A Reference Grammar of Tumetiękk

Table of Contents

1. Phonology

This section describes the elements of Tumetıęk phonology and how they interact with each other.

1.1. Phoneme Inventory

The phonemes present in Tumetıęk are listed in the two subsections of this section, together with a description of their phonological behaviour.

1.1.1. Vowels

Tumetıęk has a small vowel inventory which numbers only four distinct vowel qualities. These four phonemic vowels are organised into an imperfect square-shaped system, which is shown in the table below.

	front	**back**
close	i	u
open	e	a

- The vowels can combine to form the following nine diphthongs: /ae̯/, /ai̯/, /au̯/, /e̯a/, /ei̯/, /eu̯/, /i̯a/, /i̯e/, /i̯u/, /u̯a/, /u̯e/ and /u̯i/, as illustrated below.

a			e			i			u		
e	i	u	a	i	u	a	e	u	a	e	i

- All vowels can occur nasalised, in which case they are marked with an *ogonek* (tail) diacritic: **ı̨ ę ą ų**.
  As for the diphthongs, nasalisation is never marked on the glides: **ąı ąu ıų uı̨**.
- The low vowels /e/ and /a/ are generally realised as [ɛ] and [ɑ], which makes the vowel inventory a bit more symmetric.
  Note that /a/ generally does not back after palatal or otherwise palatalised consonants, and its preferred realisation in that position is [æ̟].
- The high vowels /i/ and /u/ reduce to [ɪ] and [ʊ ~ ɔ] in unstressed syllables. The [ʊ] allophone is preferred over [ɔ] in phonetic transcription.
- The high vowel /i/ is written as a dotless **ı** in the orthography. Other vowels are written as in IPA.

1.1.2. Consonants

Tumetıęk can be said to have a small consonant inventory which consists of only twelve constituent phonemes in total. The inventory is given in the table below. Where phonemes are arranged in pairs, the voiced one is found on the right of the middle dot.

	labial	**alveolar**	**palatal**	**velar**
nasal	m	n		
stop	p · b	t · d		k · g
fricative		s · z		
rhotic		r		
glide			j	

- Voiceless stops aspirate to [pʰ tʰ kʰ] word-initially before vowels.
- Voiced stops lenite to [β ð ɣ] between vowels. In some dialects, this change is confined to intervocalic onsets of unstressed syllables.
- Voiced obstruents prenasalise after nasal vowels. The prenasalised lenited allophones of /b/, /d/ and /g/ are [ᵐβ], [ⁿð] and [ᵑɣ].
- The palatal glide /j/ labialises to [ɥ] before rounded vowels.
- The velar plosives palatalise to [c] and [ɟ] before front vowels. The aspirated allophone of /k/ before front vowels is [cʰ], and the lenited allophone of /g/ before front vowels is [ʝ]. The prenasalised and palatalised allophones of /g/ before front vowels are [ᶮɟ] and [ᶮʝ], with the latter allophone found in the same environment as other lenited allophones.
- Coronal consonants often palatalise to [n̪ʲ], [t̪ʲ ~ ʦʲ], [d̪ʲ ~ dʒʲ], [s̪ʲ], [z̪ʲ] and [r̪ʲ] before front vowels in several dialects closer to the Omari territory.
  This palatalisation is traditionally not indicated in transcription.
- The onglide of a diphthong may drop altogether after an allophonically palatalised consonant: **kıayu** [ˈcʰæ̯ɥʊ] “decide”.
- The palatal glide /j/ is written **y**.
  Other consonants are written as in IPA, or with the text equivalent of their IPA representation (e.g. /g/ is written **g**).

1.2. Phonotactics

The canonical syllable structure of Tumetıęk can be summarised as (C)(C)V(C)(C). This is very oversimplified, and there are many constraints which make syllables such as **pzer**, **tųrsk**, **ytıg** and **mba** illegal. For example, clusters with three or more consonants are disallowed.

1.2.1. Onset

Tumetıęk permits maximally two consonants in an onset. The onset can be anything from zero consonant or one consonant to several more complex consonant clusters such as **ps** and **gr**.

The list of permitted onset clusters follows below.

