù
Idu	Idu	Kēbā Kērā.ā
Tibetan	Pūū	Pūū āyāpō, àyùsì àdzì āpō yā àdzà
Tawra	Tàṛā	īmíyà yúndilī ēsáyā pōthàyā
non-tribal	Mēchā	īmí ēsā
Padam	Mòshā	īmíyà thōkrèpō èsāyà lākēwē

Note that there are very few verbs included, that almost all words are commonly used nouns. A number of items, such as *lānī lākā* ‘road’ follow the common Idu pattern of paired collocations.

#### 5.4 Angry register *àshúbà*

Idu has an angry register, *àshúbà*, which can be used byelders in everyday interactions but is also used in more formal contexts, for example during negotiations over penalties for adjudged crimes. The set phrase are very allusive, and often require those with specialised knowledge to fully interpret the meanings. The set of scolding phrases () partly overlaps with the angry register.

Examples of the language of *àshúbà* include;

ipi        me    mra    heta    pila            himi,  
 bird sp. AG   field   owner   stab and kill   NEG  
 the munia bird cannot stab and kill the owner of the field

The sense is ‘a thief cannot overwhelm the owner of the property’.

mi        ya    kha.yiga    me    mi        ici        iku.la        himi  
 others   wife   lie.PRES   AG   others   husband   beat.PERF   NEG  
 someone who sleeps with other people’s wives cannot beat the husband

In Idu norms it is said that a thief cannot kill the owner and a wife stealer cannot face the husband.

endo.me                    grū                    manjo.me            hro  
 poor man.AG                grumble                deer.AG                bark  
 a poor man grumbles and a deer barks [but they have no significance]

Some worthless men complain but it is like a deer barking, of no significance



rhú.me cō.to lā.me lō.mbò  
 horn.AG hit.block tusk.AG go in tunnel.be tight  
 the horn blocks and the tusk is tight in the tunnel

Used to scold a friend who is not visiting you. The idea is that horns and tusks stop them entering your house.

### 5.5 Mediators' register *àhālā* and *àbālā*

Mediation speech is largely spoken in predetermined phrases, most of which are paired speech of a type known across the Southeast Asian region and the Austronesian parts of Oceania. The two halves of the strophe either rhyme or are balanced in rhythm. The meaning of the paired expressions is known to the mediators, although even a professional mediator may have to work through each line carefully to transcribe it correctly. It is often said by Idu that the texts contain lexicon from shamanic speech but this appears to be false; the expressions seem to be specific to mediation speech. The expressions are opaque to non-mediators in many cases, or they actually misunderstand them. Nonetheless, most of the vocabulary is simply archaic and compressed; many normal words and compound verbs are shortened. Not all mediators draw on exactly the same pool of strophes; but the majority are known to all. *Abəla* mediators are the most learned in these formulae, in part because they deal with the widest range of cases<sup>4</sup>.

The expressions are tailored to a range of specific mediation situations, whether to do with marriage-broking, marital disputes, or more serious cases, such as mithun-killing and murder. They are interlarded with more practical speech. Even so, mediators are expected to articulate in heightened speech, playing around with tone and lengthening vowels.

A feature of the mediation register which testifies to its archaic nature is the use of the expression *Kērā.ā* to refer to the Idu. This name, which seems to mean 'the children of Kera' has been completely replaced in modern discourse by Idu or the hybrid Idu Mishmi. The whole process of mediation is thus referred to as *Kērā.ā àbēlā*. The phrase which summarises the process also encapsulates Idu identity.

Ini Kèrà.à thōsū.là lhà lhà.là  
 We Idu crop hair.PST wear loincloth

Until recent times, almost all Idu cut their hair in a distinctive straight cut similar to those in Bhutan but quite different from their neighbours, hence this statement of identity. The loincloth (a long cloth which hung in front of the wearer) was also worn by some neighbouring groups, but not by the Tani peoples).

The formulae below represent an extremely compressed version of Idu, with words shortened and some basic grammatical particles omitted. The aspect of that makes it most difficult to transcribe for speakers of everyday Idu is the tonal changes. Idu citation tones are usually quite stable in speech, but in *ashuba* they are transformed to make rhythmic and tonal patterns. This makes it difficult to know what word is intended where it may have numerous segmental homophones.

The transcriptions below therefore represent the tones as sounded, not as in transcription forms.

