

Reading and writing

Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

A proposal for writing the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language



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Aims and objectives

In this booklet we make some recommendations to the Language Committee and to the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm leaders and community on how to write the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language. Our purpose is:

- (1) To seek to unite the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm people in using one spelling system and thus to encourage the writing of new books for all Margi Tiwi Nga Təm people.
- (2) To develop a writing system that will help Margi Tiwi Nga Təm people who can already read Hausa and English to be able to read and write their language without difficulty.
- (3) To develop a writing system simple enough for Margi Tiwi Nga Təm children to learn. They will be encouraged to use it in school.
- (4) To enable strangers and foreigners to learn to speak and read the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language easily.

Chapter 1

The vowels of the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language

Basic vowels

The Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language has six vowels. Five of these vowels are written in the same way as they are in Hausa and English: **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, **u**. The sixth vowel is written as **ə**. This vowel is called schwa.

The first five vowels are pronounced in the same way as they are pronounced in Hausa. The vowels **a**, **i**, and **u** are very common and are illustrated below at the beginning of a word, middle of a word and end of a word. The vowels **e** and **o** are not as common and are not found in all positions.

a

ama	<i>uwa</i>	“mother”
mala	<i>mace</i>	“woman”
bama	<i>fuska</i>	“face”
balma	<i>kumatu</i>	“cheek”
shashilga	<i>tauraro</i>	“star”

e

peri	<i>bari</i>	“leave”
heri	<i>tashi</i>	“stand”
heli	<i>ganye</i>	“leaf”
leng	<i>karfe</i>	“metal”
kamedu	<i>barewa</i>	“antelope”

i

ci	<i>fata</i>	“skin”
li	<i>ido</i>	“eye”
imi	<i>ruwa</i>	“water”
vu'i	<i>dare</i>	“night”
shishi	<i>gashi</i>	“hair”

o

o'wi	<i>gaiwa</i>	“mud fish”
foɗu	<i>huɗu</i>	“four”
kufom	<i>irin ciyawa</i>	“type of grass”
ndora	<i>gulma</i>	“gossip”
kumou	<i>goma</i>	“ten”

u

uvunyi	<i>gawayi</i>	“charcoal”
undi	<i>gwiwa</i>	“knee”
mudlau	<i>safe</i>	“morning”
fur	<i>bauna</i>	“buffalo”
ɗufu	<i>zuciya</i>	“heart”
pitu	<i>zomo</i>	“rabbit”

The sixth vowel

Margi Tiwi Nga Təm has an additional vowel sound which Hausa and the written form of Margi Babal do not have. This vowel is called schwa. We recommend that this sound be written as ə. We find many words with ə in the middle, but we find only a few words that start or end with ə.

ə

əldlau	<i>tara</i>	“nine”
təm	<i>su</i>	“fishing”
həl	<i>sata</i>	“to steal”
ɓəɓəlwa	<i>kakarye</i>	“break into pieces”

b alam	<i>gwaggon biri</i>	“baboon”
m ələ m au	<i>gari</i>	“town”
t uhud ə	<i>tausayi</i>	“kindness”

Exercise: Read the following words paying special attention to the vowels.

k a	<i>wannan</i>	“this”
k ə	<i>sai</i>	“then”
k i	<i>gida</i>	“house”
k u	<i>akuya</i>	“goat”

Vowel combinations (diphthongs)

There are words in which two vowel sounds occur together in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm. Most examples in written Margi are the combinations **ai**, and **au**, and they have only been found at the ends of words.

Examples:

ai	wai	<i>na'am</i>	"yes"
	mai	<i>Babu</i>	"not"
au	hafau	<i>Kibiya</i>	"arrow"
	ɗəfau	<i>Tuwo</i>	"food"
	abangau	<i>haka ne</i>	"like that"
əu	məsahəu	<i>dadi</i>	"sweet"
	dagəu	<i>Kwari</i>	"valley"

The only example found with the vowel combination **ou** are the number words that include the number *kumou*, "ten".

Chapter 2

The consonants of the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language

The Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language has 31 consonant sounds. Most of them are written in the same way as in Hausa or English. A few consonant sounds are written with two letters, for example, ‘sh’. This letter combination represents a single consonant sound.