A stop followed by a sibilant which agrees in voicing:

- **ps**, **ts**, **ks**, **dz**, **gz**

A sibilant followed by a stop whih agrees in voicing:

- **sp**, **st**, **sk**, **zb**, **zd**, **zg**

An obstruent followed by a rhotic:

- **pr**, **br**, **tr**, **dr**, **kr**, **gr**, **sr**, **zr**

It is worth noting that clusters in **bold grey**, except maybe for /sr/, are unattested in root words; all instances of these clusters are produced by affixation at work, for example **s-** "2SG.POSS" + **dan** "father", which yields **zdan** "your (thy) father".

The said /sr/ appears in only one word: **nasrıgru** "impediment", and this in a word-medial position, which implies it can be either an onset cluster: /ˈna.srĩ.gru/, or spread across two syllables: /ˈnas.rĩ.gru/.

Either way, /ˈna.srĩ.gru/ and /ˈnas.rĩ.gru/ would both develop to a same word, which is **nosřıkra** /ˈno.ʂʅi.krɑ/ in the only descendant, Tantšak, so the exact state of /sr/ remains unclear.

1.2.2. Nucleus

The syllable nucleus is the sole obligatory part of a legal Tumetıęk syllables, and there are strict limitations on what can be a legal nucleus.

Only monophthongs and diphthongs can be a legal nucleus, and triphthongs and syllabic consonants of any sort are strictly disallowed.

1.2.3. Coda

Tumetıęk permits maximally two consonants in a coda. The coda can be anything from zero consonant and any single consonant except **r y**, to more complex two-consonant clusters such as **nd**.

Coda clusters are rare, though, and are limited to a nasal followed by a voiced homorganic stop: **mb nd**. Notably, **ng** is disallowed.

1.3. Stress

Primary stress is weight-sensitive in Tumetıęk, falling on the heaviest syllable in a word: **kuęgren** [kʰo̯ɛ̃ˈŋgrɛn] “sleep”, **deądın** [dɛ̯ɑ̃ˈⁿðin] “be rude”.

Syllable weight depends on presence and size of the syllable coda. Open syllables count as light, closed syllables with a single coda consonant count as heavy, and closed syllables with a coda cluster count as superheavy.

If there are two or more equal-weight syllables, the first such syllable is stressed: **gara** [ˈgɑ.rɑ] “chipmunk; squirrel”, **etkun** [ˈɛt.kʊn] “murder”.

Secondary stress falls on the third syllable after the primarily stressed one. It ignores syllable weight: **sątırıa** [ˈsɑ̃.tɪˌrɪ̯ɑ] “knowledge”.

Stressed syllables can carry a higher pitch, bur this is left out from the phonetic transcription for the sake of readability, especially when a nasal vowel receives stress which would result in the IPA symbol carrying two diacritics above itself.

Secondary stress falls on the third syllable after the primarily stressed one. It ignores syllable weight.

1.4. Morphophonology

This section details the morphophonological processes that occur in Tumetıęk.

1.4.1. Voicing

The voiceless obstruents /p t k s/ sometimes voice to /b d g z/ between vowels or next to a sonorant. Instances prone to voicing will be indicated by a middle dot (·).

kenet· "bone" + **-ak** "GEN" → **kenedak** "of bone"

nı- "1SG" + **·kęb^{r}** "cut off" → **nıgeb** "I cut off"

1.4.2. Iotation

Iotating consonants, most commonly /n/ /k/ and /g/, but sometimes also /m/ and /t/, sometimes eject an **ı** before the next vowel. Such instances will be indicated by an apostrophe (').

bık' "raindrop" + **-ak** "GEN" → **bıkıak** "of raindrop"

·kırıę^{m}' "cloud" + **-ak** "GEN" → **kırıemıak** "of cloud"

1.4.3. Lenition

Lenition is a type of consonant mutation which occurs at specific morpheme boundaries. Consonants usually get more sonorous by undergoing lenition, but a notable exception is the lenited form of **g**, which is a voiceless **k**.

Leniting environments will be indicated with a plus sign (+).

