

A grammar of Idu, a language of Arunachal Pradesh

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Mite Lingi
Roing

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFF	Affirmative marker
EVD	Evidential
HAB	Habitual
NEG	Negation marker
NUM	Number
PRS	Present
RPST	Recent past
CPST	Completed past
PCONT	Past continuous

Parts of Speech assigned in the dictionary

Like all languages, Idu words can be classified according to the function they have in the sentence. These are known as ‘parts of speech’ - the most well-known types are nouns and verbs. The following table gives the abbreviations used in the dictionary with short explanations;

Abbreviation	Full form	Explanation
a.	Adjective	Qualifies a noun
a.i.	Adjectival intensifier	A word which intensifies the degree of an adjective
a.p.	Adjectival phrase	Phrase used to qualify a noun
adv.	Adverb	Qualifies a verb
c.a.	Comparative adjective	Form of an adjective used to compare two items or states
c.i.	Colour intensifier	A word which intensifies or qualifies the degree of colour
c.v.	Compound verb	A verb which consists of a main verb and a complement which creates an unpredictable meaning. Also called phrasal verb
cl.	Classifier	Type of adjective which qualifies a noun and is obligatory when the noun is being counted. Only applied to certain classes of nouns
coll.	Collective	Noun which describes a cluster or group of specific nouns where they are not counted
c.m.	Conditional marker	Expresses the relation between two events
conj.	Conjunction	A word used to join two or more nouns, verbs or clauses
dem.	Demonstrative	Words used to point out something. ‘this’, ‘that’ etc.
det.	Determiner	Word that specify the definiteness of a noun, ‘a’ ‘the’ etc.
dir.	Directional	Describes the direction of something, a subtype of locative
e.v.	Extended verb	A verb root with one or more of the many extensions, modifying the meaning of the verb
evd.	Evidential	Particle which expresses the knowledge or attitude to the truth of a statement, by the speaker
excl.	Exclamation	Greetings or expressions that do not form part of an ordinary sentence
id.	Ideophone	Word which expresses a state, noise or other quality in an iconic fashion, such as reduplication
int.	Interrogative	Question word
loc.	Locative	Describes the position of things in time or space (formerly preposition)
n.	Noun	Refers to things, objects etc.
n.p.	Noun phrase	A phrase where a head-noun is joined to other words to form an expression
n.s.	Nominal suffix	One or several morphemes suffixed to a noun to modify its meaning
num.	Numeral	Number
part.	Particle	Short words added to complete a clause or sentence
quant.	Quantifier	Word that describes the quantity of something
p.n.	Proper Name	A name of a person or object; always capitalised
p.p.	Pronominal phrase	A phrase used in a pronoun slot
pref.	Prefix	Morphemes added before any part of speech, modifying their meaning
pron.	Pronoun	A word that stands for a noun
quant.	Quantifier	A word that expresses the amount of something
suff.	Suffix	Morphemes added after any part of speech, modifying their meaning
s.v.	Stative verb	Verb which acts like and adjective, qualifying some aspect of a noun
v.	Verb	Expresses action
v.a.	Verbal auxiliary	Modifies a verb with respect to tense or state
v.i.	Intransitive Verb	A verb with no object

Abbreviation	Full form	Explanation
v.n.	Verbal Noun	A noun formed directly from a verb to express a state of being
v.p.	Verb phrase	A phrase where a head-noun is joined to other words to form an expression
v.s.	Verb suffix	Morphemes added after a verb to modify the tense or semantics
v.t.	Transitive verb	A verb with an object
voc.	Vocative	Expression used in addressing someone directly

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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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

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.

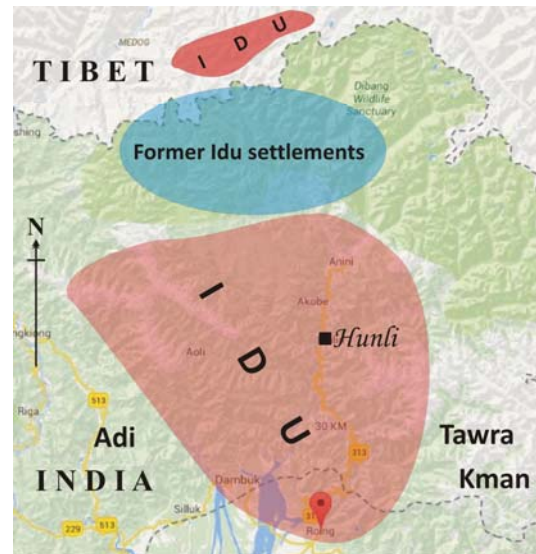
The earliest reference to the Idu language is in Brown (1837) and language data can be found in Campbell (1874) and Konow (1902). The only significant publications on Idu from the Indian side are the pre-linguistic Pulu (1978, 2002a,b). The main value of Pulu (2002a) is as an elicitation guide, although 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
Red oval 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 religions¹, 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

¹ 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 amplification, political rhetoric and performances by popular singers, as well as the near interminable awarding of certificates for minuscule ahievements, 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 1. First Rē festival, 1967



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

Source: As indicated

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

Gloss	Midu	Mithu
brush-tailed porcupine	āló	kāló
banana	àjì brū	màjì brù
When?	kājīhō	káisō
high	ìrù	hìrù
no!	ngā	ṅáwà
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 C₁ 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, six 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

Date	Location
17-26/2/15	Roing
1-15/12/15	Roing
7/1 to 1/2/17	Roing
4/1/18 to 2/2/18	Roing
1/10/18 to 18/10/18	Roing
17/7/19 to 4/8/19	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 Mishmi Cultural and Literature Society (IMCLS).

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	ālō	alyim	b.lòṅ
stone	ālāphrá	phlā	phlāṅ (lower grindstone)
bedbug	àbā	àbà	mākłap
ginger	àṅjítà	àdzìṅ	dóʔìṅ
granary	àkā	aka	kātəm
name	āmū	amaṅ	əmòṅ

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 4 shows a comparison of lower numerals in the three Mishmi languages.

Table 4. Mishmi lower numerals

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
One	khàgè	khin	kēmū
Two	kà.nyì	kayìṅ	kēnìn, kēyìn
Three	kà.sō	kasay	kēsəm
Four	kà.pri	kaprayk	kāmbrān
Five	màngá	maṅa	kālèn
Six	tāhrō	tahro	kātām
Seven	íù	wē	nān
Eight	ìú	lim	grān
Nine	khriṅ	kijay	nētəm
Ten	hūū	hálay	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, tī	ma	kāʔyùm
red	shù	sʰiʔ	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 Tawrā.

Table 6. Idu and Tawrā body parts

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
back	ìpindò	phlíŋ	glāwk
body	jóntà	kyàŋ	shəy
breast	nōbrā	ŋèè	cīn
eye	ēlōbrā	blm	mīk
hand	ākhó	hàprò	rāwk
leg	āŋgēsà	gròn	plā
lip	īnūbrū	thánù	chūw dàl
mouth	ēkóbə̀	phùùkè̀	chūw
nail	āhū̀kò	áphliŋ	zū̀k
neck	sēmbrá	pà hŋ	hū̀ŋ
nose	ēnāmbó	à̀nàdùn	mī̀nyùŋ
palm	lāpū	à̀tyòpà	rāwk tə̀pà
skin	kòprà	pô	ū̀ŋ
thigh	hàpū	sàhà	kə̀tsāwk
toe	ātāmbó	gròn bràn	plā bàn
tongue	īliná	hèlèŋnà	blāy
tooth	tāmbrō	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 Tawrā 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	Retro- flex	Palato- alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p, p ^h b	t, t ^h d				k, k ^h g	{ʔ}
Fricative		s, s ^h [z]	{ʂ}	[ʃ]			h
Affricate		[ts] [dz]		tʃ, tʃ ^h [dʒ]			
Nasal	m	n			ɲ	ŋ	
Tap		r					
Lateral		l	ɭ				
Approximants	w		ʈ		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.jì, 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
ɽùcì	jaggery sugar

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

Table 9. Evidence for /l/ ~ /ɽ/ contrast

Idu	Gloss
lā	to say, speak, talk
ɽà	to wear (loincloth)
lè	to roll yarn with hands on the thigh
ɽè	to migrate
lí	earthquake
ɽí	tender, soft

lò white
 lò¹ ropeway, with single rope

The retroflex /ʂ/, 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 /ʂ/

Idu	Gloss	Comment
sí	to die	
sì	to bear fruit	
sī	seed	
ʂì	to slice	
ʂī	iron	< Tibetan

All words with /ʂ/ 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 phonemic glottal stop in Idu

Idu	Gloss	Comment
ābāʔ	to wait	
āʔatō	thread beam	
āʔòtà	calf of leg	
bāʔúbāʔú	spongy	
ētóʔū	fish sp.	
jóʔōō	looking like an owl	Also jōlōlō
ī’ci	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^hrũ
sound of hen, conventional ʔātā

There are two ideophones which have /d^h/;

d^hàà sound produced by striking a vertical bamboo wall
d^hìì sound produced by foot stamp

but these are strictly sound-symbolic and /d^h/ 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 /mm/, /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
ìttū	to come up	itū	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^h/, /d^h/, and /g^h/, which 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^h/, /t^h/, /k^h/, /tʃ^h/

/p^h/

/p^h/ 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^{hr}/

phrē	set fire to
īphrírù	type of creeper

2.1.3.3 Rhotacisation

The following consonants can be rhotacised

/p^r/, /p^{hr}/, /b^r/, /t^r/, /t^{hr}/, /d^r/, /k^r/, /k^{hr}/, /g^r/, /ʃ^r/, /h^r/

p^r

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

b^r

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

2.1.3.4 Labialisation

The following consonants can be labialised;

/p^w/, /p^{hw}/, /b^w/

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 [ó] [ɔ]
Open-Mid		ə, ɘ	
Open		a [ã] ʌ	

2.2.2 Length

All vowels in Idu show length contrast except /ə/, /ɘ/ 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

dā ²	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

īlī	soil	īlīi	sting
mì	yellow	mīi	appearing uniform from a distance
pī	to bite (snake)	pīi	quiet
brī	torn	brīimbó	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)	mūū	to go out (fire, light)
phù	cooking pot	phūū	to puff air out of mouth
ṛù	to snatch	ṛūū	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 ã ~ ã̃.

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.

ĩĩĩ n. third day of Rẽ

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 case.

àndũmbã dung beetle

ã

ãlõ to bring out s.t. hidden, reveal

cà 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/

àprã carpet

brãgá 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

brõbrõ describes s.o. walking very actively

cõõ shortage

tõõ to break (rainfall)

brõõ to shoot up straight

/ũ/

àkrũ bamboo stemborer

ãnjípũ cucumber

ãphũ to observe taboo after a killing

cũ 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 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	àṛè	to measure
àṛē	to weed	àṛè	to aim (gun etc.)
āṛē	to shuck a maize cob	māārdā	serow
māày	serow		

/ḛ/ is only attested in two words;

mèēr	enemy
mèèr	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.

/ḭ/

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

Mríí
Mrìì

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

Idu	Gloss
ā.à	to give birth to child
è.étà	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

Idu	Gloss
cè.ékhè	algae
ìlì	third day of Rē

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

Idu	Gloss
à.ò	sudden body pains
à.ú brēnā	herb sp.
àú āndīsi	ear-ring
ā.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 /ə̰/ 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 /ə̰/ appears to be in free variation with a /we/ sequence.

Examples of /ə̰/ and /ə̃/;

ēpē̃	to eat something in particles
ətākrū	latrine
gè̃	to carry on the back
hè̃	honey
khē̃	beeswax

Examples of /o̰/;

òr sound of pig

Examples of /u/;

ūr to jack up (car etc.)

ūrtè to pour

2.3 Tones

Idu has three level tones², 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 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;

² 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.

Table 21. Examples of tonal morphology in Idu

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āsē	to sing	àsè	song
mé	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

Idu	Gloss
bàgān	kitchen garden, flower garden
bàrsēnē	any open container
bòstā	bag
cìnī	chisel
còkhrē	chair
kàsī	sickle
khàr	manure
mùndūrā	guava
pòrī	to study
sàkī	tea-strainer
àrisī	glass
sìnī	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
òmòrità	papaya
pēmsámá	to hang around fruitlessly
sīṅkēnē	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
màrsā	potherb, cultivated and wild	<i>Acmella paniculata</i> . < Adi
màrsē	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 C₁ of the stem. In some cases this pathway can be demonstrated, as the more conservative Hill dialects, conserve C₁. For example *āmbā*, ‘jungle’, is *kāmbá* in Hill dialects. A rare structure, such as *èòná* ‘face’ (V(C)VCV) arises from deletion of C₁ 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	àbēlā	mediation
VVCV	ìlī	third day of Rē
V ² VCV	āʔòtà	calf of leg
VCVCVCV	āchāyīpà	creeper sp.
CV	bē	hole
CVV	bī	grass sp.
CVCV	bāmbū	golden jackal
CVVCV	bīmbó	tree sp.
CVCVCV	bèʔábò	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
àṛū	crowd, herd
n-do	things, inanimates

Thus;

man men
 ìmú ìmú àlòmbrò
 ìmú àṛū

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

sá àṛū→sáṛū 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;

tānjāmbō 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
àṛò	male bovids	màcū àṛó	bull
àlā	male (birds)	ètō àlā	cock
àpí	female animal, general	ili àpí	sow
èchē	female bird	ètō èché	hen
krú	female bovids	sà krú	mithun cow

3.1.5 Numeral classifiers

3.1.5.1 Classifier 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
ā à	cloth, paper, planks	flat rectangular objects
(-m)bò	trees, plants, main trunk of anything	trunk (trees, body)
brā	potatoes, beads, oranges, stones	small round things
brū	maize, bananas, small branch of a tree, usually cylindrical	cylindrical long objects
(-n)do	bamboo clusters, houses, hunted deer, pig carcasses	?
(-ŋ)gō	fish, rats	
(-ŋ)gò	fish, rats	
ná	specific leaves, some types of paper	flat things
ph(r)á	small packets (such as cigarettes)	small solid rectangular objects
pò	packets, <i>léképò</i> necklace	medium solid rectangular objects
pò	bundles (firewood, hay), playing cards	large solid rectangular objects
prā	leaves, paper, flat things	flat objects
pū	elephants, chickens, wild birds, cucumbers ³ , papayas, pumpkins	large and medium round and oval things
-tō ~ tō	single bamboo plant, reeds with cylindrical stem, sugar-cane	giant grasses

The bound classifiers –(n)do and –tō 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;

ā|à

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

ā|à flat rectangular objects

Applies to; cloth, paper

tāpūhù ā|à 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.

ādzōprā ná ālhà mǎngá
paper piece CLF five
five pieces of paper

prā 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 *ā|à* is applied.

(-m)bò trunk, main stem of s.t.

Applies to large standing plants;

āsīmbó kàpri
tree.CLF four
four trees

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 á|V-;

ālāphrá brā mǎngá
stone CLF five
five (round) stones

This can be seen other lexemes;

álo.ũũ sandstone
ãlõhrũ pebble

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

brũ cylindrical long objects

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

àmbó brũ gè
maize CLF one
one cob of maize

or;

àjì brũ gè
banana CLF one
one banana

(-n)do semantics unclear

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

aŋgə.do màngá
bamboo.CLF five
five bamboo plants

ó.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.

ngò gə ma ngō màngá
CLF one CLF five
bundle of five fish

(-ng)gō

àngā (ng)gō kajigə gəyi a?

how many fish have you brought?

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		

ànjipū	pū	gè
cucumber	CLF	one
one cucumber		

kà	goitre	n.
kàpū	goitre	n.

-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	tō	khriṅī
bamboo	CLF	nine
nine bamboo plants		

rùpòtò	tō	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
àndĩmbū	dung beetle	
āpĩmbú	mole, white-tailed	<i>Parascaptor leucura</i>
ārèmbù	snakehead	
bāmbū	golden jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
ícĩmbù	turtle	
ŋwōbū	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;

āŋētō	tō	khrìni
bamboo plant	CLF	nine

The classifier is thus repeated. Equally possible is;

āŋētō	dō	khrìni
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 ~ -tō̄

Gloss	Idu
bamboo I	āŋētō, māŋētō
bamboo I	bùlúkā
bamboo I	ārútó
bamboo II	ābrátó
bamboo III	hīcító
bamboo IV	brádūtò
bamboo V	ìlitō
bamboo VI	kālītō
bamboo VII	àpàtō
bamboo VIII	mānútó
bamboo VIII	àpító
bamboo IX	bāndātō
cane I	lákātō̄
cane II	ārùtò̄
cane III	èlāshòtò̄

cane IV	lākàmbòtò
cane V	ēṛātō
cane VI	lākāsù

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
-gə	indicates a measurement
-gəgə	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
-tātá	remains; leftovers
-wēyā	nominaliser, creating nouns from verb stems

-cū indicates sprouting bamboos and canes

?