The **Abəlaya** begins the mediation with the pronouncement;

Kera.a aci mbrò.ga inyi yō.ga māmā  
 Idu water flow.PRES sun shine zone

The water flows and the sun shines in the Idu area [moral universe]

### To assist

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<sup>4</sup> The authors would particularly like to acknowledge the assistance of Yona Mele in this section, both for proving the examples and for assisting with the interpretation of obscure lexicon.

hā.ndró      hī.cī  
eat.support    have.get

Sense I have supported you when you organised celebrations [such as Rē festival]

thō.ndró      bà.cī  
speak.support    speak in low voice.get

thō is the usual form so it is raised here.

I have supported you verbally on every occasion

àgú              àpī      àdá              yò  
trough for beer    repay    loan at time of Rē    buy

yō is normally mid

Sense: The person has returned at Rē to repay their debts

īkū              há      àwù      hã  
head [=heart]    give    mind    give

the tone on the second hã is lowered to mid

Give your heart and mind

To show **fear**:

njótá    àmù,    ápòbrá    cò  
body    shake    heart    beat

the body is trembling, the heart is thudding

To **insult**

īkū    ābí,    àwù    àbī  
head    sell    mind    sell

You are selling your heart and mind

To **threaten**

bú[dū]    khō,      àdū                      khō  
relatives    be angry    junior maternal relatives    be angry

If you don't do this, these people will be angry

ārhu              dùù,              āmrō              dùù  
group              revenge              assistants              revenge  
the group [will] take revenge, the assistants [will] take revenge

nānyī      dùù,      nàbā      dùù  
mother      revenge      father      revenge  
mother take revenge, father brother will take revenge

### New block

thō      b̄,      bà      lī  
speak      defend      murmur      get out  
[I am] speaking in your defence, I am murmuring to let you get out

thōká,      bārī  
cage      wall of bamboo strips  
cage with a wall of bamboo strips

You should be put in prison

khrūtāmbò      ārhū      cèmbṛā  
stocks      cane      rope  
khrù      v.      to step  
stocks cane rope

You'll be shackled

br̄b̄,      cã.hè  
marriage.defend      bail out (captivity).leave  
I have defended you by marrying you off, so now you are bailed and can get out of captivity

àsà      mē      cí.m.bà      àmrā      mē      grám.bà  
chicken      DET      squawk.PST      pig      DET      grunt.PST  
chickens squawked and pigs grunted

these are not the usual words for chicken and pig

igu words chicken is eto asa, pig is ili amra

When a victim is staying silent, despite being pressed to speak, this means 'chickens cry and pigs grunt, so why are you silent?

chì.lōtō,      grá.lōtō  
result of walking      result of shouting  
what comes from walking and shouting

chì.lōtō is here shortened from *chīkōlòtò* result of walking

Don't do unnecessary things, don't take risks and draw attention to yourself

to indicate **insult**:

khā ngā                      ānòcò  
shit stuck on your face    swipe hand across face  
s.o.is humiliated because of the swiping action

pú.là              àbri.lā  
punch.PST    slap.PST  
punched and slapped

pū is usual tone

### To express sadness

íbrí    rò.gā              khòprī.gā  
tear    fall.PRES    frown.PRES  
tear falls (from eye), frowns

tó              ábī    pā              àrhà  
claim    sell    barren    abandon  
claim and sell, abandon s.t. barren

This appears to refer to wives, which can be abandoned if they are barren

i.e. everything perishes (so I alone)

tígè              tsígè,              hrùgè              lógè  
heat bear              be rotten bear              burn bear              heat bear  
bear the heat, bear the rottenness, bear the burning, bear the heat

This is used when s.o. has been insulting you regularly. You do s.t. to s.o. else in the name of the culprit, so the victim accuses the insulter.

This is said when s.o. has committed s.t. like adultery or other social crime. The sense is you will now bear the heat of social opprobrium. The warning only applied to poor people who cannot pay their fines.

To remind s.o. of a **penalty**:

yōgrōrhó              āmē    pò  
loan to pay fine    wealth    pay penalty

To remind people that when you damage others' property you are bound to pay a penalty

additional penalties on top of fine              wealth    fine

To interpret and clarify **relations**:

nānyī    èmē    nàbā    ēmbò  
mother    brother    father    relatives on mother's side

Don't you know your own relations?