The outcomes of lenition are given in the table below.

plain	lenited
p t k k'	b d g g'
Ṽbr Ṽdr Ṽgr	Vm Vn Vn
Ṽb^{r} Ṽd^{r} Ṽg^{r}	
z g g'	r k y

·kı+ "down" + **·kıek'·** "go" → **kıgıek** "go down"

yęg^{r} "be slow" + **ę^{m}'** "agentive suffix" → **yenę** "slug; snail"

1.4.4. Nasalisation

If a nasal consonant comes before another consonant, it is realised as nasalisation of the previous vowel. However, some instances of /m/ and /n/ can resist nasalisation. Such instances will be indicated by a ring above (°) when word-final.

mun° "seven" + **-kık** "GEN.MED" → **munkık** "of those seven"

nın°- "1SG›2SG" + **tıu** "see" → **nıntıu** "I see you"

Some words that begin with a voiced obstruent (/b/, /d/ /g/ and /z/) can cause a prefixed vowel to undergo nasalisation. Such words will be indicated by a tilde (~).

nı- "1SG" + **~brat·** "sibling" → **nı̨brat** "my sibling"

rı- "1PL" + **~zrıgrıe** "give" → **rı̨zrıgrıe** "we give"

1.4.5. Epenthesis

Some words end with a consonant which only surfaces before a vowel or sometimes in a legal consonant cluser. Such consonants are superscripted (e.g. ᵐ, ᵖ and ʳ).

kı̨bʳ "tooth" + **-ak** "GEN" → **kı̨brak** "of tooth"

rıı̨grıuᵖs "you annoy them" + **e** "IMP" → **rıı̨grıupse** "annoy them"

If possible, words ending with such a consonant inflect as if they end with a vowel, so the genitive form of **tumetıę̨ᵐ'** "newcomer" is **tumetıę̨k**, instead of ***tumetıę̨mıak**.

1.4.6. Vowel Coalescence

Two vowels with same basic quality, regardless of nasalisation, can come into contact because of affixation and/or compounding. In such vowel sequences, the first vowel fuses with the second vowel.

If a nasal vowel appears before an oral vowel which is not opener than the former, it loses nasalisation.

bru- "3PL.POSS" + **ı̨du** "cow" → **brı̨du** "their cow"

grı̨- "2PL›3" + **ek·** "burn" → **grıek** "you burn it"

1.4.7. Rhotacism

If a nasal consonant, excluding **n°**, comes into contact with an obstruent, it nasalises the preceding vowel, voices that obstruent if possible, and changes to a ʳ which appears after the obstruent.

n- "1SG" + **dan** "father" → **dran** "my father"

s- "2SG" + **nęb** "goat" → **zręb** "your (thy) goat"

1.4.8. Nasal Assimilation

A fairly minor, yet regular process is the assimilation of **n°** to **m** before a labial stop.

pun°- "3›2SG.PST" + **bumunį** "avoid" → **pumbumunį** "he avoided you (thee)"

pun°- "3›2SG.PST" + **pekı** "choose" → **pumpekı** "he chose you (thee)"

1.4.9. Deletion

If three or more consonants or vowels come into contact, all phonemes in the resulting sequence except the last two are deleted. Some affixes are able to delete preceding vowels. Those suffixes will be indicated by a grave accent (`).

grıeka "duck" + **-•`tı** "NOM.PRX" → **grıektı** "this duck"

madu "lips" + **-`ka** "NOM.MED" → **matka** "those lips"

Obstruents are regularly deleted before nasals, and clusters of two identical consonants are resolved to a single consonant.

ınd "be blue" + **naba** "water" → **ınaba** "deep water" (via ***ınnaba**)

nęb "goat" + **nęıya** "cheese" → **nęnęıya** "goat cheese"

1.4.10. Voicing Assimilation

If obstruents with different voicing come next to each other, regressive voicing assimilation applies.

kųbʳ "tooth" + **-•`tı** "NOM.PRX" → **kųptı** "this tooth"

madu "lips" + **-`ka** "NOM.MED" → **matka** "those lips"

2. Nominals

Nominal words in Tumetıęk fall into two distinct categories: *nouns* and *pronouns*, which differ primarily in morphological behaviour.