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

This incorporates the measurement suffix, gə;

àmbó.gəgə amount of maize

èkā.gəgə amount of grain

-lò nominal suffix implying dimension or orientation

ābrālò widthwise

alelò lengthwise

apòlò downside

etolò vertically

pelò horizontally

-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 meat of any animal

sā.tà piece of mithun meat

tá partly

hàkātá n. part-eaten food

njòtá n. half-finished job

nga ó.koa njòtá khaga badayi! I have plenty of work left at home

njòkā a. half-finished

njòkātá n. half-finished job

-tātā

Table 32. The partly achieved suffix -tātā on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ha	to eat	hātātā	
ra	to decay, to rot	rātātā	

Other suffixes include the augmentative

-nyī extreme, very, great applied to qualifiers;

īgū.nyī great igu

āmō.nyī very strong

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

Idu	Gloss	Incorporated classifier
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	
àndimbùù	dung beetle	
àndùndũ	mason wasp	
ánjìpò	earthworm	
ánjìpròmbrà	earthworm	brā (round things)
an̄gre abra	wasp sp. large yellow	brā (round things)
àpòmò	caterpillar	
apòtò	woodworm	? tō cylindrical classifier
àpìnjò	cricket, small	
aṛṣ̄	honeycomb	
áṛòkà	large red ant, edible	
aṛundi	rhinoceros beetle	
ásùcì	large black stink-ant	
atapũ	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	
àwṛùlì	firefly	
awutṣ̄	termite	
àyàbrà	bee	brā (round things)
ayiṅgo	bee, large, striped	
ayobra	fly, large, bites cattle	brā (round things)
ayuṅgo	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

Idu	Gloss	Latin name
<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 ìì</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 ìṛū</i>	black drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>
<i>prā jàrímū</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>prā khōmà</i>	little cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>
<i>prā khrà khàṛìṛpṛū</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 krìì</i>	kingfisher, general term	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
<i>prā krō</i>	great cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
<i>prā kùhùtù</i>	Gould’s shortwing	<i>Heteroxenicus stellatus</i>
<i>prā lí</i>	bearded vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>
<i>prā líì</i>	Hodgson’s frogmouth	<i>Batrachostomus hodgsoni</i>
<i>prā lísupū</i>	golden-fronted leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>
<i>prā lū</i>	spangled drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentotus</i>
<i>prā lūàlā</i>	green-tailed sunbird	<i>Aethopyga nipalensis</i>
<i>prā lūàlā ētāmà</i>	black-throated sunbird	<i>Aethopyga saturata</i>
<i>prā màcì khīmìsù</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 ìmìsù hīṛùcì</i>	firetail myzornis	<i>Myzornis pyrrhoua</i>
<i>prā lùàlā ìmìsù</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 pūdù shù</i>	scarlet finch	<i>Haematozpize 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 suffixed. 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
páhǒ	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.

3.1.7 Verbal nouns/gerunds

Idu has a small set of nominalising suffixes, which transform verb roots into verbal nouns

-wēyā

hàwēyā edibles
hiwēyā possessions

lǒ
há to eat hǎlǒ tǒlǒ to eat + road + to drink + road means of earning a living
tǒ to drink

hǎlǒ tǒlǒ agumine hano agute ine
means of earning a living

where are you going instead of going for your work/daily bread?

jìlǒ kàlǒ to sit + road + to lie + road
way of behaving

jìlǒ kàlǒ

lāgācā **n.** what is being said Also *lāācā*. *sar lāgācā ahrulōji a.* listen to what the teacher is saying. *āyā mē lāgācā manji ambra ye* what he has said is definitely true

hāgācā what is being eaten
khāgācā something which is lying there
khrāgācā something which is making noise

3.1.8 Paired collocations with nominal sense

A salient element in 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 36 presents some of the common expressions;

Table 36. Idu paired collocations with nominal sense

Idu	Approximate gloss	Possible etymology
àtómū	reserved place for hunting	? + grazing area
àprāmū		
àtóryī àlōyī	metalworker	blacksmithing + making hole
àyòjī ngājī	drizzle that stops and starts	
bódá gādā	nook and cranny	
bràcí bràlí	drizzling rain	CFL round things -spreading repeat + ?
brāthā brālā	small amount of grain	CFL round things solid repeat small amount of liquid
jùí nǎí	person who knows, educated person	
kāsī kāmù	small things to do	
tāī rīì	person who is good at craft or weaving	one who weaves + one who pulverises
brāthā brālā	p.c. small remaining	crumbs <i>ngá brāthā brālā bu ngà jiyi ma</i> I don't have even small crumbs

3.2 Pronouns

3.2.1 Personal pronouns

The basic unmarked pronoun set is given in Table 37;

Table 37. Idu personal pronouns

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

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 mǎnā
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 *-cì* suffixed to the marked pronoun set (Table 38). Note tonal changes with respect to bare pronouns in the plural set. As in English, these can function both as pronouns and adjectives;

Table 38. Idu possessive pronouns

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

For example;

ēcā ātār̀hù āyācì ātēgē mbrā
 this hair-pin hers definitely very
 this hair-pin is definitely hers

However, possessive adjectives precede the noun the qualify;

nga nyūcì 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 39). However, the distinction between second and third person singular has undergone merger and is only disambiguated in the plural.

Table 39. 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.hībà
 himself cut.x.PERF

he has cut himself

Table 40 shows an extended set of possessive pronouns which broadly correspond to ‘own’, emphasising possession;

Table 40. Idu possessive pronouns ‘own’

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

3.2.4 Impersonal or indefinite pronouns

Table 37 shows the main indefinite pronouns used in Idu;

Table 41. Idu impersonal or indefinite pronouns

Idu	Gloss	Comment
āṅgrōyà	larger portion, share of s.t.	
ètágè	something	
ètágè.ā	somewhere	
ètakhē	everything	
ījī	something	
ījīgúmi	nothing	
ījímá	anywhere	
ījīngā	nothing	
īmú lāhīndō	anybody	
īmúgè	somebody	
īmúndō	anybody	
kēbā	everyone	
kēbā khē	everybody, everyone	
mī[cī]	others	
ngāmā	nothing, nowhere, none	used in answers

Examples are as follows;

āṅgrōyà larger portion, share of s.t.

āṅgrōyà

nyū 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

ètágè something

nyū ètágè mú.yi khà wu.ji
you something hide.PRS EVD think.PRS
it seems you are hiding something

ètágè.ā somewhere

nyū ètágè.ā gə khà wu.ji
you somewhere go EVD think.PRS
it seems you went somewhere

ètākhē everything

ètākhē ndo lā.ke
everything ? tell?
tell everything

ījī something, anything

nyū 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 ahrū.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 ìjīgúmì da ū.mì a
I.ACC nothing ? think.NEG EVD
don't undermine me [i.e. don't think I am nothing]

ìjīmá anywhere

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

ìjīngā nothing

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

ìmúndō anyone

ìmúndō mè là.là.wè
anyone can say.FUT
Anyone can say what they like

also;

ìmú làhīndò anybody

ìmú gè someone
ìmú àlòmbrò group of people
ìmú brāgè some people
ìmú àṣū hordes of people
ìmú hrūnzhī those people

ìmū àlòmbrò gè.gá.bà
group of people came and went.AFF
a group of people came

kēbā everybody, everyone

ēnē kēbā ētānyì ngaga ijiya 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.

3.2.5 Demonstratives and determiners

3.2.5.1 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 42).

Table 42. 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
àmālā	that	àmālā hrùjī	those	downwards

The demonstratives usually precede the noun they qualify;

ēcā ó ābrā lõ mitar màngá yí
 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 áliwe prōō yí
 this INT that probably is
 this might be like that

àhí there

àhí ma isēyā 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 āsīmbō 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

3.2.5.2 Determiners

Idu has a single determiner or definiteness marker, but it is only rarely used and hardly appears in natural sentences. The definiteness marker *-mē* follows the noun it qualifies.

ìlì.mē grágrá
pig.DET grunt
the pig is grunting

The rarity of the determiner in everyday speech can be counterposed by its common use in the angry register, *àshúbà*, (§5.2.4). Many of the nouns are followed by *mē*, which suggests that this may be part of the rhythmic infill of the two balanced clauses which make up its utterances.

-mē is presumably a counterpart of the *-mē* attached to pronominals (§3.2.6),

3.2.6 Pronominal suffixes

-gā is a locative suffix on pronouns to indicate ‘place’

ngā.gā
I.LOC
my place

nyu ngá.gò inglis àhē wa? Will you teach me English?
nyú.me ngá.gò ālū sàsà laaba you have insulted me by saying this
ngá.gò e àdè mi mana Don’t irritate me!

-mē suff. indicates speakers (attached to pronouns, nouns) or doers

nyuya.mē, , ngā.mē, , etc.

I, me	ngá	
you	nyū	nyū.mē
he, she, it	āyā	áyā.mē
we, us	īnyī	
you pl.	ēnē	
they	āyà hrūzhī	

nyū.mē gə̀ á. āhīmī.à

you go and come back, OK? Alright

ìmū.mē

cibū v. is; are incorporates an element of surprise, new information.
nyu nanyi cibū agu.ga athu.la ma I saw your mother walking there

amama tabu cibū mbrōṑ yòtē.hiba āthú.ji I saw a snake moving there very *mbrōṑ!*

ēcā mēcū ōkā.là cibū aguyi puma this cow has been injured from a gunshot wound

copra te hoyi cibū me áttípù hoga ne khà.gayi in spite of being thrown to the ground, the person is still struggling

nyu pàwũ átúlā ebo tene khà.ga cibū atege ma your money had fallen down over there, so I picked it up

3.3 Verbs

3.3.1 Basic verb morphology

Despite their complex surface morphology, all Idu basic verbs can be analysed as underlyingly V(V) or (V)CVV in structure (Table 43);

Table 43. 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 44);

Table 44. 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 45. Two are nasalised, two have C₁ modified with –r and one has an a- prefix.

Table 45. Idu (V)C(r)VV verbs

Idu	Gloss
ànōō	to beat s.o. severely
brōō	to shoot up straight
cèè	to tease
dùù ²	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)
hrṑ̀	to empty out (of people)
khā̀̀	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 46);

Table 46. Idu CV verbs with a- prefix

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
àbà	to throw down		
àbí	to sell		
àbrà	to burn s.t.		
ābr̄	to swallow	br̄	swallowing
àc̄	to suspend, hang	c̄	to be suspended
ād̄zī	to prepare a corpse for a funeral		
ād̄ū	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		
àdz̄	to interrogate		
àḡ	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;

áttī to kick

Table 47 and Table 48 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 47. Idu CV verbs with an e- prefix

Idu	Gloss
ēbā	to slap down dough
ēbò	to fall
ēc̄ō ²	to wear (upper body)
èk̄ē	to show
èkhrà	to inform s.o. who will be going on a journey
èlà ²	to hold out hand to receive s.t.
enjō	to act generously

Table 48. Idu CV verbs with an i- prefix

Idu	Gloss
īcī	to sting
idī	to scrub
īlū	to replace s.o.
īnū	to grieve
ìpr̄	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 49), and they all can be explained as compound verbs, conjoining either ú ‘to pluck’ or ũ ‘to think’ plus another verb.

Table 49. 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
ũ̀tĩ	to recollect, remember
ũ̀tĩmĩ	to forget
ũ̀tõ	to think

In the Tawrà 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

3.3.2.1 TAM 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.

3.3.2.2 Nominalisers

Apart from TAM morphology, Idu verbs can also take suffixes which create nominals (gerunds) and locatives.

-muko denoting place, locative suffix

Table 50. The locative suffix –muko on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
è	to do	ẽmùkõ	place where you do s.t.
hà	to eat	hãmùkõ	place where you eat
lā	to say	lãmùkõ	place where you say s.t.
na	rest	nãmùkõ	place where you rest
tó	to drink	tõmùkõ	place where you drink

Idu has a facilitative auxiliary, *-yìgā*, expressing the notion that something can be done, that it is possible. This is homophonous with the verbal extension *-yìgā* (§3.3.7 & §6.3).

āyā tǒ.yìgā
that drink.FAC
that is drinkable

-wēyā nominaliser

The suffix *-wēyā* added to verbs creates nouns;

Table 51. The nominaliser *-wēyā* in the Idu nouns

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>hā</i>	to eat	<i>hàwēyā</i>	edibles, victuals
<i>hī</i>	to have	<i>hìwēyā</i>	possessions
<i>lā</i>	to speak	<i>làwēyā</i>	things to be spoken
<i>tǒ</i>	to drink	<i>tǒwēyā</i>	drinkables

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

gènè indicates sequential action

hā.gènè after eating
há.gènè after giving
lā.gènè after saying
mè.gènè after tearing
wā.gènè after lifting

aya ājōprā khəgə mè.gènè ha.lo.i
that page one by tearing give.IMP
tear off one page and give me

- used to join sequential action with two or more verbs. Has a short form *nē* used after a second verb in the sequence. cf. *bēnē.nyū mē la gānē áli.bam* it happened because of what you said

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 52 presents a categorisation of strategies for extending verbs in Idu;

Table 52. 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 53 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 53. Extended forms of the verb *cè* in Idu

Idu	Gloss
<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 54. Examples of Idu phrasal verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>ālū</i>	to revenge	<i>ālū sàsà</i>	to insult severely
<i>bā</i>	to touch softly, pat	<i>bā shà</i>	to feel around, grope
<i>cǎ</i>	to fall on top of s.t.	<i>cǎ mbūtū</i>	to have s.t. fall on you and have your body swell up
		<i>cē ālǒ</i>	to hiccup
		<i>cè wūtū</i>	to level off the stumps after clearing
<i>cē̃</i>	to tie, knit	<i>cé tútè</i>	to tie up with a rope
<i>dè</i>	to stand	<i>dē phàà</i>	
<i>dò</i>	to jump	<i>dò māgá</i>	to jump competitively
		<i>dò pī</i>	to jump aside
		<i>dò yūgā</i>	to jump around
<i>èná</i>	to observe taboo	<i>èná cō</i>	to break a taboo
<i>gǎ</i>	to carry on the back	<i>gǎ ùpā</i>	to carry and throw away
<i>hǎ²</i>	to give	<i>hǎ ágǎ</i>	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 ùtè	to design
lā	to say, speak, talk	lā àhìtò	to learn how to talk
lhì	to fly	lhì ìpà	to fly over
mrà	to writhe after eating s.t. poisonous	mrà sùkù	to writhe in agony
nè	to be exhausted, be tired	nè kāsī	to be exhausted, tired out
nyā	to fan, flutter	nyà yūgā	to flutter in the air
phrē	to set fire, burn	phrē sētō	to die by fire
sā	to be dry	sā kālā	to be chapped (applies to body parts)

cē tūtè to cut into two

Examples

ànjì tápúmè bòstā ma cē tūtè.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 thùwē jò ùtè.himì
 everyone by skirt design.NEG
 not everyone can design the weaving patterns

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

nyú brāā prà sá 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 55;

Table 55. Idu compound verbs

Verb	Gloss	Eymologies
āmāmbù	to turn away in anger	āmā 'frown' and 'close'
āmātsī	to show anger	āmā et. 'frown' and 'rot'
ānōnjī	to scold and chase away	ānō 'scold' + njī 'chase away'
ànyúbà	to deceive, trick, confound	ànyú 'cheat' + bà 'whisper'
brídú	to ask to marry	brí 'marry' + dú 'ask'
cālā	to fall on and kill	cā 'to fall on' + là 'be killed by s.t. falling'
cātú	to fall on and break	cā '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’ + êkē ‘show’
hāsē	to tie and kill	hā ‘tie’ + sē ‘to murder’
rètā	to tear apart by twisting	rè ‘wring out’ + [?] tā ‘block’
sèlā	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’

lō denotes waiting (esp. children and animals)

hǎ to wait hǎ lō to wait to eat
tō to drink tō lō to wait to drink

īgà v. to have come

3.3.7 Verbal extensions

3.3.7.1 Verbal extensions overview

The meanings of core verbs in Idu can be extended by up to four suffixed CV 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 56.

Table 56. Idu verbal extensions

Idu	Category	Approximate gloss
-acǎ	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)pà	sequential	denotes sequential action completed
-athà	expectative	denotes expecting to get s.t.
-dò	passative	denotes passing on s.t.

Idu	Category	Approximate gloss
-(n)dòhōlā	completive	denotes action and completion
-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., also functioning as reversive
-kōlòtò	patient	denotes being the victim or passive object of an action
-kòthò	incapacitative	denotes being unable to do something
-kù	funditive	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.
-mànéto	temporo-negative	denotes purposelessness, time-wasting
-mbrè	participative	
-mbūtū	tumesive	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.
-mūthruýì	occupative	denotes being busy doing s.t.
-ndò	completive	denotes completion of an action
-ngērē	incauto-repetitive	denotes careless repeated action
-ngó	provocative	denotes dare s.o. to do s.t.
-ngō	politeness	denotes request s.o. to do s.t. politely
-nū	evitative	denotes 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
-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

Table 56 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.

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

Table 57. 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

Occasionally quite unusual verbs attract extensions, but these are the most common.

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 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 53). 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 53) 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;

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

Since other verbs can take a *-kōlòtò* extension (Table 73), 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 Identified extensions

This section provides an annotated list of Idu verbal extensions 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 additive

Denotes doing s.t. additional or extra to the primary action

Table 58. Idu verbs with the additive suffix -acà

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
è	to do	èacà	to repeat, to do s.t. in addition
hā	to eat	hāacà	to eat extra
hī	to have	hīacà	to have more
lā	to speak	lāacà	to speak in support of s.o.
njò	to work	njòacà	to work extra

The core verb always conserves its tonal value.