àdú.á                      èmō.ā  
junior relative.child    brother-in-law.child

Don't you know your own relations?

bū[du].ā              àdù.à  
relative.child    junior relative.child

àthī    icī              yá    èmè  
sister   husband   wife   brother

āpā                      yī                      búdù  
elder brother    younger brother    relatives

Apā stands for apiya yi is li in Upper dialect

ā                      àgrā                      yá    àgrā  
children    consequence of wrongdoing    wife    consequence of wrongdoing

[You are being punished] for the misdeeds of your wife and children

In disputes of **property**:

ibè                      hāndò              hīmi    ìphrū              tōndò              hīmi  
food served    finish eating    not    jug of beer    finish drinking    not

You have so much that you cannot consume everything

èdì    pō              àū              àcī  
jewel    bundle    money    bag  
jewels in bundles, money in the bag

If you don't have gold and cash you cannot conduct Rē

àū is Upper for pàwū

idi is short for pwēdī

hà.gò                      hí.gò  
eat.with              have.with  
You have things to eat and own

āhēr hó                      ēmētā  
place where mithun is reared    money for Rē

[We must all watch over] our mithuns and our money

ībā              ngā              ìphrū              ngā  
food served    not have    jug of beer    not have

I have no food to serve and nothing to drink. This can only be said by a woman.

sā              àgù              ngā              ìli    ārhū    ngā  
mithun    pasture    not have    pig    sty    not have

I have no mithun in the pasture, no pig in the Rē enclosure

ètō              ākā              ngā              ìli ārhū    ngā  
chicken    enclosure    not have    pigsty    have not

As above

āndū              ngā              àkà              ngā  
middle tray    not have    granary    not have

Women store valuable foods in these two places.

I don't have a second tray over the fire, I don't have a granary

### Rich set

āpí    gò    ācī                      gò  
floss    with    bundle of cereals    with

Said about a woman, implying she is a good manager

bwā              gò    mbòyō              gò  
s.t.surplus    with    storage basket    with

Said about a woman. She has surplus, she has a basket

i.e. he is rich

pū                      gò    āyī                      gò  
chicken basket    with    chicken pen    with

pū is short for ètō ndùpū

i.e. they are is rich

àgú gò àrhó gò  
box with pig-trough with

āī ènō nga àpí cēlō nga  
shield power not have south side not have

?

In matters of **lying**:

īpì thò ācī bà  
munia bird speak rat whisper

scaly-breasted *Lonchura punctulata* considered to be a thief and s.o. referred to with this name is  
munia caricatured as a thief and liar

The rat cannot be understood, caricatured as speaking nonsense.

You talk like these, I can't trust what you are saying

àlhú thò èmē bà  
incest speak brother whisper

Accuses a woman of incest, sleeping with her brother, i.e. same meaning as before

ayu is Upper for alu

àlhú thò àthī bà  
incest personspeak sister whisper

Accuses a man of incest, sleeping with his sister, i.e. same meaning as before

àkù thò èkō bà  
steal speak gossip whisper

problems of **marriage**:

Ŋgòlò br̄ Àsā lò  
Ngolo marry spirit buy

The image is that the act of marriage took permission from the spirits. When a marriage goes wrong, buy is a metaphor for marriage

people feel they have married into the problematic spirit world

yo = lo

àlò br̄ àmrá lò  
increase next generation marry increase children [?] buy

I marry you to expand clan membership and get more children

àthū br̄ tāyì lò  
source marry remaining life buy

You have been bought from your source [clan] and your remaining life is mine

épò lò yā br̄  
slave buy wife marry

[Be a man!] Buy a slave, marry a wife

ēpò àjū yā br̄  
slave advance payment wife marry

Be a man! Make a payment on a slave, marry a wife

ār̄hū [ē.]tē āmbō [ē.]tē  
mithun lasso do.PERF tie do.PERF

Tones radically altered

Lasso the mithun and tie it up

I have paid the brideprice can be used in other contexts for payment

### Explaining relationships

àthī [i]cī yā [e]mē  
sister husband wife brother

### Expounding relations

īlī íthrúnjú èmètā pō



pig chest payments made to mother's family at Rē pileup

ili ithruṅgu gift to relatives

This underlines the importance of maintaining relations with maternal side + embo side