2.1. Nouns

Tumetıęk nouns inflect for case, deixis and pronominal possession by means of affixation. The case-deixis suffixes exhibit a considerable degree of fusion, and as such they are best treated as a single suffix type.

The exact ordering of noun inflections is given below.

-1	**0**	+1
· possession	**STEM**	· deixis
		· case

2.1.1. Pronominal Possession

Possession is marked on Tumetıęk nouns by means of prefixing. There is a small class of *inherently possessed nouns*, which mandatorily take a possessive prefix agreeing with their possessor. The most typical words in this class include body part terms, but some other nouns referring to parts of a larger whole, such as terms referring to people, especially kinship terms, are treated as such.

Possessive prefixes are given in the table below.

	singular		**plural**	
	_V	_C	_V	_C
1st person	n’-	n-[1]	t-	te-[3]
2nd person	r-	s-[2]	k’-	kıe-[4]
3rd person	bru-		nu-	

[1] **nı-** before sonorants or consonant clusters.

[2] **sı-** before consonant clusters or one of /s/, /z/, /m/ or /n/, **z-** before prevocalic /b/, /d/ or /g/, combines with /j/ into **sı-**.

[3] **t-** before a prevocalic /s/, **d-** before prevocalic /z/ and /r/.

[4] **k’-** before a prevocalic /s/, **g-** before prevocalic /z/ and /r/.

2.1.2. Case and Deixis

Tumetıęk nouns inflect for case and deixis by means of fusional suffixes.

The case system is a simple nominative-accusative-genitive one, and there is a three-way deictic contrast: the degrees of distance include proximal, medial and distal as common with such three-way contrast.

Case usage is relatively straightforward: the accusative case marks direct objects and is used with some prepositions; the genitive case marks possessors in alienable possession constructions, and is also used with some prepositions. The nominative case is used elsewhere, e.g. for subjects and predicative nouns.

The deictic system exhibits a considerable amount of morphophonological complexity compared with the rest of Tumetıęk morphology. There are three degrees of distance from the deictic centre: proximal, medial and distal.

The case/deictic suffixes are given in the table below.

	no deixis		**proximal**		**medial**		**distal**	
	V_	C_	V_	C_	V_	C_	V_	C_
nominative	-Ø		-·`tı	-·tı	-`ka	-ka	-·`pe	-·pe
accusative	+`u	+u	-·`tu	-·tu	-`ku	-ku	-·`pu	-·pu
genitive	-k	-ak	-·`tık	-·tık	-`kık	-kık	-·`pık	-·pık

– If a noun ends in one of **-b(rV)**, **-d(rV)**, or **-g(rV)**, the deictic suffixes devoice the stops to **p**, **t**, and **k**, and replace the stem-final vowel with the suffix vowel if possible, as shown below.

psędıebra “bridge” + **-·`tı** “PRX” → **psędıeprı** “this bridge”

2.2. Pronouns

There are only two distinct types of pronouns in Tumetıęk: *personal pronouns* and *interrogative pronouns*.

2.2.1. Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns inflect for number, case and politeness. The case inflections show a cosiderable amount of irregularity, and are given in the table below together with the basic nominative forms.

There are no third-person pronouns *per se*, but the numeral **nu** "one" or demonstratives borrowed from Omari may be used as one.

first person (speaker)

	singular		**plural**	
	casual	**polite**	**casual**	**polite**
nominative	tı	nıɻru	sı	tęru
accusative	tuı	nıɻruı	sıu	tęruı
genitive	tuya	nıɻza	sa	tęza

second person (speaker)

	singular		**plural**	
	casual	**polite**	**casual**	**polite**
nominative	nı	nąru	grı	kıęru
accusative	nuyu	nąruı	gruı	kıęruı
genitive	nuya	nąza	gra	kıęza

2.2.2. Interrogative Pronouns

Tumetıęk has only one interrogative pronoun, which inflects for case and number in a somewhat irregular manner, having a distinct accusative suffix **-ı**.

It is also of note that the singular form has two distinct stems, the nominative stem **kıe** and the oblique stem **kıab** which is used to form the accusative and the genitive.

	singular	**plural**
nominative	kıe	kıan
accusative	kıabı	kıanı
genitive	kıaba	kıana

3. Verbs

Tumetıęk verbs are richly inflected, inflecting for a total of six grammatical categories. Nonetheless, the language makes frequent use of auxiliaries.