-àdé ignoro-irritative

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 59).

Table 59. Idu verbs with the ignoro-irritative suffix -(à)dé

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
āhrū	to hear	āhrūàdé	to listen and ignore
āthú	to see	āthúàdé	to look but pay no attention
chì	to walk	chīàdé	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
è	to do	èàdé	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 or inserting with verbs of physical force (Table 60);

Table 60. Idu verbs with the penetrative suffix -àndā

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cò	to punch	còàndā	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
nyi	to push	nyiàndā	to push in

-(à)pà sequential

Denotes the completion of an action referring to the first verb in a sequence (Table 61);

Table 61. The sequential suffix -(a)pa on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
dò	to jump	dòàpà	to jump
hā	to eat	hāāpà	to eat sequentially
jì	to sleep	jìàpà	to sleep
lā	to speak	lāpà	to speak sequentially
là	to fall	lààpà	to fall sequentially
si	to die	sīāpà	to die
thrā	to write	thrāāpà	to write
thrū	to run	thrūāpà	to run
tó	to drink	tóāpà	to drink

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

nyū là.àpà nga la.we
 you speak I speak.FUT
 I'll speak after you

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

nyū sī.āpà.go nga shi.we
 you die.EXT.PERF I die.FUT
 After you have died, I'll die

-āprā denotes improving on s.t.

la to speak lāprā to improve on what s.o.else has said
 kha to lie khāprā to re-arrange s.o. lying on a bed
 ji to sit jīprā to correct your posture when sitting

-prā denotes being good to do s.t.

la to speak láprā to be nice to speak
 ? not a verbal extension

-athà expectative

Denotes expecting to get s.t. as in Table 62;

Table 62. The Idu verbal extension -athà

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hā	to eat	hāthà	to expect to get s.t. to eat
hí	to have	hīāthà	to expect to get s.t.
tó	to drink	tōāthà	to expect to get s.t. to drink

-dò passative

Denotes passing s.t. on (Table 63);

Table 63. The passative suffix –dò on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
hà	to eat	hədò	to eat from s.o. else's portion
há	to give	hádò	to pass on s.t. to s.o. else
hí	to have	hiədò	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

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

Table 64. The errative suffix –hā on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
cà	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
grà	to get	grāhā	to try and receive s.t. and miss
hù	to grope	hūhā	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 77) is used in most daily speech, but *hā* is used in formulaic expressions. Presumably *-lāhā* in turn originates with the extended form of *lā* (above Table 64).

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

-hí causative and hī indirect imperative

The *-hi* suffix is a classic causative, widely attested in the languages of the world (Table 65);

Table 65. 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

-hī indirect imperative

Denotes telling someone else to do something or to send someone to do something (Table 66).

Table 66. Idu verbs with the indirect imperative 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 67);

Table 67. Idu verbs with the suffix *-hīmì*

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
àthū	to see	àthū.hīmì	to be unable to see; to be blinded
àthū	to see	àthūnjī.hīmì	to be unable to see clearly

-hīmìcīcī 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 68)

Table 68. Idu verbs with the negative conative suffix *-hīmìcīcī*

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chì	to walk	chihīmìcīcī	to try to walk but fail
dè	to stand	dèhīmìcīcī	to try to stand but fail
è	to do	èhīmìcīcī	to try to do s.t. over and over again
hà	to eat	hàhīmìcīcī	to try and eat even though one can’t eat anymore
khà	to lie down	khàhīmìcīcī	to try and lie down even though one can’t
lā	to say	lāhīmìcīcī	to try and explain s.t. but not succeed

-hòjà inceptive

Denotes beginning a process, arriving

Table 69. Idu verbs with the inceptive suffix *- hòjà*

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
do	jump	dò.hōjā	to arrive jumping	dò.gā.hòjà	to arrive jumping
gra	shout	grā.hòjà	to arrive shouting	grā.gā.hòjà	to arrive shouting
lā	speak	lā.hòjà	to come speaking	là.gā.hòjà	to come speaking
li	fly	li.hōjā	to come flying	lì.gā.hòjà	to come flying
thru	run	thrū.hòjà	to start to run	thrù.gā.hòjà	to start to run
yo	slide	yò.hōjā	to come sliding	yò.gā.hòjà	to come sliding
yo	throw	yō.hòjà	to come throwing	yō.gā.hòjà	to come throwing

the ga marks many people doing it

strange tonal behaviour!

Has to be followed by a secondary verb

naba me do.hoja ne cehibayi
 father det came jumping then cut s.t.

-hōlà denotes revealing s.t. boldly or inappropriately

cíhōlà	to have got s.t. boldly
ēhōlà	to have done s.t. boldly or inappropriately
hāhōlà	to have eaten s.t. boldly
lāhōlà	to have said s.t. boldly or inappropriately

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

Denotes someone performing an action in imitation of someone else (Table 70).

Table 70. Idu verbs with the imitative suffix -jì

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

Note that *céjì* ‘to cut uniformly’ is not an example of this extension but a compound verb (Table 53).

-kà incomplete, denotes partly doing s.t.

The -kà suffix marks doing something partway or incomplete (Table 71).

Table 71. Idu verbs with the incomplete suffix -ka

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

The raising of the tone to mid in *ŋgrókā* 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 78) apparently has a similar meaning.

Table 72. Idu verbs with the incapacitative suffix -kō

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chì	to walk	chīkō	to be unable to walk
dzi	to wear bangles	dzikō	to not fit ornaments for wrist and fingers (rings, watch etc.), to not want to
hā	to eat	hākō	to be unable to eat (for physiological reason), to not want to eat (bored with food)
hālā	to recall, remember	hālākō	to forget
jí	to sit, live	jíkō	to be unable to sit, to be tired of waiting for s.o.
lā	to tell, speak, say	lākō	to keep telling s.o. s.t. but they don’t listen, to be unable to speak

			(sore throat etc.)
nè	to dress, wear	nèkō	to not fit (upper-body clothes or necklaces), to not want to
sò	to wear trousers, sock etc.	sòkō	to not fit (lower-body clothes)
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 achievement

Denotes achieving something through an action. This is a compound extension, similar to *-hīmìcīcū* (Table 68). A proposal for the origin of this extension is presented in §4.1.

Table 73. Idu verbs with the achievement 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	pīkōlòtò	to hurt oneself while using a tool
thò	to speak	thōkōlòtò	to achieve s.t. by speaking

-kòthò incapacitative

Denotes being unable to do something (Table 74);

Table 74. Idu verbs with the incapacitative suffix -kòthò

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
de	to stand	dèkòthò	to be unable to stand
hā	to eat	hàkòthò	to be unable to eat
hí	to have	híkòthò	to be unable to have
hì	to sleep	hikòthò	to be unable to sleep
tó	to drink	tőkòthò	to be unable to drink

-kù denotes doing s.t. thoroughly

The suffix -kù indicates the action is performed thoroughly (Table 75).

Table 75. 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
idī	to scrub	idīkù	to scrub vigorously
mū	to burn off feathers, roast	mūkù	to burn off feathers completely
pì	to peel	pìkù	to peel off completely
pi	to dig with spade/shovel	pìkù	to clear away short grass

rē	to scratch	rēkù	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 denotes finishing s.t.

<i>ànyūkùlā</i>	to be washed thoroughly
<i>cēkùlā</i>	to slash completely
<i>hākùlā</i>	to eat everything
<i>idīkùlā</i>	to rub s.t. thoroughly, to scrub the floor strongly

-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 76).

Table 76. The valency change suffix *-là* on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
<i>āshū</i>	to be startled	<i>āshūlà</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>ikó</i>	to move s.t with stick/twig	<i>ikólà</i>	to move s.t. away from you with a stick
<i>kà</i>	to untie	<i>kālā</i>	to untie
<i>lāhò</i>	to announce	<i>lāhòlà</i>	to have become widespread (message)
<i>tō</i>	to pound into powder	<i>ātōlà</i>	to instigate trouble (with women or money)

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

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

Table 77. 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>grà</i>	to get	<i>gràlāhā</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>hūlāhā</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>tó</i>	to drink	<i>tólāhā</i>	to drink s.t. in error

Words like *hālāhā* and *tólāhā* 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 72), with a similar meaning.

Table 78. The incapacitative suffix -lako on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ālā	to search	àlākō	to be unable to search
cō	to remove	còlākō	to remove s.t. from s.t. cylindrical, such as a shirt from the arm
hālā	to search for food	hālākō	to be unable to find enough food (e.g. an orphan)
hālā	to recall, remember	hālākō	to be unable to remember
jī	to sit, live	jī àlākò	to be unable to find shelter
lala	to call	lālākò	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	tólākò	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 79. 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

-līsā denotes ‘all around, everywhere’

???		bràbràlīsā	to be scattered; dispersed
ce	to cut	cèlīsā	to cut all over the place
ha	to eat	hālīsā	to eat and throw everywhere
khèě	to defecate	khèělīsā	to defecate everywhere
là	to throw	làlīsā	to throw around

-lyū replacive, denotes replacing s.o.

Table 80. 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	hīlyù	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 tōlyù to drink in the place of s.o.

-mànéto denotes purposelessness, time-wasting

Table 81. The temporo-negative suffix -mànéto on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ē	to do	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

-mbrā really; very

Table 82. The temporo-negative suffix -mbrā on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ē	to do	ēmbbrā	to really do s.t.
hí	to have	hímbbrā	to really have s.t.
lā	to speak	lāmbbrā	to really say s.t.

-mbrè ~ mbrè participative

Table 83. The participative suffix -mbrè on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ājī	to make (object)	ājīmbrè	to help s.o. to make s.t.
há	to give	hámbbrè	to give alongside s.o. else
hā	to eat	hāmbrè	to eat together s.o.
hù	to beat	hùmbrè	to take part in a beating
lā	to speak	lāmbrè	to speak together in support of s.o.
njò	to work	njòmbrè	to take part in work with s.o.
thò	to speak	thòmbrè	to take part in speaking

-mbūtū denotes swelling or fitting s.t. tightly

Table 84. The bloative suffix -mbūtū on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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

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

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

Table 85. The negative suffix -mì on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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 86. The tendency suffix -mīmù on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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 87. The desiderative suffix -mīsī on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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 88. 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
tó	to drink	tómū	to drink continuously

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

Table 89. Idu verbs with the occupative suffix -mūjì

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ājì	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 90. 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 jimu njōmūjì thru hoyi

without sleeping

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

porika ma ā.ālōmbró thrā.mūjì thra.gaga

exam FOC children busy writing

In exams, every child is busy writing

-nā imperative suffix

ìgànà	to come back; to return	īgànā	to come (future)
jānà	to come back from the north	jānā	to come from the north
ītūnà	to come back from the south	ītūnā	to come from the south
ìbīnà	to come back from east/west	ìbīnā	to come from east/west

nàbā mē īgànā lagayi

father is telling you to come

-ndò completive

Denotes finishing or completing a task

Table 91. 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
njò	to work	njòndò	to finish working
tò	to drink	tòndò	to finish drinking

-(n)dòhōlā completive

Denotes action and completion

hà to eat hāndòhōlā to have finished eating

lā to speak lāndòhōlā to say everything and round up

This is a composite extension, combining the -ndò completive and -hōlā which denotes finishing up

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

cè to cut cēngērē to cut all over the place
 ū to pinch ūngērē to pinch incessantly

-ngō 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.

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

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

Table 92. The provocative suffix -ngó in Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
bā ²	to touch softly	bāngó	to touch gently (s.o. with fever)
chì	to walk	chīngó	to try to walk
hā	to eat	hāngó	to dare to eat
hà	to give	hāngō	to press s.o. to give s.t. inappropriate

dote to jump dôtē.ngōà to try and jump down

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

Table 93. The polite request suffix -ngō on Idu verbs

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

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

Table 94. The evitative suffix -nū on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chì	to walk	chīnū	to avoid s.o.'s home
hā	to eat	hānū	to abstain from eating and drinking due to social restrictions
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.

ayu ebra.ga hānū.gaji
 in-laws refrain from eating.PRS.
 we refrain from eating meat at our in-laws' house

-pòmì negative actant

Describes experiencing something never previously experienced

Table 95. 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

-pràjī

Denotes action for the sake of it, aimlessly

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
jī	to sit	jīpràjī	sit idly
lā	to speak	lāpràjī	speak aimlessly; to ramble
thrū	to run	thrūpràjī	running aimlessly; jogging
wū	think	wūpràjī	thinking to no purpose

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

-rē to do something purposelessly, anti-purposive

Table 96 shows examples of the -rē suffix;

Table 96. 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

-rè to provoke or irritate, irritative, provocative

Table 97 shows examples of the -rè suffix;

Table 97. The provocative suffix – rè on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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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

-si intensifier

Denotes intensified action

Table 98. The intensifier suffix -si on Idu verbs

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
??		àkū.sī	to be tired
àndā	to be full (stomach)	àndā.sī	be very full by eating
??		hàgīsī	to be hungry
??		nèkà.sì	to be very tired

This is a highly unusual extension in that the simplex verbs which should correspond to the intensive form are synchronically absent in Idu. Moreover, unlike nearly every other verb in this list, none of the probable simplex forms are part of the small set of verbs, usually extended in some way. The lowered tone of -sì in nèkà.sì is also unexplained.

-símī

denotes being tired of s.t.

chi	to walk	chī(gá)símī	to be tired of walking
ha	to eat	hāgásímī	to be tired of eating
la	to speak	lā(gá)símī	to be fed up with speaking
kha	to	khā(gá)símī	to be tired of lying down

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

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

Table 99. 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 ¹	to cut	cēkātá	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 ó ājītá mu kha.ga
 I house be incomplete still lie.PERF
 my house is still incomplete

-tà to do s.t. incompletely

Table 100. The partly achieved suffix -tà on Idu verbs

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

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

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

-te denotes intensification of an action

Idu has a verbal suffix -te which is realised with all three tone heights (Table 101).

Table 101. 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 102. 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 103. 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	lātè	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
ikù	to beat s.o.	ikùtè	to be beaten
Ìmbrṁ	gift of grave goods	ìmbrṁtè	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 *gə̀ŋi thù* ‘uneasy’ contains the root, but *gə̀ŋi* is not otherwise attested.

Table 104. 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	āthùthù	to be bad to look at

ayo ko a ó ājīthù.yi
house difficult to build
it’s difficult to build a house on a rainy day

bāthù mē tándò

it is very difficult to talk

-to has two allomorphs, -tō, a reflexiviser, and -tò, a separative, expressing apartness, distinctness;

-tō reflexiviser

Generally has a sense of reflexive, but as the example of ‘to teach’ shows, this can have a reversive or commutative effect on the root.

Table 105. 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	
hàṣē	to tie and kill	hàṣē.tō	to commit suicide by hanging oneself	
āhē	to teach	āhī.tō	to learn	

tò separative

separate, apart, different

Table 106. The Idu separative verbal extension -tò

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
chi	to walk	chitò	to walk apart
de	to stand apart	deto	to stand apart
ha	to eat	hato	to eat apart
ī	to be	ītò	to be different
la	to talk	lato	to talk separately

-tō ineffective suffix

Denotes ineffectual action

There are two tonal allomorphs, tō̃ and tṑ, which appear to be part of the same semantic set.

Table 107. The Idu ineffective verbal extension -tō̃

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
ōō	to shoot	ōōtō̃	to shoot and not enter
cō	to punch	cōtō̃	to punch ineffectively
pi	to hit with spade	pītṑ	to hit and bounce off
ce	to cut	cètṑ	

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

Table 108. The Idu incompetentive verbal extension -tòsī

Idu	Gloss	Idu	Gloss
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 109). No etymology has been identified.

Table 109. 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)
tó	to drink	tóúsà	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 110).

Table 110. Plurality in an Idu verb

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

The following shows the use of a plural verb.

njò apa ēnē keba ata hawe ijīnà a

work after you pl. all food eat come [many] 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.

3.4 Adjectives and qualification

3.4.1 Qualification strategies

Qualification in Idu is achieved either through a variety of strategies. These are shown in Table 111;

Table 111. Qualification strategies in Idu

Class	§	Comment
adjectives	§3.4.2	
adjectival intensifiers	§3.4.3	qualify other adjectives
adjectival phrases	§3.4.4	
colour intensifiers	§3.4.5	qualify colour terms
stative verbs	§3.4.7	
quantifiers	§3.4.8	
numerals	§3.10	
ideophones	§3.11	
paired collocations	§3.11.5	
classifiers	§3.1.5	obligatory with specific nominals

Semantic classes such as taste and smell (§3.4.6) and mix different word classes to express qualification, and so are described below, but unlike colours do not constitute a single strategy. Paired collocations (§3.11.5) also fall into multiple grammatical categories, but since a significant proportion are adjectival they are included here.