ètō cē b̄ yū thù b̄  
chicken cut protect beer prepare protect

The chicken is sacrificed, the beer is prepared

This summarises the first entry of the bride and company to the marital home

àcì sò b̄ āmrū kō b̄  
water scoop protect fire light fire protect

scoop implies moving earth to keep water off fires are lit to keep away wild animals

àcì for màcì āmrū for āmrūhū

i.e. the husband's group has protected the wife's group

jí [ā]cō yā [ā]cō  
dependents destiny wife destiny

What will happen to your slave and wife is destiny

mī ãyā prūcù mī àthī prūcù  
other daughter fully grown mithun or pig other sister fully grown mithun or pig

You should not humiliate the daughters and sisters of others, they are valuable

Mediation, especially in the area of marriage, is an essential part of maintaining a harmonious social structure. Both when a marriage is contemplated, when it breaks down and for other inter-clan disputes, the role of the mediator is essential.

àrhù àmbō sò (i)bì [ān]dròndrō ānè ãthò  
mithun rope tie to shovel give baskets cash  
the mithun has been tied up, the meat has been shovelled into baskets, we have [distributed] cash

All the usual stages of the marriage have been performed [why are you arguing]?

mēyá lā híàgò jí.gò yá.gò yàkū lā híàgò a.gò ícì.[a].gò  
 man say if slaves.with wife.with wife say if child.with husband.with  
 a man should have a wife and slaves, a wife should have a husband and children

[a] ghost sounds introduced for symmetry

jí slaves is normally low tone jí but here is raised to high for assonance

āyā.me āthí.me ícì.chī èbā ālā.we só bà  
 daughter.AG sister.AG husband.walk surname search.FUT time until  
 daughters and sisters should get married in time

ícì.chī husband.walk idiom for to get married

èbā ālā surname search idiom for to get married

Note changed tone on ícì.chī

āyā āthí īnyīyā jī.hími āsīmbrū.āsītá libà.go  
 daughter sister our control.NEG be fully grown.be fully grown pass.COND  
 when our daughters and sisters are fully grown we cannot control them

jī has been lowered from jí

mi ēhòndò.me brí.dú la.ga dó àhē.weya  
 others very rich.AG marry.ask say.PRES there send.FUT  
 when other rich people ask to marry them you should assent

### 5.6 Cursing and scolding register *ìpwā* [=ìpū]

This is a particular set of formulae used in cursing people. This can be done by any knowledgeable person and it is greatly feared. It is also used by hunters after they have killed a *misu* animal. They curse the spirit hoping to avoid vengeance. Some examples of the proverb-like formulae used in cursing are given below.

In the following curse, *Ŋgolo* is the guardian deity of the snowbound regions up towards Tibet, while *Asa* is a mischievous and aggressive spirit which lives in the trees and is known to steal children and sometimes eat them.

Ŋgōlō mē ēlōbrā lūlà.là Àsá mē ápròbrā phrǎlà.là  
 spirit DET eyes pluck out.PST spirit DET heart pull out.PST  
 Ŋgolo has plucked out your eyes, Asa has pulled out your heart

The basic sense is ‘are you blind?’.

*Inisha Mra* is a valley full of paddy fields both in this world and the underworld where evil spirits are said to congregate, located in the area between India and China. The sense of the following is that someone is always looking towards the land of the dead, i.e. ‘may you be murdered’.

Īnīshā Mrá àlhī.là  
 Inisha Mra turn eyes towards.PST  
 your eyes have turned towards I.M.

The following phrases are used to scold children. To outsiders they seem rather harsh and conjure up somewhat gruesome images, but these are considered mild and even humorous. All embed a significant amount of cultural knowledge.

The cultural background to this is complex. If you are bitten by a snake or kill a tiger by accident, then you are compelled to undergo ten months prohibition (*tabusu* and *amrasu*). However, if you can conceal this, then you stay in your house for five days and nights. So the following maledictions hope that your transgression is made public.

tàbū mē tāyiyā pí.là  
 snake DET fatally bite.JUS  
 may a snake bite you fatally

ámrá mē hācè ngà.là  
 tiger DET gulp spit out.JUS  
 may a tiger gulp you and spit you out

Athryu is a spirit which kills infants immediately after birth. This is considered a serious transgression and in principle the couple should undergo a ten months' prohibition in order to cleanse themselves. This is a serious burden, and it is common for couples to conceal this. The corpse of the infant is put in a special basket and hung from a tree in a remote part of the forest. A woman who loses a child will perform *àyèbà* to prevent further mishaps. The following curse threatens the child with a similar fate.