The ordering of the verbal inflections is summarised below.

-2	-1	**0**	+1	+2
· subject · object · tense	· secondary voice	**STEM**	· mood	· primary voice

3.1. Person and Tense

The first slot in the verb template contains a large array of prefixes, sixty-five of them in total, which encode the number and person of the subject, and in transitive verbs also the person of the object.

One can choose between two sets of such prefixes, the choice of which indicates the tense of the verb, of which there are only two: the non-past tense and the past tense.

The pronominal prefixes in the non-past tense are given below, together with their common allomorphs.

non-past tense

subject →	**1SG**		**1PL**		**2SG**		**2PL**		**3**	
object ↓	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C
no object	n-	nı-	k-	kıe-	r-	rı-	gr-	grı-	Ø-	
1SG	—		—		rın’-		grıen’-		mun’-	
1PL	nıs-				rıs-		grıs-		mus-	
2SG	nın°-		kıen°-		—		—		mun°-	
2PL	nık·’-		kıek·’-		rık·’-				muk·’-	
3	nı-	nıu-[1]	kı-	kıu-[1]	rı-	rıu-[1]	grı-	grıu-[1]	mu-	mu-[1]

[1] **nıų-**, **kıų-**, **rıų-**, **grıų-** and **mų-** before nasals.

The pronominal prefixes are also given below, now in the past tense. The most common allomorphs are listed below the table.

past tense

subject →	**1SG**		**1PL**		**2SG**		**2PL**		**3**	
object ↓	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C	_V	_C
no object	t-	ta-	b-	u-	y-	ya-	k’-	kıu-	s-[2]	
1SG	—		—		yan’-		kıun’-		br’-	brı-
1PL	rus-				yas-		kıus-		ps-	pus-
2SG	run°-		un°-		—		—		n-	pun°-
2PL	ruk·’-		uk·’-		yak·’-				puk·’-	
3	ru-[1]		u-[1]		ya-	yau-[1]	kıu-[1]		bru-[1]	

[1] **rų-**, **ų-**, **yąu-**, **kıų-** and **brų-** before nasals.

[2] **se-** before a consonant cluster or one of /s/, /z/, /m/ or /n/, **z-** before prevocalic /b/, /d/, /g/ or /r/, combines with /j/ into **sı-**.

3.2. Mood

The first suffixal slot in the Tumetıęk verb template is occupied by modal suffixes. There is a total of four moods: realis, irrealis, imperative and optative.

The realis mood is unmarked, and as such it is usually left out from the interlinear glosses.

The irrealis mood is heavily used, and does not map exactly to English usage of irrealis modals such as “would”; an average speaker would use the irrealis to add even a slightest element of doubt to their utterance in all but most formal speech.

Verbs conjugated into the imperative mood accept only second person subjects.

The modal suffixes are given in the table below.

suffix	**mood**
-Ø-	realis
-tuı-	irrealis
-e-[1]	imperative
-nu-	optative

[1] **-ke-** after vowels.

3.3. Voice

The voice system of Tumetıęk is very large and as such it spans two slots in the verb template. Voice inflection is carried out on two tiers: the *primary tier*, which hosts two *primary voices* and the *secondary tier*, which tosts nine *secondary voices*.

Tumetıęk has a total of eleven voices including both prmary ones and secondary ones, so the voice system is very large when compared with an average one.

3.3.1. Primary Tier

The primary tier occupies the last slot in the verb template. This tier hosts a total of two voice suffixes, collectively called *primary voices*.

-Ø **ACT** **active**

Unmarked; the citation form of verbs. Left out of glosses for sake of brevity.

-un **PASS** **passive**

Decreases valence by promoting an original primary object to subject; the original subject is removed but may optionally appear in the genitive case, accompanied with the preposition **kıa**.

3.3.2. Secondary Tier

The second tier occupies the second slot in the verb template. This tier hosts a total of nine voice prefixes, collectively called *secondary voices*.