Adjectives can be distinguished from stative verbs when morphological suffixes are attached to them, but there are no evident distinctions in word-structure. Some paired collocations which consist of verbs

3.4.2 Adjectives

3.4.2.1 Morphology

3.4.2.1.1 Word structures

Word-building strategies in Idu are such that adjectives can take a wide variety of structural forms, as shown in Table 112;

Table 112. Canonical forms of Idu adjectives

Structure	Idu	Gloss
V	ũ	decayed (plants); rotten
CV	bā	like
CCV	mmá	new
CVV	grāā	traditional
VCV	àkā	strong (alcohol)
VVCV	é.ésí	exhausted
CVCV	brūsù	small, rounded
CVCVV	cikéē	empty
VCVCV	èbròbrò	dirty
CVCVCV	cèphràndū	tasteless
CVCVCVCV	khèpātélá	solitary

This does not include reduplicated forms, which are considered under ideophones, although syntactically they behave similarly to underived adjectives. For example;

bā?úbā?ú spongy, soft àkōmbó bā?úbā?ú a soft pillow

Most long vowels in adjectives conserve the same tone, but in a few cases the tone changes. For example;

cikéē zero; finished; empty; void
 sīī more; very
 sūū describes complete loss of everything

Plausibly these originate with the deletion of intervocalic consonants, and in one case, *cikéē*, there is an alternate form, *cikéē*, which confirms this.

Still longer adjectives can be created with suffixes such as the negative formant -mì, but these are not treated as basic adjectival roots. For example;

áhrúmì mischievous; notorious
 ìhímì depressed
 ìjígú.mì of no value; of no importance

The most remarkable aspect of Idu adjectives is the large number of underived forms, especially those with trisyllabic structures whose etymology cannot easily be discerned. In a language where the distinction between nouns and verbs is not easily made, this is surprising. The canonical forms of trisyllabic adjectives are either CVCVCV or VCVCV. Table 113 shows a variety of these adjectives;

Table 113. Idu trisyllabic adjectives

Idu	Gloss
àcùgō	well-informed on the rules of Idu society
àgēsī	hungry
áhrúmi	mischievous, notorious
àjji	complete, full, replete
ākúsí	tired, exhausted, worn out
ālágá	sloppy (work)
àngōmá	very large, gigantic
āsēngā	fearless, brave, courageous
àtēkā	not straight, crooked
àthíngtò	cute, affectionate
básāsā	soft
bēcēlā	slippery
brātōlō	describes a small, rounded object
bùkǎli	in doubt
bùsúsú	dishevelled (hair)
bùsúsú	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
kétrēdrē	spotted
khōmbōtū	state of extreme anger
kráhahā	shrunken look
kūphāndū	denuded (plain), naked (person)
lōnjíkhé	authentic, genuine
māchāndū	tasteless
mākúsi	very dark (soot in the ceiling)
mīcìprá	old (people and animals)
ngālāhā	hollow (cylindrical)
ṅáprācē	negligible, insignificant
ngárírí	tearful
pīkūngṅū	bent (person)
pòjōmā	protruding (teeth)
rhōgátà	equal
rōkāpò	hollow (spherical)
sūmbībī	smooth
sūmbūtù	congested, crowded, out of space

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 or animals are being referenced.

míi normally applied to plants

mìi normally applied to small animals

Generally speaking, as evidenced in Table 113, tone can be very diverse, showing no obvious patterns.

3.4.2.1.2 Adjectival suffixes

There are some examples of bound suffixed forms which qualify the heads. For example;

-mbù closed

bā hole -mbù closed → bāmbù closed hole

3.4.2.2 Comparatives

Idu has a small number of adjectives used for comparisons which have a broadly regular paradigm. Unlike English, Idu has a four-term paradigm with two ‘middle’ forms. A sample of the main terms is given in Table 114. 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 114. Paradigms of comparative adjectives

Gloss	Simple	1 st comparative	2 nd 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 fast	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	écā good	écāyā very good	écātī better	écāyāndò 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*, ‘more’, is now only retained in the Mithu dialect.

The syntax of comparisons incorporates the particle *mi* ~ *me* ‘than’. The following sentences show how this is expressed. A simple comparison requires the comparandum to be stated, not replaced with a pronoun as in English.

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

ēcā ó atikō ma ècāyándò
 this house village in biggest
 this house is the best in the village

An alternative method of expressing comparisons is the used of a noun + verb construction where the compared noun is assumed and a comparative form is not required.

ngācì ó nyúci mi àléló kālō.ya màpū
 I house you than length be tall.PRES is
 my house is longer than yours

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

3.4.3 Adjectival intensifiers

Adjectival intensifiers qualify adjectives and adjectival phrases. Colour intensifiers () constitute a special case of this. However, Idu otherwise has only small number of intensifiers. The two identified are *pī*, ‘very, so’, and *mbrā*, ‘really’, which both follow the adjective they qualify. For example;

mīcīprā àhíyā hōkòcī pī pūmà
 old people those shrunken so really
 that old person is so shrunken

èécè bú māārdā pī bā pūmà
 dao that rusty so become really
 that dao has really become so rusty

tānō pā pī chībē dōà mā hū gānē ìnà.yì
 thorn cross so pass there push through beat then come back
 I arrived after pushing through the thorny jungle

In this example, the adjectival phrase is intensified with *mbrā*;

īmú bú à sù jākàmì mbrā pūmà
 man that restless really indeed
 that man is really restless

-sì very

ēcā yū àkātā.sī pūmà
 this beer be strong.very really

this rice-beer is very strong

3.4.4 Adjectival phrases

Idu has a great variety of picturesque adjectival phrases, which may be composed a variety of nominal and verbal elements which taken together qualify a noun. Table 115 gives a sample of these;

Table 115. Idu adjectival phrases

Idu	Gloss
à sú jākàmi	restless
àkrā khítōmī	describes someone who is hyper-active, constantly fiddling
ànjā mīmù	very sad, distressing, mournful
āthúyī pēgáhimī	difficult to distinguish
bē thrūhímī	countless, numberless
pòsú mbrèyì	impassive, unresponsive
ūsò nō ìmì	unaware, without realizing
dī hùhù	imposing; overshadowing others in respect of health, dignity
kàpà lèkōtā	disabled; handicapped; crippled
sú jākàmi	restless; unfocused; s.o. who wriggles in their seat; fidgety
tīnī ā.ā drùpràtē	beaten black and blue

ànjā mīmù very sad; distressing; mournful

ó phrē làbà he ànjā mīmù āthú.yì gāyí
 house burn fall down ? distressing see.PRS COP
 it is very sad to see a house burn down

īmú āyā mò dī hùhù mbrā puma
 man that still imposing really COP
 that man is still very imposing

īmú kàpà lèkōtā njò.hihi.mi.yi
 person disabled work.
 a disabled person cannot work

pòsú mbrèyì impassive; unresponsive; unreactive

á àhíyā ājìjì lā.gə bu pòsú mbrèyì.mì mbrā
 so there whatever say unresponsive.NEG really
 no matter what you say, the man is really unresponsive

tīnī ā.ā drùpràtē beaten black and blue

āyā wea tīnī ā.ā drùpràtē ga.ba hū te.gaba
 he beaten black and blue beat
 this person has been beaten black and blue

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.

3.4.5 Colour and colour intensifiers

Idu has the following basic colour terms;

Table 116. Idu colour terms

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

These all appear to be basic terms, very broadly following the Berlin & Kay hierarchy of colour term acquisition. It is intriguing that colour terms are shared with Tawrà, despite the striking differentiation in what might be consider more basic lexicon, such as body parts (Table 5).

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

Colour terms 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. It is striking that the elaboration of intensifiers is highly uneven, with ‘black’ being under-represented in comparison to ‘green/blue’ and ‘red’ being by far the most elaborated. Table 117 shows the basic term for ‘white’ and the intensifiers used with it;

Table 117. Idu intensifiers for ‘white’

Idu	Gloss	Example
lò	white	
lò dúgù	dark white	
lò pālī	bright white	
lò sùsù	off-white	

Table 118 shows the basic term for ‘black’ and the intensifiers used with it;

Table 118. Idu intensifiers for ‘black’

Idu	Gloss
mà	black
màndí kì kátálá	pitch black

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

alaphra mà black stone

Table 119 shows the intensifiers for ‘red’, which are relatively elaborate. It is clear that particular terms have semantics beyond simply shades, and include some spatial or other aspects.

Table 119. Idu intensifiers for ‘red’

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

jāā can stand on its own in some contexts, referring to the sky, or blood;

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

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

Photo 3. Marbled cat



Source: CC

shù	red	<i>iyu shù</i> red blood
shù bráli	dark red (objects)	<i>asipi shù bráli</i> the flower is dark red in colour
shù dàgrù	medium red	<i>etola imbu shù dàgrù</i> a cock’s crest is medium red in colour
shù grōò	red and glowing like fire	<i>amru me shù grōò hrugane khagayi</i> the fire is glowing red
shū hēàà	reddish (e.g. sunset)	<i>inyi ndaa losobane imudu me shū hēàà bayi.</i> it is sunset so the sky has become reddish
shù jáà	describes things spread widely, such as blood	<i>kapə hakepo mame iyu me shù jáà dega.</i> after a leech sucks, the part of the body becomes blood-red.

shù màkò dark red *iyu anngo shù màkò yi.* the blood clot is dark red in colour.

Table 120 shows the basic term for ‘green/blue’ and the intensifiers used with it;

Table 120. Idu intensifiers for ‘green/blue’

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

Table 121. Idu intensifiers for ‘yellow’

Idu	Gloss
mì	yellow
mì cǎlí	bright yellow

cǎlí appears to correspond to cǎlí for ‘green/blue’ (Table 120) except for the polar tone.

Idu has an elaborate weaving culture, and thus numerous names for specific patterns in cloth. However, terms to describe patterns in the natural world are very few. This may reflect the uniform green that surrounds their villages, and the singlecolour domestic animals. Only bush cats seem to attract specific terms.

kátrēdrè spotted e.g. leopard, marble cat (Photo 3).

ēcā zo kátrēdrè.yii
 this pattern be spotted.PRS
 this pattern is spotted

jògérē mixed design; patterned; multi-coloured

mēkārī bu jògérē lo bu dai
 cat multi-coloured
 this cat’s fur is multi-coloured

3.4.6 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 122 together with foods given as examples of that taste category.

Table 122. 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

thùthù bland, tasteless adverb jackfruit
 yā to tingle stative verb vegetable marsa

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

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

intsi mibē khū mē tándò.yi
 chili variety hot DET too much.PRS
 the chili variety is extremely hot

pò is a stative verb which is applied to something also separately marked;

ēnjūpū lī a pò.yi
 jackfruit be unripe is 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

yā to produce a tingling sensation in the mouth from eating *marsana* seeds

mārsānā yā.yi
 marsana tingles.HAB
 marsana tingles

3.4.5.2 Odours

Similarly, Idu odour terms describe a limited subset of smells. Table 123 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 123. Idu odour terms

Idu	Gloss	Example
cíkhè nò	muddy smell	mud

khǎǎ̀ nò	s.t. smelling, pungent	
khṑ nò	foul	faeces
mbà no	musky	civet cat
sū nō	pungent smell	tiger, other animals, armpit
takə no	sweaty	unwashed body
thē nò	urine	
tsi no	rotten, putrid	meat, fish, fruit

cicikhè̀ nò muddy smell mud

khǎǎ̀ nò s.t. smelling, pungent

ēcā ēsòyā mē khǎǎ̀ nò ò.gàà?
 this what DET pungent smell happen.QM
 what is this smelling khǎǎ̀?

khṑ nò foul faeces

khṑ nò e!
 faeces smell EVD
 there's a smell of faeces

mbà no musky civet cat

shrū pràcinò smell; n. e.g. bamboo shoot, unwashed person.
 sour;
 fermented
 ; sweaty

īmú shrū pràcinò
 person sweaty
 sweaty person

sū nō pungent smell tiger, other animals, armpit

ēcā ma sū nō.gà puma
 this pungent smell is

takə no sweaty unwashed body

3.4.7 Stative verbs

In principle, stative verbs can be distinguished from adjectives because suffixing morphology can be attached to them. For example;

ngà to not have; to be without; to lack

takes suffixes as follows;

ngá pàwú ngà.jīyì ma
 I money lack.1SG.PRES AFF
 I don't have any money

Adjectival phrases can also take suffixing verbal morphology;

āhrũ àkhó partially deaf

mīcìprā bā.gò āhrũ àkhó.yì
 old people happen.to partly deaf.PRES
 Old people are partly deaf

In practice, where no verbal suffixes are in place, the distinction from adjectives has to be tested for individual words. The verbal nature of many qualifiers can also be discerned from their use as intransitive verbs. For example;

bò to be cracked *siphũ bò* the cauldron is cracked

can also be used as;

bò to burst; to explode; *àhīmá ēsòyā bò.gà?* what is bursting there?

As befits verbs, stative verbs tend to be much shorter than their counterparts and be strongly related to action, except in the specialised case of colour terms (§3.4.4). The complex underived adjectival forms are absent. For example, Table 124 shows the wide range of stative verbs connected with tearing and breaking, all of which shows considerable specificity, not unlike classifiers (§3.1.5).

Table 124. Stative verbs connected with tearing and breaking

Idu	Gloss	Commentary
bò	to be cracked	applies to vessels, pots, cauldrons etc.
brè	to be torn apart at the seams	applies to objects with joints such as cloth or rubber hoses
drā	to be torn	applies to flat objects such as cloth or paper
drō	to be broken but the pieces are still attached	applies to cylindrical hollow objects
drũ	to be 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	to be 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

These verbs of tearing and breaking are typically used with the verb bā, 'to happen';

siphu bò bā
 cauldron cracked happen
 the cauldron is cracked

Use of the evidential particle

siphu bò bayi
 cauldron cracked is definitely

the cauldron is definitely cracked

taphuhũ br̩̀ bā
 cloth coming apart happen
 the cloth is coming apart

kagos dra bā
 paper torn happen
 the paper is torn

aŋətō dro bā
 bamboo broken happen
 the bamboo is broken

eto cu drū bā
 egg broken happen
 a broken egg

arisi ga bā
 glass be smashed happen
 the glass is smashed

e.ece gri bā
 dao blade be ragged happen
 the dao blade is ragged

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

kǎcǒ be short

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

Ame iskol 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

The meaning of stative verbs in Idu can take a great many extensions, both as phrasal adjectives and ?. Table 125 shows a sample of the extended adjectives which can be created with sǎ;

Table 125. Extended stative verbs with the base form sǎ

Idu	Gloss
sǎ	to be dry
sǎ kâlā	chapped (applies to body parts)

sā̀ kùcī	dried out (single objects)
sā̀ kùtù	completely dried out (especially edible things)
sā̀ pīsì	dried out (multiple objects especially grass)
sá̀ prà(cì)	thirsty
sā̀ sùkā	completely dried up (riverbed, firewood)
sá̀ tàtē	shrivelled (plants, human beings, animals)
sá̀ tòkā	completely dried out

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

elikhə̀ sā̀ ka.ayi
soil dry is.DEF
the soil is dry

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

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

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

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

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

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

aɾe sā̀ tate a bayi
grass shrivelled PERF is.DEF
the grass has shrivelled

tsì̀ to be incessant (rainfall)

àrhá tsì̀.gāyí
weather be incessant.PRS
the weather is rainy

3.4.8 Quantifiers

Quantifiers express the amount of something, from nothing to complete. These do not constitute a natural word class in Idu, which uses a variety of adjectives and stative verbs. Idu quantifiers are shown in Table 126.

Table 126. Idu quantifiers

Idu	Gloss	Comment
dù'	be many	mainly applies to living things
èbétēgè	part of	
èdràgè	piece of s.t. flat	
étēgè	half	
icígè	small bit of s.t., few, a little	Also icúgè.
īcúbù	more of s.t.	
īlīgè	this much	used to demonstrate the size of s.t. with the hands
īlīlī	this size	
lāhíndó	all	
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

Examples of quantifiers in use;

dù

āpāyā Rē.ma īmú dù i.gayi
 brother Rē.LOC people be many come
 Many people turned up to [my] brother's Rē

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

èbétēgè half

èbétēgè can stand on its own like a pronominal, as in the following example;

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

In this example it has the nominal suffix -ta, with the meaning a 'half-piece';

ēcā ròtì èbétēgè.ta ha.ji a
 this bread half.piece eat.PRS AFF
 let each one eat a half of this bread

However, it also behaves like an adjective, following the noun it qualifies.

ēcā ilhīkhè èbétēgè ālīyā gōba akha puyi
 this land half brother for keep IMP
 Keep a half portion of this land for your younger brother

èdràgè

āyā ājōprā èdràgè mètà.gènè 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.ji a?
This bread part.piece 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

nyū ìcúbù la.mi.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 ilhīkhè 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 cībū ābrè.hībà.yi
marble this size AFF swallow.PST
he has swallowed a marble this size

lāhíndó

īmú 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 gūmì
spirit all bad not
not all spirits are bad

mbrāgè

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

ījīngā ndùcīcí nothing

pàwú àpílāndò nē ngā.mò ījīngā ndùcīcí bà ji.yi ma
money distribute after I.EMP nothing happen sit.PRES AFF

after distributing the money, I am sitting without anything

ā.ālōmbró haweku hando nē ījīngā ndùcīci 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.DET lot say hear bad is
it is bad to listen to ignorant people who talk a lot

ha cīpù gōbā 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

āṅgrōyà

nyū 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

dù

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

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

èbétégè half

èbétégè 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 nàbā mē nga èbétégè ha.ambayi
this field father DET me half give.PAST
Father gave me half of this field (before he died)

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

ēcā ilhīkhè èbétégè ālīyā gəba akha puyi
this land half brother for keep IMP
Keep a half portion of this land for your brother

èdràgè

āyā ājōprā èdràgè mētà.gònè 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 liitle 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

nyū īcúbù la.mì.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 prā īlīgè ēthrò.a loi
vegetable.LOC salt this much put in. RQ
put this much salt in the vegetables

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here soil this much shovel POL AFF
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This size QM
Was it this size?