Àthryù ā sū.ane è jia?  
 childbirth spirit LOC put in.EVD do QM  
 have you been put in the basket for child corpses?

The implied meaning is 'Are you so dead as to be so careless?'

emo andro me tī.là  
 epilepsy basket DET put lid on.x  
 may the basket of epilepsy be put over you

tì is normally low

epilepsy is conceived to live in a basket

emo andro.a àlù.là  
 epilepsy basket.LOC put in.  
 may you be put in the epilepsy basket

This curse refers to the same spirit, albeit in shortened form. The image is rather obscure, but the sense is that the child who is careless, has been captured by the Athru spirit and stuck in the gap between its teeth.

Àthru mē tāgā sù.là  
 Athru DET tooth gap hang.PST  
 you are stuck in the tooth gap of the Athru spirit?

The implied meaning is 'Are you so useless that stuck in the teeth gap of the spirit?'

### 5.7 Humorous register *álánū àshrhèè*

Idu has a humorous register, *álánū àshrhèè*, consisting mostly of one-liners, which can be considered as jokes. Many of these have a strong misogynistic flavour. Some examples of jokes are;

Mītācō      prā krāyā      cī      āyītò      yá      ànà  
clan name    crow      with    host of igu performance    group    clan  
The Mītaco clan uses a crow for its ceremonies

It is normal to use the chicken for these ceremonies but one time the M. clan used a crow and this event is recalled humorously. Similarly;

Mīhū      āndīkhi      àkā      cé  
clan name    mucus      granary    bind  
The Mihū clan binds its granaries with mucus

and;

Mēle      tàyè      pò  
clan name    make unfit to use    act of  
The Mele clan makes things unfit to use

A Mele man used to eat and savour a particular species of mushroom in the forest. In order to prevent other people from eating it, he used to defecate on the place where it grew. Hence the joke that Mele people...

Some of the misogynistic sayings include;

èbānē      līngī      dē.tā      dē  
name    clan name    purity.occupied    purity  
E.L. spends her whole time protesting her purity

E.L. was a promiscuous woman but always protest her innocence. One day she was caught *in flagrante* by an *igu* and denounced. Used to insult individuals by implying their purity is not what they suggest.

There are also warnings about female behaviour;

ékóbē      ĩmbù      ágò      yágò      lāprā.mì  
words    confidential    with children    with wives    not good to say  
Don't share confidences with wives and children

and;

yākú      mē      ijīsī      àrù      r̄yì  
wife    can    murder by weapons    to instigate    cackling of cock  
A wife can cause a murder just by her voice

or;

ètópì      rhū      àsū      yākú      grá      àsū      mē      èlèyāndò  
hen    cry like cock    because of    wife    shout    because of    DET    worst  
The shouting of a wife and the hen that cries like a cock are worst of all

### 5.8 Mourning register *ànjà*

Rituals following death in Idu consist of three styles of ceremony, *Ànjà*, *Brōcā* and *Yà*. Each of these is attributed to a named *igu*. *Ànjà* is considered as the most archaic of these and was displaced by *Brōcā* and then later *Yà*, which is the most elaborate. Dele (2018) has described the *Yà* in some detail, although without quoting the original Idu text. Practised even today, this act of ancestral narration through weeping is sadly, a dying art.

The *ànjà.ì gā* or narrator guides the soul (*àhūthró*) through the after-death route. The Igu follow the same route but the *ànjà.ì gā* covers it in a very short manner.

### 5.9 Babytalk register

Probably all languages have a few distinctive lexical items used when parents are speaking to children. English, for example, has ‘choo-choo’ for train, and ‘moo-cow’ for cow. However, this register seems to be very developed in Idu and a wide range of terms can be replaced. Those recorded to date are shown in Table 144 together with their usual Idu equivalents.