All secondary voices promote an indirect or otherwise oblique argument to direct object. They can only be used with intransitive verbs, except for the dative **-sa-**.

If a secondary voice is used together with the passive voice, the verb takes on an impersonal meaning, as shown below.

Kıutaneu zıŗıu.		**Kıutaneun zıŗıu.**
1PL›3-INE-live house-ACC	vs.	3-INE-live-PASS house
We live in a house.		One lives in a house.
		(A house is lived in.)

The secondary voice prefixes are listed in the table below, with glosses and explanations provided next to them.

sec. voice	gloss	meaning
-tan'-	INE	in, inside
-·kɪm-	ELA	outside
-ska-	ABL	away (from), from, off, out of
-rek·-	SUPE	above, onto, up
-·kɪ+	SUBE	below, down, under
-yen-	VIA	through
-mu-	ALL	to, towards
-ɪm-	CIRC	around
-·sa-	DAT	for, to[1]

[1] Used for promoting both datives and benefactives.

Several sentences which exemplify the use of secondary voices are given below.

Yaurekɪekɪe psutku!
2SG›3-SUPE-climb-IMP tree-MED.ACC
Go climb that tree!

Uranı muıŋın stebru.
child 3›3-CIRC-run house-ACC
The children are running around the house.

4. Derivational Morphology

This section describes how Tumetıęk derives new words from ones that already exist using derivational affixes, the most common of which are described below.

4.1. Verb → Noun

-ę -ę$^{m'}$ – agentive

This commonly used suffix derives nouns with an agentive meaning.

Many nouns with this suffix exhibit considerable semantic change, and there are some nouns ending with this suffix which do not have a corresponding verb, such as **kırıę** "cloud" and **huę** "prostitute".

gręreb "annoy" + **ę** → **gręrebę** "annoyance; mosquito"

yenu "shine" + **ę** → **yenuę** "star"

This suffix sometimes exhibits irregularity, as in the following examples:

pruęd "build" + **ę** → **pruętsę** "builder"

yęg "be slow" + **ę** → **yenę** "slug; snail"

-ga -ga – instrumental

The other commonly used nominaliser derives instrument nouns out of their corresponding verbs.

dretı "grind" + **ga** → **dretıga** "grindstone"

kęb "chop; cut (off)" + **ga** → **kębga** "knife"

kıe- ·kıe- – art; skill

This quite unusual nominaliser suffix derives nouns with a basic meaning of art or skill. Notably, it appears in the full name of the language: **kıeta** "language; voice" is regularly and transparently derived from **ta** "speak".

kıe + **ta** "speak" → **kıeta** "language"

kıe + **nıek** "sing" → **kıenıek** "music"

-rıa -rıa – action; abstract

This suffix derives action nouns and abstract nouns out of their corresponding verbs.

sątı "know" + **rıa** → **sątırıa** "knowledge"

zı "love" + **rıa** → **zırıa** "love"

4.2. Noun → Noun

-ıu -ıu – hypocoristic; diminutive

This suffix derives nouns with a meaning that conveys smallness of the object or quality named, or endearment. Perhaps the best example of this suffix is its use in forming the intimate words for parents, as exemplified below.

mıen "mother" + **ıu** → **mıenıu** "mummy"

dan "father" + **ıu** → **danıu** "daddy"

-nęg -nęg^{r} – singulative

This suffix derives nouns that denote the part of a larger whole, but it can also derive nouns from other nouns which are inherently plural, such as **międa**n "parents".

kı "sand" + **nęg** → **kınęg** "a grain of sand"

międan "parents" + **nęg** → **międa**ną**nęg** "parent"

5. Syntax

In short, this section describes how sentences are constructed in Tumetıęk.

5.1. Noun Phrase Syntax

Noun phrases display quite equally distributed left- and right-branching.
The canonical ordering of constituents within a noun phrase is given below.

(REL) (DET) (APP) **NOUN** (PREP) (REL)

5.1.1. Relative Clauses

Tumetıęk employs the gap strategy to form relative clauses, and this is described in more detail under 5.3. Clause Linking.

Relative clauses can either precede or follow the head noun, depending on their *weight*. Relative clauses consisting of a single verb are counted as *light*, and all other relative clauses are counted as *heavy*.