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some went north while others ran south

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 after distributing the money, I am sitting without anything

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

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 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

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 our hill beautiful are so much
 our mountain areas are very beautiful

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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 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

3.5 Adverbs

3.5.1 Temporal adverbs

Idu has a wide range of temporal adverbs, collected together in Table 127. Examples of their use are given below the table.

Table 127. Idu temporal adverbs

Idu	Gloss
ábé ìmtā	afterwards
ābā	later
ābābālī	a bit later
ābābwēyā	a bit later
ābānē	forever; eternally
ābūnyì	tonight
ādrēdrē	instantly
āhānyì	few days back
ānā yánjá	day after tomorrow
ānāyà	tomorrow
àsīnyī	two days from now
āyāhō, āyāsō	then
bàgè nyī	sometimes
bàgàbò	once again
būnyī	yesterday
būnyī ìnyìgē.ā	day before yesterday
bwè thrū hímī	countless times
bwèyā bàhá	long ago
ēcā càndō	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

Idu	Gloss
īmītáyándō	last
īsì	always
kàjì hōnè bŭgŭmì	never
kāndū	always
lāgá	again
lāmpā	again
līlīyā	sooner
lōnō	yesterday evening
mòò	suddenly
mù, mò	still now, even now
pà	after in time
úninīyà	a bit earlier
ūnyì	earlier

A process of reduplication operates in some temporal adverbs to reduce the amount of time specified (Table 128).

Table 128. 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.

3.5.2 Adverbs of manner

Idu has quite a small inventory of adverbs of manner, a sample of which is given in Table 129, followed by sentence examples;

Table 129. Idu adverbs of manner

Idu	Gloss	Commentary
ājīī	in detail	
āmbṛā	straight, directly	
ārḥūjì	happily	
ātāmī	easily	
dūkùmì	quickly	
īcū thrè	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 āmbrā ba.na.ba
at home directly go.x.IMP
go straight home

nyū āmbrā la.na, ahrū.jiya?
you straight speak.x listen.
you must speak straight, are you listening?

dūkùmì bana
quickly go.
go quickly

kāyū idly

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

? < nēkētōmì 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 ch̀ì
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.m̀ì
useless.LOC time waste do.NEG
do not waste time in useless activities

ànggàcē at an angle, bent

nyū esoya bane ànggàcē ne ch̀ì.ji.a?
you why at an angle LOC walk.PRES
Why are you walking at an angle?

ànggàcēló sideways, crabwise

nyū esoya bane ànggàcēló ch̀ì.ji.a?
you why sideways walk.PRES
Why are you walking sideways?

ànggàcēlónyū sideways, crabwise

nyū esoya bane ànggàcēlónyū ch̀ì.ji.a?
you why sideways walk.PRES
Why are you walking sideways?

pèlhō horizontal

āsīprā pèlhō sō.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 130;

Table 130. 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

-cá on, above, on top of

átò.cá
tray.LOC
on the tray

àtà.cá
elephant.LOC
on the elephant

pó.cá kú yò
snow.LOC on slide
slide on the snow

This has a longer, quasi-pronominal form;

ēcá this place

This is incorporated in various directions ()

ànggōcá towards the upper part of the village

-gā place

ngā.gā
I.LOC
my place

-ko at, from, by

õ.kò
house.LOC
at the house

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

nàbā òkò.á ji.ga?
father at home.LOC sit.QM
is father at home?

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

-kū over; on; in

Acapra.kū

on the mat, *aphra.kū*

in the river bed

-mā

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

ngā Abali.mā ji.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 kō.gājì 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 mì
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 131 shows the locatives in Idu that has so far been identified;

Table 131. Idu locatives

Idu	Gloss
ābrāmè	everywhere
āmárí	underneath
àmùkū	outside house
àndōṅgō	below
àndōrũ	below platform
átúdrī	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

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

ilhīkhè āmáyī tōmō ābā á
 soil below dig.hide RQ AFF
 dig and hide it in the soil

àmùkū outside

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

ámōtò.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

āsīmbō 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.DET only walk.PRES say.NUM.PRES
it is said that only igu can go deep down

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

sā mē àmā ájú dèbālā.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 tāpūhù 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.DET go QM
who went before you?

nyú.mē ēhēyá la.gə chō
you.DET 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 [ēlā in Upper dialects]

ālā ja a
here come down AFF
come down here

ēcá dòtē.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’

ètālīmó

àtà ètālīmó a còhō.ne.ji
elephant on top LOC straddle.sit.PRES
straddle the elephant and sit on top of it

ètālīmū

ēcā ethre aya ājōprā 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 jí.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.

átú 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 átú 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 khàwúji
I behind something walk seems
something seems to be walking behind me

lēwēwē all around, from all sides

pūlīs.mē àkūyá lēwēwē deb̩.ga.aba
police.DET thief from all sides stand.x.EVD
the police surrounded the thief from all sides

ópitá behind the house

aya ópitá ìsiyā 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 ópitá 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 àndōṅgō can be used in identical contexts to āmárhí

àndōrũ below platform

āyā àndōrhũ 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 cìbū yote.hībàyi
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 132 summarises the Idu directionals so far recorded.

Table 132 summarises the Idu directionals so far recorded.

Table 132. Idu directionals

Category	Idu	Gloss
Orientation	àdrí	straight up e.g. if you are on the ground
	àmá	straight down e.g. if you are in a tree
	àyùmà	downwards
	àyùmànyū	towards downwards
	ètòlō	upwards
	ètò(lō)nyū	towards upwards
Cardinals	àló, yàló	North
	(y)àlónyú	northern side
	ātú	up there North
	àtúdrī	up there on top, high up
	ātúyā	there upwards there North (close)
	àmá	down South
	àmāyā	there South, downwards (close)
	àmányú	southwards
	àpí	on the south side, down there South (remote)
	àhí	over there East or West
	àhíyā	East or West (close from speaker)
àhílā	there East or West (close from speaker)	
Rivers	ànó	downstream
	àrhó	upstream
	àhínyū	on the other side
	(maci) hrēgēnyū	on the other side esp. rivers
	(maci) ěkōnyū	on this side esp. rivers
	ēlānū	on this side
	ēwānyū	on this side Hill dialect
īlīn(y)ū	on my side	
Villages	ànggōcá	towards the upper part of the village
	ànggōpò	towards the low-lying part of the village
Hand	ēcānyū	right side
	lākēnyū	left side

If you want to express remoteness from the speaker, the first vowel is lengthened ààhí, àààhí etc.

Orientation (vertical)

àdrí straight up e.g. if you are on the ground

aya àdrí àcápù àkhà aba a
 that up shelf keep RQ AFF
 Keep that on the shelf there

àmá straight down e.g. if you are in a tree

āsĩmbó.ane àmá andongo do.aja cho!
 tree.LOC there down jump.? IMP
 [You], jump down from the tree!

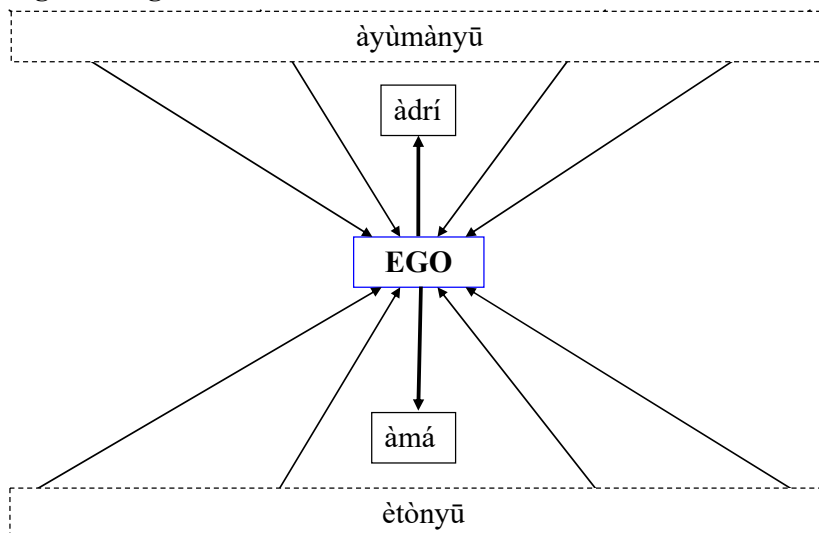
àyùmànyū downwards, down from there

āyā mane àyùmànyū ebo.aja go chi.pra.prayi
 there LOC downwards fall.FUT CON walk.good.AFF
 after coming down from there it is good to walk

ètònyū upwards (up from here)

ètònyū shu.himi.yi
 upwards climb.can.NEG.x
 it is hard to climb upwards

Figure 1. Egocentric directionals without cardinals



Cardinals

àlō North upwards [yàlō in Upper dialects]

ngá àlō Anini ne ja
 I north Anini LOC come
 I come [down] from Anini

Hūli yàlō kha.gayi
 Hunli up there lie.EVD
 Hunli is up there

àlō mráā ne ja?
 north hill LOC come?
 Have you come down from the hill?

yàlónyú northern side

yàlónyú ne liga.a ja.yi
northern side LOC fly.AFF come.PRES
they flew down from the northern side

ātú up there North

nga ālīyā ātú ànggōcá ji.gayi
my brother up there north side live.PRES
my brother lives up there in the upper part

àtúdrī up there, on top

àtúdrī īmūdù.ma pra li.gayi
up there sky.LOC bird fly.PRES
up in the sky, a bird is flying

ātúyā there upwards North

ātúyā moca pram.ne ho!
there near AFF EXCL
it is very near up there!

àhí over there East or West

àhí īmú khegə dè.gayi
there person one stand.PRES
One person is standing there

àhí ma isēyā me dè.ga?
there LOC who PRES stand.QM
Who is standing there?

àhíyā, àhílā there East or West very remote from speaker

àhílā ikū khəgə si tene kha.ga ma
there dog one die lie.PRES AFF
There's a dead dog over there

àhínyū the direction you are facing (East or West only)

àhínyū ba aba himi.a
there go IMP .AFF
go over to that direction

àhíyā there (East or West remote from speaker)

àhíyā āsīmbó.a pra.a khàgè ndo.gayi
 there tree.LOC bird.SING one perch.PRES
 A bird is perching on that tree over there

àhíyā isiya.ga ó.ó a?
 there whose.LOC house. QM
 Whose house is that over there?

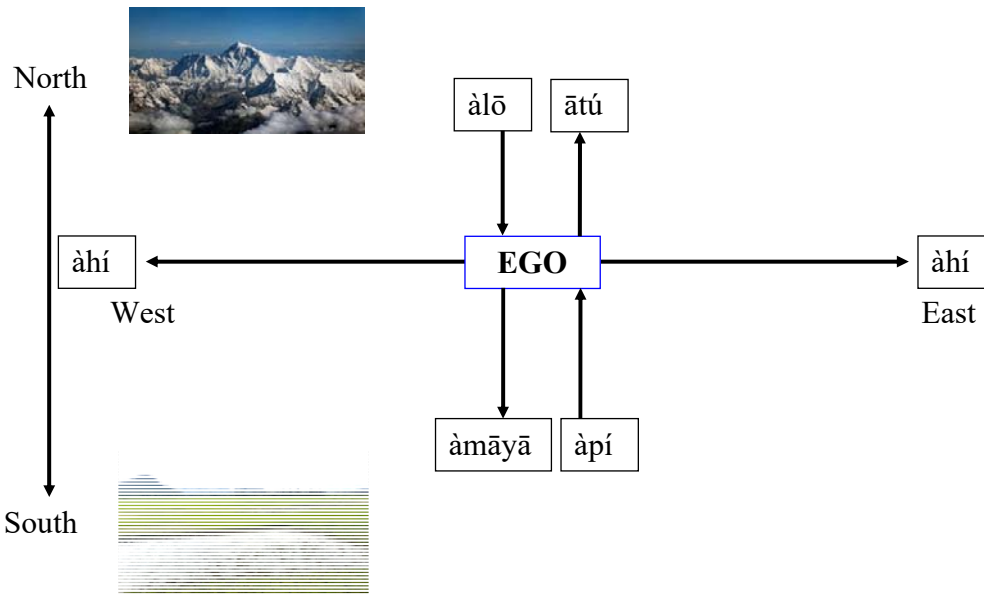
àmāyā there downwards, South

àmāyā gə a
 there go and come AFF
 Go there and come back

àpí from the south side, down there South

àpí nyune itu ayi?
 south you.LOC come QM
 Have you come from the South?

Figure 2. Directionals relation to mountains/ plains and cardinals



Villages

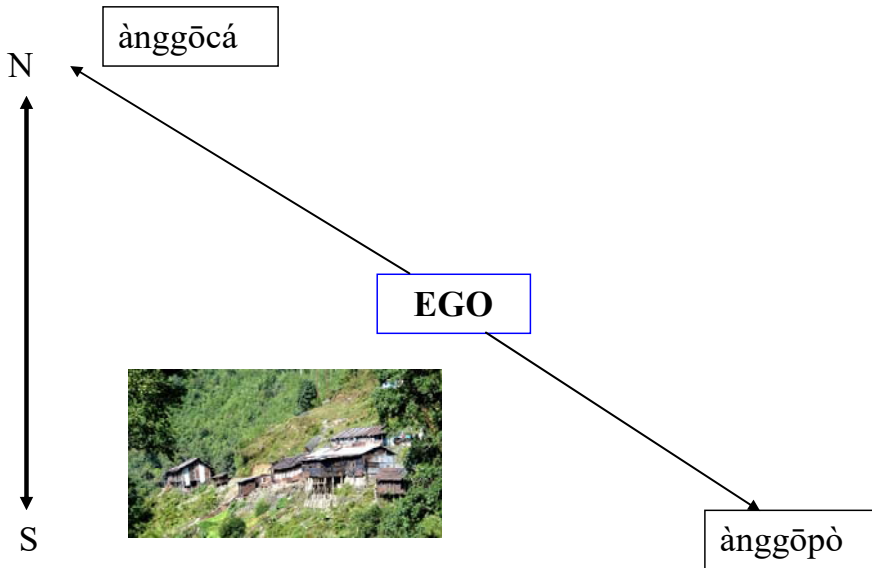
ànggōcá towards the upper part of the village

ngá ó he Ejengo atiko ànggōcá dunyu kha.gayi
 I house LOC Ejengo village upper part side lie.PRES
 my house is in the northern side of Ejengo village

ànggōpò towards the low-lying part of the village

ēcā ànggōpò dūnyu.ne āmó yà.gā ampu
 here downside side.LOC wind blow.x AFF
 the wind blows here from the downside

Figure 3. Directionals within the village



Rivers

ànó downstream (towards the mouth)

maci ànó dūnyu ba cho
 water downstream side go IMP
 Let's go downstream

àrhō upstream (towards the source)

maci àrhō dūnyu imu agu.gaga athu.jia?
 water upstream side people walk.PRES see.QM
 do you see people walking upstream?

ēwānyū on the other side

maci ēwānyū de gene gra.gayi
 river other side stand then shout.PRES
 he is standing on the other side of the river and shouting

īlīn(y)ū on my side (originally of a river)

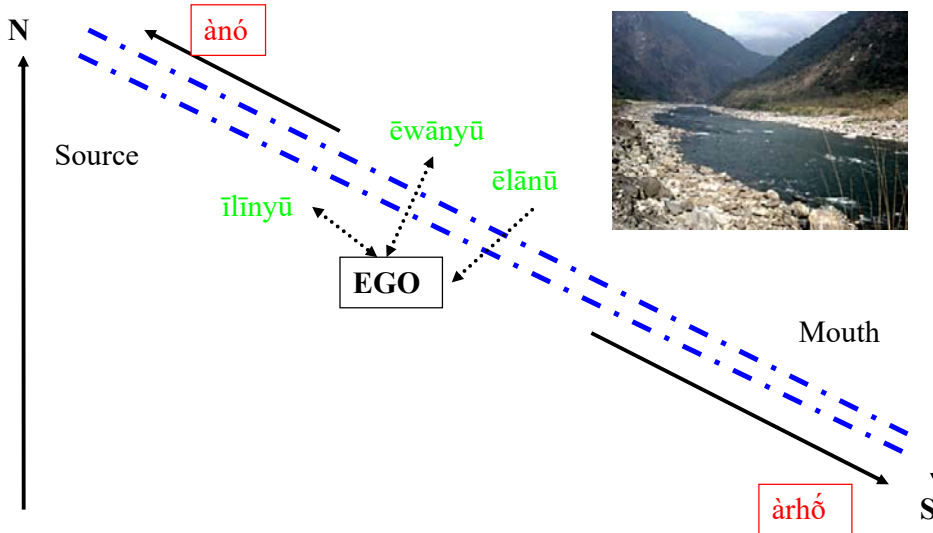
nyū īlīn(y)ū nga mbrōmrò ji

you this me with sit
 you sit this side with me

ēlānū on this side (originally of a river)

nyū èlānú ibi.lo
 you this side come.RQ
 you come this side please

Figure 4. Directionals from a riverbank



On both sides

ēnōnyū hòyà both sides

ēnōnyū hòyà ne āgū.prà.gāyì ma
 both sides LOC walk.possible.PST AFF
 it is possible to walk from both sides

ēnōnyū...dēgà describes s.t which is positioned both sides of the subject

nyū ēnōnyū imu dēgà
 you side people stand.PRES
 there are people standing on both sides of you

ēnōnyū dùnū at both ends

ngaci. ó ēnōnyū dùnū maci kha.ga
 I house both sides water lie.PRES
 water is lying on both sides of my house

Hand

ēcānyū right side

Imehi ci nyuko ēcānyū kha.gayi
Imehi.DET room right side lie.PRES
Imehi's room is on the right side

lākēnyū left side

ēcā nga lākēnyū de.ga
this me left side stand.AFF
this is on my left side

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

The marks rhetorical questions where the speaker is pretending to be surprised, as in;

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?