**Table 144. Idu babytalk register**

Babytalk	English	Idu
bàbā	father	nàbā
bàbāliyà	uncle (FYBr)	nàbāliyà
bàbāpiyà	uncle (FSBr)	nàbāpiyà
bòmbō	bone	ròmbō
brābā hà	suck breast	nyōbrā dò
bùbù	drink	tò
būgì	to carry on back	bā gè
cīī khà	sleep quietly	pīī hì
cīī jī	sit quietly	pīījī
è.ē	toilet	khò.ḡ
échō	girls’ vagina	itū
èr.èr	dirty	tàṛì
hà.ī	fearful	ìbīsī, thōpōlò
hāhā.jì	laugh	ndàgē
hākì	speak, say	lā
jījì?	don’t do [it]	è.m.nā
kàkà	meat	tāmbrē
kòkō	chicken	ètō
māmā	food	hàtā
nānā	it will be painful	nā
nīnī	mother	nānī
ō.ò/nīnà	sleep	hī bācò
pá.è	throw [it]	làpā
pāpū, cāpū	boys’ penis	sāpū
pūdò/būdò/bùbī	fall down	dò
sì.../zìthè	to pee	thèprā
tādè	stand	dè
tátá	walk	chī
tātā	grandfather	nātā
tītī	hot	tī
wāw	uncle (MoBr)	nāw
yāyā	grandmother	nāyā
tsīīkhā	lie down quietly	pīīkhā

## 6. Oral literature and texts

### 6.1 Genres

To be completed

## 6.2 Proverbs

A sample of Idu proverbs are given in a pictorial book by Pulu (2002b). Unfortunately, the orthography used is not consistent with other publications and some of the longish sentences are clearly not proverbs.

ikū ru.ga eto atra.ga.do.a ahrū pra.mì  
 dog bark.PRES chicken cluck.PRES listen good.not  
 Don't pay attention to the barking of dogs and the clucking of chickens

ekobə imbu a.go ya.go la pra.mì  
 mouth secret murmur to child to wife tell good. not  
 It isn't good to tell secrets to your wife and child

### More examples

## 6.3 Narrations

The character of the Drō familiar spirits. Narrated by Mrs. Akrube Meme in January 2018 at Roing.

Igu gā àjò hā.yìgā,  
 Igu make awake give.FAC  
 Who gives the knowledge to the igu and makes them perform,

ēkóbàtá nōlò.yìgā,  
 mouth.edge to affect.FAC  
 makes them start chanting

eto iyu halō.yiga, igu apa halō tōlō.yiga mē ndrō  
 chicken blood wait.eat.one who igu food wait.eat drink.wait.one who DET familiar spirit  
 the spirit which waits to eat and drink the sacrifices

Igu gānē akupi akana hami,  
 igu after performing mushroom leafy vegetable eat.NEG  
 after performing, the igu should not eat mushrooms and leaf vegetables

āndrūgè ànànègā do hatōmi, āndrōhò anyu.mì,  
 menstruation clothes LOC eat.drink.NEG cloth wash.NEG  
 whenever menstruation is occurring, you should not eat, drink, wash or

{

yaku so jìmàngā khami  
 wife with five days sleep.NEG  
 sleep with your wife for five days

Drō mē nuya bə igu ga hāló tōlō.yi  
 spirit DET itself also igu from eat.wait drink.wait.PRES  
 the spirit which depends on the igu for food and drink

cibume igu mē álí èná mine  
 in spite of igu DET like that taboo not observing  
 if the igu does not observe taboos,

ha tō ga pragumi dà u.ga.  
eat drink PRES good.NEG AFF think.PRES  
will think it is bad

Mìngà ci drō nga.  
non-igu his spirit not be  
A non-igu does not have his drō

Igu ca'a ci hōnē drō iga.  
igu only his because spirit there  
only the igu has drō

## 7. Sociolinguistics

### 7.1 Is Idu an endangered language?

One of the first things any visitor to the Dibang valley hears is that Idu is ‘almost going extinct’. One reason for this is the high density of non-indigenous migrants from outside, who dominate life in a town such as Roing. The main outside groups are Nepali (due to resettlement of ex-service personnel in the colonial era), Bengali, Assamese and Hindu. The Idu traditionally lived in the montane areas, but many moved down to the plains, which were largely empty, following the 1950 earthquake and the growth of modern economic opportunities. For more than sixty years they have been living side-by-side with major ethnic groups, who dominate trade and all types of business. In addition, the schools use Hindi as a medium of instruction, such that children inevitably adapt to Hindi as a common lingua franca, as well as the language of television and internet. Parents often deplore their children’s poor Idu but make little effort to enforce its use in the home.