Heavy relative clauses mandatorily follow the head noun; light relative clauses can either precede the head noun or follow it, with former being preferred.

nęgru psut	**psut nęgru**
3-be_dead tree or	tree 3-be_dead
dead tree	dead tree

kada muprụd zịrıu
man 3›3-build house-ACC
a man who is building a house

5.1.2. Determiners

Determiners constitute a small closed word class distinct from both verbs and nouns. This class includes quantifiers, numerals, and specific words describing size or age such as **betre** “old” and **pịdre** “big; large”.

They immediately precede the head noun or its apposition, if there is one, and are always closer to the head noun than relative clauses which precede it.

betre rına
old woman
old woman

tumet Kırą nırıbe
young kırą 1SG-sister
my younger sister Kırą

5.1.3. Appositions

In Kıeta, appositions immediately precede the head noun, agreeing in case with it.

nık nue
sun light
sunlight

ya·Kırąu brurıbeu
with kırą-ACC 3-sister-ACC
with her sister Kırą

5.1.4. Prepositional phrases

Tumetıęk constructs prepositional phrases out of normal noun phrases by simply putting a preposition in front of it. The head noun of that phrase is then inflected for case demanded by the preposition.

ya·nımıędanu
with 1SG-parents-ACC
with my parents

In case a prepositional phrase *itself* modifies an another noun, it appears immediately after that noun.

kada ya·brurınau
man with 3-woman-ACC
a man with a wife

zıŗı ban·skımı
house near river-GEN
the house near the river

5.1.5. Possession

Tumetıęk distinguishes between two kinds of possession: *alienable possession* and *inalienable possession.*

Alienable possession is handled by placing the possessor in a prepositional phrase introduced by the preposition **kı** "of" and inflecting the possessor into the genitive.

Some dialects do not use the preposition **kı** in possessive constructions.

kębga kı·brıenak
knife of 1SG-brother-GEN
my brother's knife

zreya kı·nırına
clothes of 1SG-woman-GEN
my wife's clothes

On the other hand, inalienable possession is handled in a much simpler manner; the possessor is placed in apposition with the possessee.

nık nue
sun light
sunlight

nıumıen nąrek
1SG-mother_in_law tongue
my mother-in-law's tongue

Pronominal possession, regardless of alienability, is handled with possessive prefixes.

nınąs
1SG-arm
my arm

tegıeta
1PL-language
our language

5.2. Clause Syntax

This section describes ordering of constituents within a clause and strategies of forming constructions out of these constituents.

5.2.1. Word Order

The basic and most common word order in a Tumetıęk clause is **S Aux V O**, and the language handles indirect objects through a double object construction.

Kada brųzamutıu zunu sa.
man 3›3.PST-DAT-predict flood-ACC 1PL.ACC
The man predicted the flood for us.

Pagı mugıek yenųkuda.
lion 3›3-go attack-INF
The lion is going to attack us.

The most common variation on the word order is **Aux V P A**, ubiquitous in passive clauses because it gives the patient a greater prominence than to the agent.

Meun naba.
3-spill-PASS water
The water was spilled.

Egun hutu kıa·pıumestak.
3-burn-PASS town by fire-GEN
The town was burned by fire.

5.2.2. Adverbials

Adverbial phrases immediately follow the last verb in the verb phrase.

Tumetıęk productively forms adverbials out of verbs by nominalising the verb with the abstract nominaliser **-rıa**. The resulting noun is placed in a prepositional phrase introduced by the appropriate preposition, most commonly **dru** “in”.

Bruetkun dru·gruarıak pagıu!
3›3.PST-kill in be_true-NMLZ-GEN lion-ACC
He really killed a lion!

5.2.3. Auxiliary Constructions

Tumetıęk makes frequent use of auxiliary verbs to convey information which verbal morphology is not able to indicate, and they are often stacked next to one another to convey richer and more complex meanings.

They make the main verb non-finite, so it has to take the infinitive suffix **·ta**.

Auxiliary verbs do not constitute a distinct verb class – it is more that certain verbs, in fact eight of them, can be used *both* indepedently and as auxiliaries.