-gājìyà v.aux. verbal suffix marking present question for plural subjects

ēné àmbō hā.gā.jìyà?
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?

nyú àhò āhrũ là
you news hear QM
have you heard the news?

For third person the question marker is *hībà* pl. *gá.hībā*;

āyā hà hībà
he eat QM
has he eaten?

āyà hrùzī àmbō hā.gá.hībā
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 gō.ì bā
he come.AFF QM
yes, he came

The incomplete is unmarked in the second person;

ēnē Roying má gò.gā
you pl. Roing to go.NUM
did you pl. go to Roing?

āyà hrùzhī Roying má gí.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 mācī 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?

hàtā hàprà bŭ
food tasty is
Is the food tasty?

hàtā hàprà cī(à)bŭ
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 133). Morphologically they are quite diverse, though some contain a ka- element. The typical clause structure is;

S-INT-V

Table 133. Idu interrogatives

Gloss	Idu
who?	èsēyā, isēyā
where?	hānò, hānòā
when?	kājīhō
what? why?	ēsòyā, èsòwēyā
which?	kājīyā (mē)
why?	èsòwēyā dānē
how?	kājī wújī

Examples of their use are given below;

who? èsēyà...(mè)

When followed by a verb, followed by mè

èsēyà mè là.ga
who is say.PR
Who is saying that?

èsēyā hrŭnji 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 bŭ?
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?

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? kājīhǒ

kājīhǒ bà.w[è].à
when go.FUT
When will you go?

nyū kājīhǒ 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?

būdā v. is; are *nyū ēsòyā būdā nē álí la.jiya?* why are you speaking like that?

which? kàjìyā (mē)

īkū kàjìyā mē nyū gò thù.à bà
dog which DET you to bite.CPAST QM
Which dog bit you?

nyū 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?

nāwā marks rhetorical questions

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 134;

Table 134. 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
tēnē, tēnē, tégōnē	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;

thùwē jo.ma mà, prù kāgā.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 nyū 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 ālīyā 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

sō, hō while

Conjoins two verbs marking simultaneous actions;

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?

tēnè, tēnè, 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 135).

Table 135. 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;

ālib̄ə but, but still, even so, still

In most cases, *ālib̄ə* joins two declarative clauses, and is placed between them.

aya pra la.pra.ga ālib̄ə 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 ālib̄ə ĩcíbù 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 ālib̄ə ĩkū 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 ālib̄ə 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 ālib̄ə ĩcā 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.

ālib̄ə ĩcíbù 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

ēhēyá khàgè jā āthú.ji áyápāgò tándò thrūgá.hòjà.yì
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* (*bəya* 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

nyū ēsò.yā bānē ó.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

nyú mē la bēnē áli.ba
you say because happen
it happened because of what you began to say

ene ata ha gēnē ba.ji.aba
you pl. food eat then go
you pl. eat your food and then go

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

aya hangə gēnē apretega hibayi

he has been scolded because he was speaking coarsely

cīmē

Nga áli laji cīmē ahru.ga gūm̀
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 hiàgò hiba a
Food eat.finish then sleep AFF

Nu álí la.gə hiàgò āpāyā. 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 matõ
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 nyū 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 nàbā kholeba híàgò 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

cūū ji hōnē ahrũ hiyi
Quietly sit if hear able
Only if you sit quietly can you hear [anything]

nē is a sequential marker, similar to ‘then’, placed between two verbs;

nyú ata ha gene pàkū bā nē 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, focus and other particles

3.9.1 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 136;

Table 136. Idu evidential particles

Idu	Function	Approximate Gloss	Position
<i>āī</i>	pseudo-question marking affirmation	is it?	clause final
<i>būthūlà</i>	marks evidential certainty of the speaker	I experienced it myself	clause final
<i>cím</i>	maybe, perhaps, possibly, might	speaker’s assessment of likelihood	clause final
<i>dà</i>	affirmative evidential marking definiteness	definitely, certainly	clause final
<i>hò</i>	affirmative evidential particle	marked by demonstration	clause final
<i>khà, khàm</i>	marks indirect knowledge		
<i>làmpū</i>	affirms positively an immediate statement of speaker		clause final
<i>pùmà</i>	affirmative particle	really, definitely	
<i>dù</i>	part. affirmative particle	<i>nga.me ènggō ā dù</i> let me try it	

Examples of their use are given in the sentences below;

āī pseudo-question marking affirmation clause final

òò, álí *āī*?
 Oh! like that is it?
 Oh! Is it like that?

būthūlà marks evidential certainty of the speaker clause final

āyā mājì la.mbrā.yi būthūlà
 that person true say.really.PERF EVD
 that person spoke the truth, for certain

cím maybe, perhaps, possibly, might clause-final

Expresses the speaker's uncertainty about the likelihood of an event or explanation, but tending towards more likely than not;

khənyu mē bú àshúyì è.jì, cím
spirit DET that shock do.PST maybe
maybe the spirit shocked the child

In many examples, *cím* accompanies a verb which already includes the sense of likelihood;

Yō álà? āprā cím
Is it so? be likely might
Is it so? It might be

ètō īlīlī gə go prāpràwè cím
chicken this size be likely probable
this size of chicken will probably do

dà affirmative evidential clause-final

Used to assure the listener of the speaker's conviction about the truth of a proposition;

á lí la.ga dà
like that say.PRES definitely
it is definitely said like that

nga ata hawə gūmì dà
I food eat.FUT NEG certainly
I certainly won't eat food

ngá bú aya bawə dà
I also there go.FUT definitely
I'll definitely also go there

hǒ affirmative evidential clause-final;

marks demonstration by the speaker

á lí mǎcí.mē, hǒ
like this ?? EVD
Yes, it's like this

khà, khàm marks indirect knowledge clause-final;

hā prā.yi khà
eat good.PRES EVD
[someone has told me] it is good to eat

āyā á lí 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’

exx

affirms positively an immediate statement of speaker

āi, ngā.mē lā làmpū
yes I.DET say EVD
yes, I have said it

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

gābā part. for; on; at

ājīmbrè v.t. to make s.t. together; to co-operate; to work together
ēnē pòrikā gābā pròjèk ājīmbrè ji a All of you work together to make your project for the exams

3.9.2 Conditional markers

bá c.m. if

Nyu ali laji bəya nga bā na weya
you like that talk. I go

If you say like that I will go back.

bwē.à

3.10 Numerals

Idu basic numerals are shown in Table 137 and those of Tawra and Kman are presented for comparison;

Table 137. Idu lower numerals

Gloss	Idu	Tawrā	Kman
One	khàgè	khin	kəmu ^m
Two	kà.nyì	kayiŋ	kəni ^m , kəyi ^m
Three	kà.sō	kasəŋ	kəsə ^m
Four	kà.pri	kaprayk	kəmbɾ ^m
Five	màngá	maŋa	kələ ^m
Six	tāhrō	tahro	kəta ^m
Seven	í(r)ù	wē	n ^m
Eight	ilhú	lim	gr ^m
Nine	khriṅ	kijəŋ	nətmù
Ten	hūū	hálaŋ	kyəpmu ^m

Tawrā 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 138. Idu has a fairly regular decimal system, although due to some assimilation, forms cannot always be reliably predicted.

Table 138. Idu higher numerals

Numeral	Idu
11	hōlōkè
12	hūlūnyī
13	hōlōsō
14	hūlūprī
15	hōlōmā
16	hōlōhrō
17	hūlūù
18	hūlū ū
19	hūlūkhriṅ
20	ānyīhū
30	àsōhū
40	kəprīhū
50	màngāhū
60	tāār.hū
70	īūhū
80	ī ūhū
90	khənyī hū
100	mālō

Table 139 shows the Idu cardinal numbers.

Table 139. Idu cardinal numbers

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

Once	b̀̀g̀̀g̀̀
Twice	b̀̀ǹ̀ỳ̀i
Thrice	b̀̀à̀s̀̀d̄̀
Four times	b̀̀p̀̀r̀̀i
Five	b̀̀m̀̀à̀ŋ̀̀á
Six	b̀̀(t)̀̀ā̀̀hr̄̀o
Seven	b̀̀ì̀r̀̀ù
Eight	b̀̀ì̀ ̀̀ú
Nine	b̀̀k̀̀hr̄̀in̄̀i
Ten	b̀̀h̄̀ũ̀ũ̀

ngá Teju b̀̀g̀̀g̀̀.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 140. 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 140. Idu numerals and compound forms

Gloss	Numerals	Days	Nights (i.e. 24 hrs)
one	kh̀̀g̀̀g̀̀	ĩnyĩg̀̀g̀̀	éyág̀̀g̀̀
two	k̀̀à̀.nỳ̀i	ányínyĩ	ínyĩ
three	k̀̀à̀.s̄̀d̄̀	àsónyĩ	ēs̀̀d̄̀
four	k̀̀à̀.p̀̀r̀̀i	káprínyĩ	ĩp̀̀r̀̀i
five	m̀̀à̀ŋ̀̀á	m̀̀à̀ŋ̀̀ányĩ	jím̀̀à̀ŋ̀̀á
six	t̄̀ā̀̀hr̄̀o	t̄̀ā̀̀hr̄̀ónyĩ	éhr̄̀o
seven	íù	íùnyĩ	jíù
eight	ì ̀̀ú	ì ̀̀únyĩ	jì ̀̀ú
nine	kh̄̀r̄̀in̄̀i	kh̄̀in̄̀yínyĩ	j̄̀kh̄̀ōnyĩ
ten	h̄̀ũ̀ũ̀	h̄̀ũ̀ũ̀nyĩ	ĩsũ, jíh̄̀ũ̀ũ̀

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 141);

Table 141. 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 142.

Table 142. Idu words imitating sounds directly

Idu	Sense
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
khró	sound of hitting with a knife
nđī	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 143;

Table 143. Idu conventional sound-symbolic formulae

Idu	Sense
gūndū gārā	noise made by vessels falling down and rolling around
kèrì kòrò	noise of constant activity
khèrì khòrò	noise of wild animal walking on pebbles or gravel

pīṭī pēlē	noise made when the fishes are jumping or two people are exchanging blows
phàṛì 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 144;

Table 144. Conventional and actual animal noises

Species	Idu
cow or mithun, conventional	gū
pig, conventional	grà
pig = noise of vomiting	èr
pig (actual)	ṛēēē
dog, conventional	ṛū
tiger, conventional	khú
tiger (actual)	hũũ...
leopard, conventional	ngā
jackal, conventional	grá
jackal (actual)	wāā
barking deer, conventional	hṛō
cock, conventional	ṛū
cock when you grab it	wāā
hen, conventional	āṭā
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 145;

Table 145. 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 146. 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

drindrà-drindrà describes flashing colours and lights

Example

dùhù-dùhù describes a person walking swiftly seen in dim light or far away

Example

hihu tene nyū 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

nyū esoya bane āsīmbó lēwēlēwē agu jia?
you what happen tree round and round walk QM
why are you walking round and round the tree?

āmrūhù mílūlù mo kō gane khaga yi

the embers of the fire are still glowing, *mílūlù*

atuya nàbā Nàmjī mē pāhùpāhù e deyī

there goes father Namji walking heavily

khomē mē tsù-tsù-tsù embra ga

I am boiling with anger

Ideophones with a simple CV(V) structure do occur, but they are apparently rarer.

chǎǎ without any difficulty, at one go

nyú abrato tǎpà chǎǎ ceta.ba
you bamboo cut down chǎǎ 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

āmra mē drōō àlhī.ne āthú.ga
tiger drōō gaze. look.
the tiger is gazing with wide gleaming eyes

tūci dròòdròò kǒ.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 146) to nominal and adjectival phrases (Table 147). 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 153) also consist of paired collocations. However, the structure of these is far more diverse than those in Table 147 and importantly, the second term in many collocations has no clear etymology. Nonetheless, the *igu* lexicon draws on the same underlying structure.

Table 147 shows possible etymologies of the paired collocations, although tonal changes to verb roots means these cannot always be identified with certainty.

Table 147. Idu expressives as paired collocations

Idu	Sense	Possible etymology
càcì làpē	annoying things	undermine + throw
céi ngéi	describes felling trees	cut-ter + saw-er
chímì dēmī	doing nothing serious	
chīpō chilà	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 àthàmì	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 +
hūkə̀ 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)	
kə̀lī kālā ~	s.t. loose which is about to fall	
kə̀njī kālā		
kəlī kəlē	s.o. constantly restless (like a monkey)	
kə̀ti kə̀li ~ kə̀ti	s.t. small	
kəri		
kútò jītō	describes becoming destitute after helping s.o.	
lākhə̀ wùkhə̀	act of talking a lot without saying anything	lit. 'speak + defecate + think + defecate'
lākhə̀ lāwə̀	talk nonsense	lit. 'speak + defecate + think +
lāmì wùmì	not behaving appropriately	speak not + think not
lōtá dātā	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 + ?
pícì pìlì	describes blinking repeatedly	
pītī pēlē	describes noise made when the fishes are jumping	
prākū còkù	describes inserting the penis	
rhùmì dūmì	emergency situation	
sòkə̀ sòlì	describes how a person or animal walks when they kick their feet out blindly (e.g. an elephant)	lit. 'wrong not + quick not'

Idu	Sense	Possible etymology
súpè sùlò	describes snaking through a crowd	insert put on wall + insert insert finger
sūprā īprā	incredible, unbelievable	
thèprā thèyà	put every effort into s.t.	lit. urinate + salivate
thòmì bàmi	being entirely silent	not speaking not whispering
túpè tūlè	moving from side to side, flexible	lit. bend left + bend right
úkrè mèkrè	touching quickly and lightly many times	pluck remove + tear remove
ūngēre	touching quickly and lightly many times	pluck repeatedly + tear repeatedly
mēngērē		

Examples of these expressions in use;

bádá gādā nook and cranny, everywhere

àhí bádá gādā mama trākò.mì mana!
 there nook and cranny ? poke.not
 Don't poke in every nook and cranny!

cācì làpē annoying things

ēnē cācì làpē ji.mi
 you pl. annoying things ?
 you pl. should not do annoying things

cèi ngèi describes not needing to include everyone

asimbo ho cèi ngèi hone laba ehiwe macimoho

only by cutting-sawing can you make the tree fall down.

chímì dēmī doing nothing serious

chímì dēmī jihu gəgo ikhribri baba eyi sitting idle paralyses a person

chīpā chilà reaching somewhere by searching

njōta bawe dane chīpā chilà jama I walk over here to get to the work place.

chītā chihà walking at random and reaching somewhere

nyu esoweya badanə chītā chihà ejia?

why are you walking randomly?

chīthū chimirà making walking difficult

alyō bu chīthū chimirà buda the road is difficult to walk on

ēcōmī àthàmì not providing drink and food

Example

émrò lālò doing and saying wrong things

Example

hākū hàtù act of stealing/snatching, etc.

mīcī hākū 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

hīmi àthāmi coming home late

hūkḡ hùlī describes waving a stick around at random

a àhíyā ātōpó gəə nə hūkḡ hùlī è.ga āthú.ji.ma
child there stick ? waving a stick do.PRES see
I see that child is waving a stick around hūkḡhùlī

īdù ēkhrà 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 ~ kālīnjī 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

lākhḡ wùkhḡ act of talking a lot without saying anything

lākhḡwùkhḡ ndō la.m 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

núsù 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

pītī pēlē describes id. *amaya àngā me pītī pēlē dogā gayi* the fishes are
noise jumping *pītī pēlē*
made when the
fishes are
jumping

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 sòlì describes how a person or animal walks when they kick their feet out blindly (e.g. an elephant)

ata bu sòkàsòlì eho 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 mèkrè touching quickly and lightly many times

Example

ũṅgēre 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 set of interjections which can precede or follow a sentence or can stand alone. Evidential particles (Table 136), which are nearly always clause-final, and which express the speaker’s attitude to the truth-value of a statement are sometimes very similar in function. These are shown in Table 148 with sentence contexts given below.