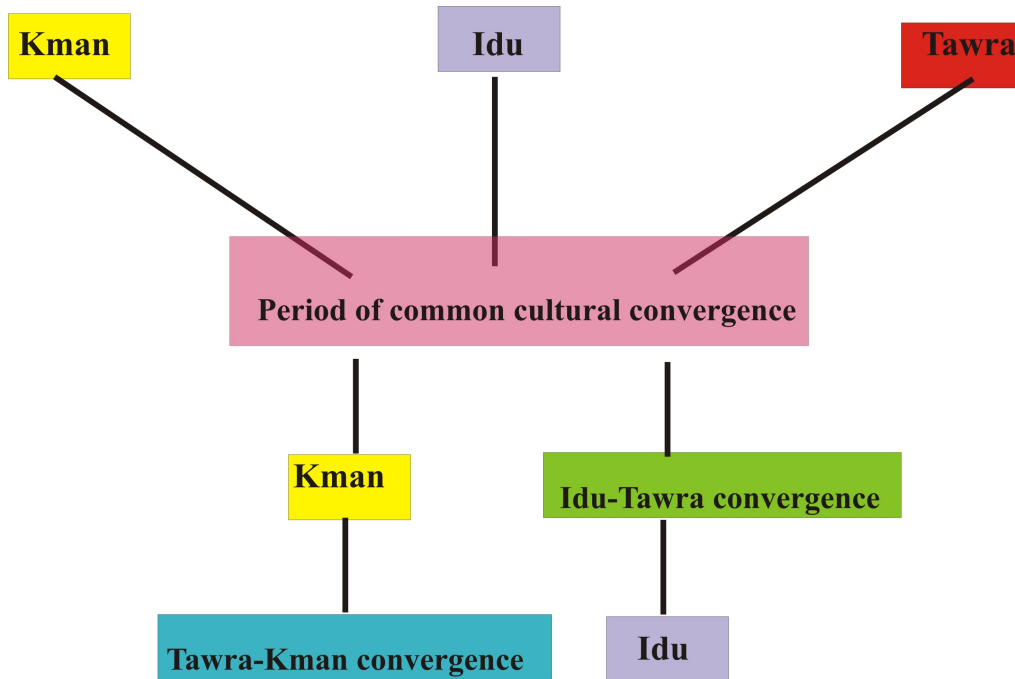
Although Idu can be heard spoken relatively fluently in any village, there has been a loss of all types of specialised lexicon, such that even members of the language development committee struggle to recall what should be common words. Idu language use is still quite vigorous in certain contexts, but is likely to degrade in terms of quality unless action is taken to reverse these trends. If speaker numbers are in the few thousands, then the Mishmi languages are threatened but not critically endangered, between 6 and 7 on the EGIDS scale. Adults in peri-urban areas are often heard bemoaning the ability of youth to speak the language properly, and indeed, Hindi and English (and even Nepali) can be heard in houses around the town. Nonetheless, children in rural areas seem to be fluent speakers. There is no good information about the status of Chinese and Tibetan among Mishmi speakers across the border.

### 7.2 Historical relations among the Mishmi

The Mishmi languages present a striking mismatch between local perceptions of cultural relationships and the linguistic facts, as far as they are known. Historically, all three languages are most likely of distinct origin, but living in a common environment, in close physical contact and in constant interchange has set in motion powerful processes of cultural levelling. There must have been a period when all three groups shared a common culture, in order to account for the basic similarities still observable.

At some point, Tawrā and Idu became intertwined, hence the intensive borrowing in restricted areas of the lexicon. Much more recently, the Tawrā/Idu bond was broken, and the construction of a relationship with the Kman people began. Figure 1 is a schematic model of the historical relationship between the three Mishmi languages. No dates are attached and it is far from explaining the motivation for their unusual interchanges. Nonetheless, it represents of model for guiding future research into this striking nexus.

Figure 1. Convergence model of Mishmi languages



The puzzle of why there has been so little lexical interchange between the three groups and why, when it occurs, it is so selective, remains to be solved. It is suggested that in global terms this situation is highly unusual and challenges many common generalisations in sociolinguistics.

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Ejengo cīmē disì.ga goso.gáhībà  
Ejengo people Deputy Commissioner complain.PRES  
Ejengo's people complained to the DC

hōmwārk āngrōyà thrā.ā ji.mì khà.gayi  
homework more write.x sit.NEG lie.PRES  
Most of the homework is lying unwritten