Auxiliaries are conventionally divided into four groups: *modal*, *aspectual*, *tensal* and *polar* auxiliaries, the distinction between which is based on the distance between the main verb and the auxiliary, as described below.

Tensals are closest to the main verb, and modals are furthest away. Aspectuals come in between these, so a general ordering of these three is modal-aspectual-tensal.

The sole polar auxiliary **drık** can come before any other auxiliary, or in the absence thereof, immediately before the main verb. It negates all verbs, both full and auxiliary, which follow it.

The auxiliary verbs in Tumetıęk are listed below.

tensal auxiliaries

verb	meaning	function
kıęk	want	Indicates future tense; gains a retrospective meaning when combined with the past tense.

aspectual auxiliaries

verb	meaning	function
nuk	start	Indicates inceptive or inchoative aspect.
nıba	die	Indicates cessative aspect.
bętkut	dance	Indicates frequentative or iterative aspect.

modal auxiliaries

verb	meaning	function
tsek	can	Indicates subject's ability to do the event described by the verb, or uncertainty whether the event described by verb will happen.
kıe	try	Indicates that the subject is trying to do the event described by the verb.
askı	succeed	Indicates that the subject succeeded in doing the event described by the verb.

polar auxiliaries

verb	meaning	function
drık	be false	Negates the following verb or verbs in the clause.

5.2.4. Questions

Tumetıęk employs a total of five question-forming strategies which fall under one of two types of questions: *polar (yes-or-no)* and *content questions*.

5.2.4.1. Polar Questions

Tumetıęk usually forms polar questions using the particle **gıa**.

The particle is placed clause-initially to question the clause as whole, but it can also be placed before a specific constituent to inquire whether the latter is/was involved in the event described, in which case it is cliticised to that constituent.

Gıa eu?
Q 3-live
Is he alive?

Gıa·ruranı bruek zıṛıu?
Q 2SG-child 3›3.PST-burn house-ACC
Was it your child who burned down the house?

There are two more interrogative particles, which can be used to add finer shades to meaning of the question. These can appear in same positions as **gıa**.

dra The rhetorical question particle; indicates that the speaker is not really asking for information; may be associated with both doubt or support of the expected answer. Glosses RHET.

uk The possibility question particle; does not ask for a statement about reality, but about the listener's assessment of likelihood of the described situation. Glossed POS.

Dra mųgręb?
RHET 3›3-do
Did you really do that?

Uk grun kıęk bıktıa?
POS rain 3-want fall-INF
Do you think it's going to rain?

5.2.4.2. Content Questions

Tumetıęk forms content questions by replacing the questioned constituent with the interrogative particle **tın**, which takes appropriate morphological marking if needed. However, the interrogative pronoun **kıe** and its inflected forms may also be used. There is no wh-movement whatsoever.

Tın nıek?
Q 3-sing
Who is singing?

Rıudımu kıabı?
2SG›3-eat INT-ACC
What are you eating?

5.3. Clause Linking

Like most languages, Tumetıęk can link clauses by subordination of a clause to the another one, or coordination in which all clauses stay independent.

Tumetıęk strongly prefers coordination over subordination so conditional or adverbial subordinate clauses are not possible to form at all; relations between two such clauses are expressed by a simple juxtaposition.

Note that the verbs in conditional clauses are marked for the optative mood.

Rutıu pagıu ruskanın.
1SG›3.PST-see lion-ACC 1SG›3.PST-ABL-run
I saw a lion and ran away from it.

Nındeądınu, munaumpa.
2sg-be_rude-OPT 3›2sg-hate
If you are rude, they hate you.

Subordinate clauses are limited to complement clauses and relative clauses. A common feature linking these two types is that they are both not marked with a conjunction, but they are formed using the *gap strategy* – there is no overt case-marked reference to the head of the clause.

Complement clauses take the place of an object of the matrix clause; placement of relative clauses is described in detail in 5.1. Noun Phrase Syntax section.

Nıuzatı rutıu.
1SG›3-know 1SG›3.PST-see
I know I saw it.

kada muprụd zịrıu
man 3›3-build house-ACC
a man who is building a house