Table 148. Idu interjections

Idu	Sense	Position
á	OK, yes	
āhīmī.à	OK	
āī...	expressed sadness	Sentence final
dā!	expresses incredulity in response to a surprising statement	Standalone
dōà	like that!	Sentence final
hñ	expresses annoyance	Sentence initial
hō...	expresses request	Sentence final
ht	expresses irritation	Sentence initial
húù	marks affirmation of a perfective imperative	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 OK, yes

Example

āhīmī.à OK

āprāhīmī.à. nyū.mē gè á. āhīmī.à

you go and come back, OK?

āīi...

sentence-final

ārḥū shímì.d āīi...

I don't want to hear this

dā expresses incredulity in response to a surprising statement

ālīyā dà
younger brother! EVD
Brother! What?

dōà like that!

ēcā álí gūmì dōà
this that not like like that
It's not like that!

h't

h't! ārḥū shímì.dā
Grr!

Grr! I am tired of hearing this

hñ Huh!

precedes sentence.

Hn! nyú mē laga.ca ēsòyā dane ārḥū we
Huh! I
Huh! Why should I listen to what you are saying?

hō... expresses request sentence final

á che.o.mì ne, ho!

Yes, please
Yes, accept this not, ho! i.e. I refuse

òmtírà há mánā, ho!
orange give IMP please
Give [me] an orange, please

nyú pa.ung nga ha.lo

Give me the money

húù affirmation of a perfective imperative

húù marks affirmation of a perfective imperative

While in the past it becomes pūcī.bú

nyū Tezu gē pūcī.bú húù
you Tezu go and come should.COM AFF
You should have gone to Tezu

The affirmative particle húù allows the sentence to be complete.

làmpū positive affirmation clause-final

í

Goes at both ends of the sentence.

ìbìshì dá, í!

I feel fear

kùú

in hide and seek

làà..., lāā

precedes sentence

m̄m̄

m̄m̄, 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

dā¹ 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: the noun phrase

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 ìbishì 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

4.2.1 Residual case marking?

-gò conj. with Could be treated as a nominal suffix.

āyā ikū.gò tārḥō.ga
he dog.with play.PRS
he is playing with the dog

In some examples, the sense is comitative;

āyā Mite.gò gè.bā
he Mite.with return.go
he came and went with Mite

ngá.gò ijīgúmì da ū.mì a
I.ACC no value

don't undermine me

ikhribri lè bà buda ne imú.gò esapə e pra.gū.mi

just because someone is lame, we should not insult him

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 àjè 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 tārḥō.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 O₂ DAT O₁ 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 ikū
this Linggi of dog
This is Linggi’s dog

ebəya nyū jíhrò ahrū.himì 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 bũthùlà
that person true say.really.PERF EVD
that person spoke the truth, for certain

nyū āājìjì la.ne bu nga.we
you whatever say.

Whatever you say it is not possible

nànyī ālū gida.ne sè daga hi.nàbā
 mother vengeance ? murder ?
 they have avenged the murder of the mother

4.2.2 Paired collocations

Table 149. Idu paired collocations with nominal sense

Idu	Approximate gloss	Possible etymology
àtómū	reserved place for hunting	? + grazing area
àprāmū		
àtōyī àlōyī	metalworker	blacksmithing + making hole
àyòjī ngājì	drizzle that stops and starts	
bédá gādā	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 nǎí	person who knows, educated person	
kāsī kāmù	small things to do	
tāí rìí	person who is good at craft or weaving	one who weaves + one who pulverises

bédá gādā nook and cranny

àhí bédá gādā māmā thrākè.mi mǎnā
 there nook and cranny area poke.NEG IMP
 Don't poke in every nook and cranny!

bràcí bràlí drizzle

bràcí bràlí è.gāyí
 drizzle do.PRS
 it is drizzling

kāsī kāmū many small things to do

nga ó.koa kāsī kāmū njòndò.hi.mi khà mbrā ma
 I house.LOC small things do.x.NEG lie? really EVD
 there are so many small things around the house I have to do

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. Some elements of a system of pronominal cross-referencing have been retained, but this is definitely a system in decline. Tone is very important in signalling aspects of the TAM system and must be carefully marked to interpret the sentence correctly. Although tones in Idu are generally static, verbal suffixes can have the effect of bringing down the tone of the verb to which they are attached. Idu is a pro-drop or null-subject language in that subject pronouns and heads can be omitted if their referents are obvious from the context. In dialogue, for example in response to an explicit question, objects can also be omitted (). Direct equative sentences do not require a verb (§4.2.6).

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 (§3.9.1).

4.2.1.2 Generic present

Where the bare verb has no TAM markers or pronominal agreement marks a generic present;

ngá ibìshì dá
I fear feel
I'm afraid

ngá hàg̃sì dá
I hungry feel
I feel hungry

The pronoun is often dropped, especially when preceded by an exclamation;

I! ibìshì dá
Oh fear feel
Oh! I'm afraid

The negative is similar;

rhūcā lā.mì
without thinking speak.NEG
don't speak without thinking

āj̃j̃j̃i whatever; anything

nyū āj̃j̃j̃i lā nē bú ngà.we
you whatever say even so not be.?
Whatever you say it is not possible

nànyī ālū gida.ne sè daga hi.nàbā
mother vengeance ? murder ? ?
they have avenged the murder of the mother

4.2.1.3 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 *-gà-*.

-jì

ngá tó.jì
I drink.PCONT
I am drinking

-gā.jì

īnyí àmbō hā.gā.jì
we maize eat.NUM.PCONT
we are eating maize

ēcā paku inyi kanyi me mbré.gá.gà.jì.ī
owned by.NUM.PRS
this field is owned by two of us

An affirmative reply to a question about the truth value of a question adds the evidential *ī*;

ngā tō.jì.ī
I drink.PRES.AFF
Yes, I am drinking

āyā tō.jì.ī
He drink.PRES.AFF
Yes, he drinks habitually

Another meaning

āyā tō.jì.ī
He drink.PRES.AFF
Yes, he is drinking

āyà hrùzhī tō.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 tō.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;

ngá àmbó hā.jì.ì

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 tō̄.jī.mì

I drink.PRES.NEG

I am not drinking

and in the plural;

īnyī tō̄.gā.jī.mì

we drink.NUM.PRES.NEG
we are not drinking

Also in the second person;

nyū tō.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 tō.gā.mì
he sg. drink.PRES.NEG
he is not drinking

But in the plural, an additional -gā- can be optionally inserted;

āyà hrùjī tō.[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 tō.jì.gū.mì
I drink.PRES.EVD.NEG
I am [definitely] not drinking

ngá hàgī̀sì.gà

I feel hungry

4.2.1.4 Present habitual

Idu distinguishes generic present, present continuous and present habitual. The present habitual singular is marked with a *ì.ì* suffix and plural with *gā.ì.ì*. The homophony with the evidential *-ì* 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 tō.ì.ì
I drink.PRES
I drink habitually

nyū tō.ì.ì
you sg. drink.PRES
you drink habitually

āyā tō.ì.ì
he drink.HAB
he drinks habitually

For plural pronouns, the number marker *-gā* is inserted after the verb stem;

īnyī tō̄.gā.ì.ī
we drink.NUM.HAB
we drink habitually

āyà hrùzhī tō̄.gā.ì.ī
they drink.NUM.HAB
they drink habitually

āyà hrùzhī àmbō hā.gá(gà).yī
they maize eat.NUM.HAB
they are eating maize

However, for the second person plural, the marker *hrùzhī* (normally associated with the third person plural) can be optionally inserted after the pronoun;

ēnē [hrùzhī] tō̄.gā.ì.ī
you pl. drink.NUM.HAB
you pl. drink habitually

Negation

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 tō̄.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 tō̄.ī.mì
I drink.AFF.NEG
I am not drinking [now]

4.2.1.5 Future

Idu marks the future with the suffix *-ì.yà.wə̀*;

nyū mācī tō̄.ì.yà.wə̀
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 tō̄.gā.ì.yà.wə̀
you pl. water drink.NUM.FUT
you pl. will drink water

and negation inserts *gūmì* between *yà* and *wə̀*;

nyū mǎcī tǒ.ì.yà.gūmì.wà
you sg. water drink.FUT
you sg. will not drink water

ēcā rùmāl lò dǔgù bā ànyū.lābà a
this handkerchief very white become wash.FUT AFF
wash this handkerchief till it becomes very white

4.2.1.6 Recent past/incompletive

The marker of the recent past or incompletive is *-hībà* pl. *-gā.hībà*

nyū mǎcī tǒ.hībà
you sg. water drink.RPAST
you drank water

ēnē mǎcī tǒ.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 tǒ.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 tǒ.hī.mì.bà
you sg. water drink.RPAST.NEG.RPAST
you could not drink water

More examples

4.2.1.7 Continuous past

The marker of the continuous past is *-[ī].cì*, which can bracket a negative. So;

ngā mǎcī tǒ.īcì
I water drink.PSTCONT
I was drinking water

nyū mǎcī tǒ.īcì
you sg. water drink.PSTCONT
you were drinking water

However, in the third person, the *ī* is omitted;

āyā mǎcī tǒ.gā.cì

he water drink.NUM.PCONT
he was drinking water

Plurals are similar with the infixing of the number marker *-gā*;

īnyī mācī tō̄.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 hrūzhī mācī tō̄.gā.[g]à.cì
they water drink.NUM.3P.PCONT
they were drinking water

-gana

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

Negation

In negative statements, *gūmì* is bracketed by *ì* and *cì*;

ngā mācī tō̄.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 mācī tō̄.gà.gūmì.cì
he water drink.NUM.NEG.PCONT
he was not drinking water

4.2.1.8 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 mācī tō̄.ìcì
I water drink.PHAB
I used to drink water

The plurals are formed with the addition of *-gā* as elsewhere;

īnyī mǎcī tǔ.gā.ìcì
 we water drink.PHAB
 we used to drink water

āyà hrǔzhī mǎcī tǔ.gā.ìcì
 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 tǔ.ì.gūmì.cì
 I water drink.PCONT
 I did not use to drink water

4.2.1.9 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?

mūlà s.v. to be roasted *nyu tàmbre mūlà haji ai?* are you eating roast meat?

We need more examples of this with different pronouns. Check tones

-gáhíbā verbal suffix marking definite recent past for third person plural subjects

āyà hrǔjī àmbō hā.gáhíbā
 they maize eat.PERF
 they have eaten maize

còkù v. to remove s.t. from s.t. cylindrical, such as a shirt from the arm *alama tabu me kopra còkù.tē ane khaga yi. a snake has shed its skin here*

ōtē c.v. to have been shot lit. 'shoot' + 'keep'. *àhiyā mabre khage òtē ane khaga yi* one goat is lying there, shot

mū.hí s.v. to have been roasted

4.2.1.10 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.gāgò.bà
 they come.PL.x.go
 they had come

āyà hrùzhī gì.gāgò.bà
 they come.PL.x.go
 they had come

Affirmative

āyà hrùjī gò.gá.bà.gūmì.ē
 they.PL go.NUM.CPAST.AFF
 yes, they had come

or;

āyà hrùjī gò.gá.bà.m
 they.PL go.NUM.PLPST.AFF
 yes, they had come

āyà hrùjī gò.gá.bà.mì
 they.PL go.NUM.PLPST.AFF
 so, they had not come

4.2.2 Imperatives

4.2.4.1 Positives

Idu has a variety of markers indicating the imperative (Table 150). The majority are suffixed to the verb, but some are independent morphemes, such as *chō*, which is always in clause-final position.

Table 150. Imperative marking in Idu

Category	Morpheme	Person
Plain	no marking	any
Direct order	-na	
Less polite	chō	any
Jussive	há	
Future	pū	

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

āmā² to paste s.t. on a flat surface

āmā nē ade
paste ? ?
paste it there

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

nā imperative marker

kāmā.mì nā
frown.NEG IMP
don't frown!

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, 'should' uses *pū*;

nyū Tezu bā pū.yí
you Tezu go should
You should go to Tezu

nyū Tezu gē pū.yí
you Tezu go and come should
You should go to Tezu and return

In a negative imperative, the negation is attached to the verb, and the auxiliary follows it;

nyu bā.mi pū á
you go.NEG. should OK
don't you go, OK

pūcī mā is a softened or polite imperative, more like a suggestion;

nyū Tezu bā pūcī mā
you Tezu go should AFF
You should go to Tezu

The perfective imperative, 'should have', is *pūcī.bú*.

nyū Tezu gē pūcī.bú húù
you Tezu go and come should.COM EVD
You should have gone to Tezu

The evidential particle *húù* marks the status of the imperative.

mānā implies irritation or sadness

á lí e.mì mānā
like that behave.NEG IMP
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 general 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
 He should not go to Tezu

Tezu bā.mī.na la[bā]
 Tezu go.NEG.3pPRES
 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 hrūzhī Tezu bā.ji.mī.à pūcī dā.yi
 they Tezu go.CONT.NEG.3p should AFF.CONC
 They should not have gone to Tezu

nyū álí ena ahrū.jiya
 you like that do.x are you listening?
 you behave like that,

The morpheme *ēm* functions as a negative imperative is presumably a reduced form of *ē* ‘do’ + *-mī*, which accounts for its non-final position in some constructions.

á lí ē.m nā
 like that do.NEG IMP
 don’t do that!

kənā part. follows negative *ali em kəna nyu* you don’t do like that
 imperatives

òm	v.a.	negative imperative marker
----	------	----------------------------

a cho.òm it won’t be possible. *ali om ne ho!* yes, it is like that

4.2.3 Modal auxiliaries

4.2.3.1 ‘may, might’

A construction with no explicit auxiliary is;

a mē hā.ló.ga.wə
 child DET eat.wait.FUT
 the child might be waiting to eat

kəda	<i>na ehi wesa kəda!</i> you might hurt yourself.
------	---

The concept of ‘may, might’ is expressed by the verbal auxiliary *wēsà*, following the main verb.

wēsà kādā v.a. may; might *na ehi wēsà kàda!* you might hurt yourself, take care
naba me khoyi wesa kàda father might scold you

nyū èlè lāhītò wēsà dā
 you bad be accused might AFF
 someone might accuse you of s.t. bad, so

ēmò ngī wēsà ndo lā.mi a
 ? might be speak.NEG

do not speak of things which might be ill-omened

ālūpì wēsà
 consequences may be
 there may be consequences

sà part. ???

aya ali wēsà sà! it may be like that!

nābā mēlò ne ètágè gəyina wēsà dānē lōlōine jiji ma
 father another place LOC something bring back might then expect ?
 I am expecting my father might bring s.t. for me from somewhere else

cīpèdá might be; could be; possibly; must be

lī.yi cīpèdá ēcā bíhū.ji puma
 quake.PRS must be this shake.PRS COP
 this is shaking, it must be an earthquake

pəda ??? *injata ayo jawe cipəda!* it might rain in the evening

prōō s.v. to be probable; to be possible; might

ēcā.mò aliwe prōō.yi
 this like that. might.PRS
 this might be like that

4.2.3.2 Facilitative

Idu has a wide variety of expression denoting the auxiliary ‘can’ or the secondary verb ‘be able’. These change according to whether they are uttered as an affirmative declaration or as a response to a query.

nyu ó ājī.la wa?
 you house build can QM
 can you build a house?

The reponse can be;

nga ó ājī.làwèm nèhō
I house build.can of course
I can build a house

nga ó ājī.hīmìwè
I house build.can
I cannot build a house

nyu ó ājī.làwèmì àthū.jì mà
you house build.can.NEG see.PRS AFF
I see that you cannot build a house

aya ó ājī.làwèmì àthū.jì mà
you house build.can.NEG see.PRS AFF
I see that you cannot build a house

inyi ó ājī.hīmìwè
we house build.can
we cannot build a house

the meaning of the following is similar but it sounds more formal;

nga ó ājā.là wè màcí mòhō
I house build can
I can build a house

Another way to express this is to use the secondary verb *prà* 'be possible, can'. In this case, both the object and the agent are omitted.

aji pra.lawe wèm nèhō
build possible can [of course!]
it can be built!

Using a form like this expresses optimism and capacity.

prà be possible; can

ēnōnyū hòyà ne āgū prà.gāyì ma

it is possible to walk from both sides

Affirmation

nga ó ajila we
I house build can
I can build a house

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

If a negative is required, then *òm*, a negative imperative marker can be used;

a chō òm
ha! IMP happen.NEG
ha! it won't be possible

ali òm nèhǒ!
like that ? of course

yes, it is like that

ali e òm kha
like thatdo IMP
do like that, OK!

4.2.3.3 Seeming

The verb *khàwú* 'to seem that, to appear that' acts like a verbal auxiliary, since it is placed in sentence-final position.

ahiya nga nàbā me agu.ji khàwú.ji
there my father DET to walk.PRES it seems.PRES
the person walking there seems to be my father

4.2.4 Relative clauses

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]

4.2.5 Conditionals

bá	c.m.	if; if so	A shortened form of <i>bāyā</i> . <i>Nyu ali laji bá nga bana weya</i> If you say like that I will go back.
bāyā	c.m.	if; if so	bá is a shortened version of <i>bāyā</i> . <i>alyō elē bāyā bami laweya</i> if road is bad I won't go
gò	c.m.	if	<i>ngame lage gò khoyi</i> we if I speak, I will be scolded
hiàgò	c.m.	then; subsequently; if	<i>nyu ngaga iga weda la hiàgò, esoweya ba?</i> you said you would come to the place, what happened?
hōnē	c.m.	if	<i>aya ò hōnē prawe chiyi</i> it would be good if he was also here

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

lā.misi bwē.à laa jā, chō
 speak.desire to if speak start PM
 If you want to speak, go ahead!

bāyā part. conditional marker; equivalent in meaning to ba
 if; if so *alyō elē bāyā bami laweya* if road is bad I won't go

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
 you like that talk.COND I you beat.
 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.jǐbá 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.jìbā ngá āyā hrūji ikùtè.là.wèyā
they like that talk.COND I them beat.FUT
If they talk like that, I'll beat you

ēmāgá v. to compete *inyi kanyi ēmāgá cane laji gumi ma* I am not saying
this in order to make the two of us compete

4.2.6 Copulas, equative sentences

Idu does not have a single strategy for marking copulas or equative sentences. A copula, or indeed any verb at all, is not required for direct equative sentences;

ngá Ídù
I Idu
I am Idu

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 kèdā
màpū de
hè

lò kèdā it is

ālī lò kèdā
this it is
that's how it is

ālī āmbrā lò kèdā.yì
this really it is.x
it's really like this

màpū de it is

álī 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

būdā v. is; are *nyū ēsòyā būdā nē álí la.jiya?* why are you speaking like that?

4.2.7 Reported speech

gārī weya alapra.me cǎ.aba da la.ga ma
car
he says that the vehicle was hit by a rock

tambre.me hembrə gə àpí yi la.gaga

it is said that the animals pass on diseases

ũ la.la.gūmì da lā.ga ma
he say say
he said that he didn't say it

4.2.8 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 there is a number-marking suffix indexing 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;

lákḥwùkh̄ 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

4.2.9 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 lexicalised compound verbs (§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.

ēhényá khàgò jā āthú.jì áyápàgò 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.

Most commonly, sequential verbs are separated with conjunctions such as nē.

bēlēchē nē cōpōtó.bayi
 to slip and to fall.PST
 he slipped and fell down

In this example, two verbs are in sequence and joined to a third verb with a sequential marker;

intsī shù jāli ba cī kě gēnē há lōi
 chili red get choose and give IMP
 choose a red chili and give it to me

ngá pàwú ngá ba dane ó kōkó ālākū la.kotho mbra la ma
 I money I house in rummage couldn't find

I have lost my money so I rummaged throughout the house, but I didn't find it

4.2 Other structures

4.3 Associative construction

The normal genitive construction is reversed when preceded by a demonstrative. Thus;

ēcā Līngī cī ikū
 this L. of dog
 This is Linggi's dog

ngá cī ó nyū cī mì àlělò kālō.ya mǎpū
 I of house you of NEG length be tall. is
 my house is longer than yours

4.4 Qualification

4.4.1 Bare adjectives

4.4.1.1 Adjectives

Qualification of nouns in Idu is through either true adjectives or stative verbs. Adjectives usually follow the noun they qualify;

īmú khòpò
man angry

mācī cīnī
water big
big river

āsīmbó kālō
tree tall
tall tree

Where there is more than one adjective, 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 mǎngá īcīkhè 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 mǎngá
paper piece red CLF five
five pieces of red paper

The *ná* could be omitted without any change to the meaning.

It is possible to have adjectives in sequence without a connecting particle although this does not sound very natural;

āsīmbó shù kālō
tree red tall

ikū mà īcīkhè
dog black small
a small black dog

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

khopo ìmú
angry man

In equative sentences, the typical word order is;

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

as in;

ìnjū̀sì 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;

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

àhíyā ń kāchī.yì
there house be big.PRES
the house there is big

kā salty, bitter e.g. taste of bitter gourd
kāchī big
mā ń ripe (only fruits)

4.4.2 Adjectival phrases

Idu has a variety of multi-lexeme adjectival phrases, which appear in a similar slot to single-word adjectives;

sú jākà̀mì ‘restless’

ìmú bú à sú jākà̀mì mbrā puma
man that restless really COP
the man is really restless

sú jākà̀mì a.p. restless; et. ‘sit + insert + ?’. *a bú jī sú jākà̀mì mbrā ho puma* this
unfocused; s.o. child is very fidgety *ìmú bú à sú jākà̀mì mbrā pu ma* that
who wriggles in man is really restless
their seat; fidgety

dī hùhù imposing

ìmú āyā mo dī hùhù āthú.yiga puma
man this imposing look.PCONT COP
that man looks very imposing

kàpà lèkōtā disabled; handicapped; crippled

īmú kàpà lèkōtā njo hi.himi.yi
person disabled work do.not
a disabled person cannot work

4.4.3 Stative verbs

cò be short, be less

ēcā pàwú cò pùmà
this money be 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

nyū 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

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

nyū 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

èndō to be s.v.
straight

ēcā angito èndō.yì
this bamboo be straight.PRS
this bamboo is straight

ēnóngá to be unprincipled; to be shameless; to be immoral

īmú áhr̀mì he ēnóngá.yì
person notorious ? be shameless.PRS
the notorious man is shameless

ètá s.v. to be fried *tambre **ètá**.la ha.pra me tando* fried meat is so good to eat
grī s.v. to become ragged *e.ece grī ba bəya phrite layi mo hō* if the dao blade has
as the blade of a *become ragged, sharpen it!*

dao, or worn
teeth
hā prā s.v. to taste good *nànyī mē bòla ànāprà hāprā mē tándò the vegetables
cooked by the mother are very tasty*

4.5 Syntax of adverbs

āyàsō

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 khètākhrū 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 bàyā ne Roing ma khaga ja
we Idu long time Roing
we Idu have settled in Roing for a very long time

bùnyī yesterday

ex.

būnyī ìnyīgā.ā day before yesterday

ex.

bùnyī lōnō yesterday evening

bùnyī lōnō ìnà ayí?
yesterday evening return ??
did you come back yesterday evening?

bē thrūhímī countless times, so many times

nyū álí emi na lane bē 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

ēcācā *ibi loi*

come right now please

ēcāhō now

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

ēhéhéyá a bit earlier

ēhéhéyá adv. a bit earlier; *nga nyū mi ēhéhéyá ina.yi* I came back a bit earlier than you
before

ēhéyá before

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

ēsè.à sōndō anytime

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

ētā now (Mithu dial.)

ex.

ētānù this year

ētānù adv. this year **ētānù** *pacha ayoyo hībà gumi* it has not rained much this year

ētānyì today

ētānyì adv. today **ētānyì** *ina wa?* will you come back today

ēyānù last year

nga nāyā **ēyānù** sí.bayi
I grandmother last year die.PERF

my grandmother died last year

hó also só at the time when

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

nyú.mē la.ga hó
you.ACT speak.PERF when
At the time when you were speaking

īmítá after

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

īmítátá a bit after

īmítáyándō last

īsì always

ene isì álí njõ.ji
you pl. always like that work.HAB
You always work like that

nga isì iskul aguji I always go to school

kàjì hōnè bŭgŭmì never

ex.

kāndū always

Aya ikhipito kāndū la ne pra.gŭmì 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

līliyā soon

ēcā mīngò līliyā balawe khàwújì yì
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 jji.ya sa?
you still sitting ???
are you still sitting?

pà after in time

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

úninīyà a bit earlier

ūnyì earlier

ūnyì adv. earlier; *ūnyì bana ba* he went earlier
previously

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'liyā*). 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 151 shows the principal recognised registers in Idu which are opposed to everyday speech (*àngá'liyā*).

Table 151. Idu language registers

Category	Idu name	Comment
Lexical substitution		
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
Formalised utterances		
Angry register	<i>àshúbà</i>	Known to most adults
Mediators' register	<i>àhālā, abāla</i>	Known to mediators
Cursing and scolding register	<i>ìpwā</i> [=ìpū]	Known to most adults
Humorous register	<i>álanū</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'liyā*) 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 152);

Table 152. 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 n̄jòótò</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>ākrū</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) <i>tambre mra aci, aju tambre</i> (Hills)

tiger	āmṛā	<i>àngóci</i> ‘from the highlands’ <i>àngó</i> montane region. (Plains) <i>aṅgo kūyi</i> (Hill)
wild pig	āmṵé	<i>enàmbòn òi</i> nose + sharp (Plains) <i>asopra</i> (Hills)
serow	māàṵ	<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, *īgū*, 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 153 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 153. Idu shamanic register compared with everyday language

English	Idu	Igu
agriculture	pākū	khènjé èndō
bad	èlè	āpūmīrù
child	ā	īdūmīrī
daughter	aya	īdūmīlī
son	ameya	īdūmētā
dead body	īthū	īpōthūtá
deer	mānjō	àthí ījīdō
dog	ikū	àbrí ànà, àbí tòmbō, kùbū mēyī
earth	īlīkhè	ètō yí dèbàlà ‘deep inside the earth’
edible beetle found under stones in the river in winter	pāhū	Mētā lōpù phrī àgrā ‘clan name’ + ‘origin’ + ‘burn’ + ‘consequence’.
father	nàbā	jìnù mētā
female	yākū	ànù mīlī
fire	āmṛhù	lōhù
food	āthā	thāyī
drink	ecō	àlōlī ètò
good	prá	àpū kèyù, kīyū kèsà
home	ó	gòlò àwā
male	mēyá	ambi mele
mithun	sā	èmbró mìtù, lātā mèlò
monkey	àmē	mālō, àyicī
moon	ēlā	īmūshidú [waning moon]
mother	nānyī	ānī zìnù
night	yāmá	àndó bùmàyī
old	mīcìprá	pòlò àtōndō, lòmè ānīnà
person	īmú	mìpī
pig	īlī	àshāli āmāyā
pig for Rē	īlī	dōndō prūchù, āmā prōkā
rat	āsāngó	ìpità àtsòtsí, ēlōyā àmālī
road	āló chí	lānī lākā
shaman	īgū	āshū mīpí, àmrà pènē

English	Idu	Igu
shaman	igu	mīpī 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 yā ētānyì
tomorrow	ānāyā	ādēyā ānāyā
village	āfīkō	āmūnó kōlāā
water	màci	ìrù cinì
wind	āmwēyā	ārūyā
yesterday	būnyī	ādē būnyì
part of wall near the entrance of house	?	àsū
erudite	?	mìpī ārhù
snow	pó	àgù
Idu	Idu	Kēbā Kērā.ā
Tibetan	Pūū	Pūū āyāpō, àyùsì àdzì āpō yā àdzà
Tawra	Tàṛā	īmíyā yúndilī ēsāyā pōthāyā
non-tribal	Mēchā	īmí ēsā
Padam	Mòshā	īmíyā thōkrèpō èsāyā lākēwē

A good illustration of how igu vocabulary becomes entangled with everyday speech is when a speaker wishes to talk about the expertise of the shaman. Thus the term mīpī ārhù ‘erudite person’ is used in the sentence;

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]

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 by elders in everyday interactions but is also used in more formal contexts, for example during negotiations over penalties for adjudged crimes. The set phrases 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. DET 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 DET 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.DET	grumble	deer.DET	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	lã.me	lõ.mbõ
horn.DET	hit.block	tusk.DET	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. *Abāla* mediators are the most learned in these formulae, in part because they deal with the widest range of cases⁴.

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 **Abālaya** begins the mediation with the pronouncement;

⁴ 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.

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

hā.ndró	hī.cī
eat.support	have.get

Sense I have supported you when you organised celebrations [such as Rě festival]

thō.ndró	bà.cī
speak.support	speak in low voice.get

thò 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 Rě	buy

yō is normally mid

Sense: The person has returned at Rě to repay their debts

īkū	hǎ	àwù	hǎ
head [=heart]	give	mind	give

the tone on the second hǎ 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

ārhú 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 bǎ, bà lī
speak defend murmur get out
[I am] speaking in your defence, I am murmuring to let you get out

thōká, bàrī
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

brǎbǎ, cǎ.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**:

khē ngē ānòcò
shit stuck on your face swipe hand across face
s.o.is humiliated because of the swiping action

pú.là àbrì.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 ìcī yá èmè
sister husband wife brother

āp̄ yī búdù
elder brother younger brother relatives

Ap̄ stands for āp̄yā 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**:

ìb̄ hànò hīmì ìphrū t̄ndò hīmì
food served finish eating not jug of beer finish drinking not

You have so much that you cannot consume everything

̀̀dì p̄ à àcī
jewel bundle money bag
jewels in bundles, money in the bag

If you don't have gold and cash you cannot conduct R̄

à is Upper for p̄

idi is short for p̄dī

hà.gò hí.gò
eat.with have.with
You have things to eat and own

āhēŕhó ēmētā
place where mithun is reared money for Rē

[We must all watch over] our mithuns and our money

ībē 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 ìlì 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 ìlì 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

bwē 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

ālī 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 brē 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

ārḥū [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 íthruṅgú 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 āyā 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 āthò
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 yākū lā híàgò a.gò ìcì.[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 jì but here is raised to high for assonance

āyā.me āthí.me ícì.chī èbā ālā.we só bà
 daughter.DET sister.DET 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 ĩnyīyā 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.DET 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, Ògolo 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.

Ògōlō mē ēlōbrā lūlā.là Àsá mē ápròbrā phrēlā.là
 spirit DET eyes pluck out.PST spirit DET heart pull out.PST
 Ògolo 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.

tábū 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

Athruyu 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 *à̀yè̀b̀à̀* to prevent further mishaps. The following curse threatens the child with a similar fate.

À̀thrùyù 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

tī is normally low

epilepsy is conceived to live in a basket

emo andro.a à̀lù.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.

À̀thrù 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 *à̀lànū à̀shrhèè*

Idu has a humorous register, *à̀lànū à̀shrhèè*, 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 à̀nà
 clan name crow with host of igu performance group clan
 The Mitaco 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;

Mīhũ āndīkhì à̀kā cé
 clan name mucus granary bind
 The Mīhũ 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;

èbànē līngī dè.tā dè
 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 īmbù 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 ìjìsī àrù ǹyì
 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 *Yā* 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 154 together with their usual Idu equivalents.

Table 154. Idu babytalk register

Babytalk	English	Idu
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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
cī khà	sleep quietly	pī hì
cī jī	sit quietly	pījī
è.è	toilet	khè.è
èchō	girls' vagina	itū
êr.êr	dirty	tàṛi
hạ.ī	fearful	ìbīsī, thōpōlò
hāhā.jì	laugh	ndàgē
hākì	speak, say	lā
jìjì?	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
tsīkhā	lie down quietly	pīkhā

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 hã.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 gōnē 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 hālō 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

Mingà 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.

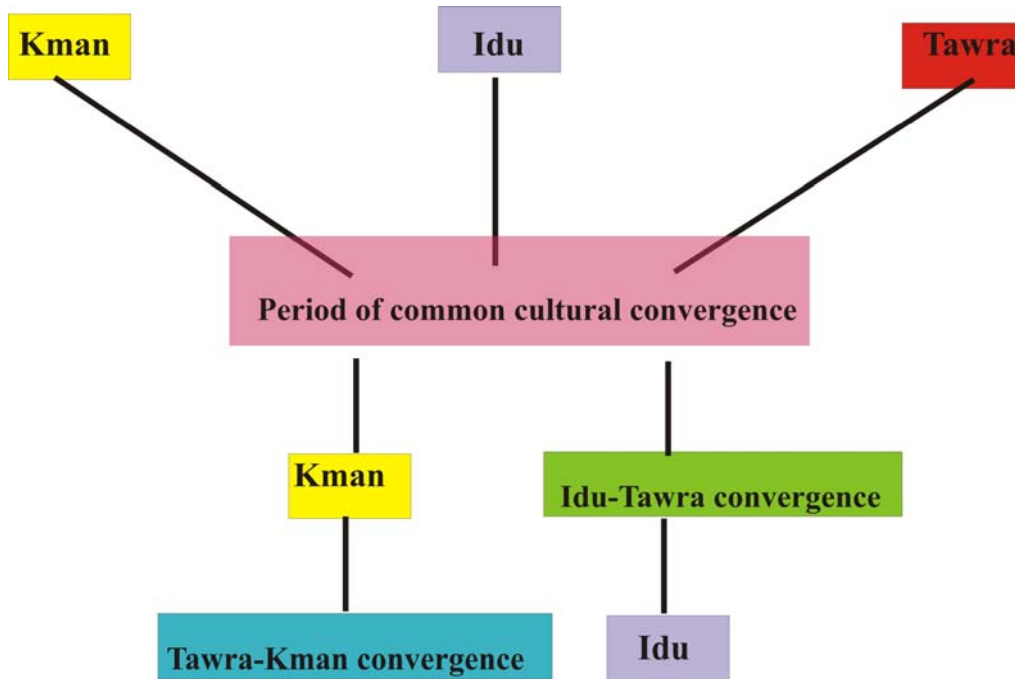
Although Idu can be heard spoken relatively fluently in any village, there has been a loss of all types of specialised lexicon, such that even members of the language development committee struggle to recall what should be common words. Idu language use is still quite vigorous in certain contexts, but 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. However, the isolation and now relocation of the Idu villages into the interior does not bode well for its survival.

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 5 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 5. 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.mi khà.gayi
homework more write.x sit.NEG lie.PRES
Most of the homework is lying unwritten