Here are some examples of each consonant at the beginning, middle, and, where possible, at the end of a word. However, the only consonants that occur at the end of the word are **p, r, k, m, n, ng, r,** and **l**.

b	babal	<i>Fili</i>	“field, plains”
	bama	<i>Fuska</i>	“face”
	balma	<i>Kumatu</i>	“cheek”
	mambəl	<i>Ruhu</i>	“spirit”
	mabəlang	<i>Kura</i>	“hyena”
b	bibi	<i>Takalmi</i>	“shoe”
	babal	<i>Tauri</i>	“hard”
	bəla	<i>Kiwo</i>	“to shepherd”
	dabəri	<i>Tara</i>	“put together”
	dzabəla	<i>karbakarba</i>	“take turns”
c	ci	<i>Fata</i>	“skin”
	cisu	<i>Takwas</i>	“eight”
	cil	<i>Guna</i>	“cucumber”

	buci	<i>tabarma</i>	“mat”
	pəci	<i>Rana</i>	“sun, day”
d	dəl	<i>Kogi</i>	“river”
	dagəu	<i>Kwari</i>	“valley”
	dabau	<i>Taro</i>	“to gather”
	pida	<i>kwanciya</i>	“sleep”
	tada	<i>Uba</i>	“father”
dl	dləɗau	<i>Tsawa</i>	“thunder”
	dlugwam	<i>Rakumi</i>	“camel”
	papadla	<i>kafada</i>	“shoulder”
	mudlau	<i>Safe</i>	“morning”
	ədla	<i>Kara</i>	“cornstock”
dz	dza	<i>Wawa</i>	“foolish, ignorant”
	dzau	<i>Jiki</i>	“body”
	dzəgam	<i>Dogo</i>	“tall”
	kwadza	<i>Kwari</i>	“quiver”
	dabəɗzau	<i>Taruwa</i>	“gathering”
ɗ	ɗəma	<i>haba</i>	“chin”
	ɗufu	<i>Zuciya</i>	“heart”
	pəɗɗau	<i>Hunturu</i>	“harmattan”
	mapidau	<i>gwiwar hannu</i>	“elbow”
	kameɗu	<i>Barewa</i>	“antelope”
f	fur	<i>bauna</i>	“buffalo”

	fəlang	<i>makogoro</i>	“throat”
	tufu	<i>Biyar</i>	“five”
	hafau	<i>Kibiya</i>	“arrow”
	mafa	<i>Bawa</i>	“slave”
g	gadu	<i>Alade</i>	“pig”
	gə'u	<i>Kuka</i>	“baobab”
	laga	<i>Baka</i>	“bow”
	shilgəu	<i>Ciwo</i>	“disease”
	shangudi	<i>Inuwa</i>	“shade”
gh	gharu	<i>dari</i>	“hundred”
	ghəm	<i>Sulki</i>	“brother/sister-in-law”
	ghanyi	<i>Barci</i>	“sleeping”
	hagham	<i>gishiri gishiri</i>	“salty”
	highibau	<i>koyaswa</i>	“teaching”
h	həl	<i>Sata</i>	“stealing”
	himi	<i>Kunne</i>	“ear”
	ɗau	<i>Ci</i>	“eat”
	hahal	<i>Tsoho</i>	“old”
j	jigəl	<i>Gadda</i>	“wild goat”
	jigwal	<i>Yayi</i>	“weed”
	ciji	<i>Kaka</i>	“grandparent”
	jiri	<i>Gaskiya</i>	“truth”
	bugujam	<i>Jubda</i>	“fox”

k	kiwal	<i>iyali baba</i>	“large family”
	kər	<i>Kai</i>	“head”
	kalfi	<i>Kifi</i>	“fish”
	thləkələm	<i>mara wayo</i>	“stupid”
	maḏəkur	<i>kishiyanci</i>	“rivalry”
l	li	<i>Ido</i>	“eye”
	lari	<i>Gani</i>	“see”
	lagu	<i>Hanya</i>	“road”
	mbəla	<i>Tsamiya</i>	“tamarine”
	babal	<i>Fili</i>	“field”
m	miya	<i>Baki</i>	“mouth”
	mafəli	<i>Gizo</i>	“spider”
	mapidau	<i>gwiwar hannu</i>	“elbow”
	dəma	<i>haba</i>	“chin”
	həm	<i>Kada</i>	“crocodile”
n	na	<i>fada</i>	“say”
	nu	<i>Bi</i>	“follow”
	nanda	<i>Su</i>	“they”
	səni	<i>Sani</i>	“know”
	alen	<i>Wasu</i>	“other”
ng	nga	<i>Da</i>	“with”
	ngaliya	<i>Ciza</i>	“bite”

	ngilang	<i>Saiwa</i>	“root”
	fəlang	<i>makogoro</i>	“throat”
	parang	<i>Kullum</i>	“always”
ny	nya	<i>Cika</i>	“fill”
	nyau	<i>Koshi</i>	“satisfaction”
	nyanyabu	<i>danye</i>	“fresh”
	uvunyi	<i>Gawayi</i>	“charcoal”
p	pitu	<i>Zomo</i>	“rabbit”
	patu	<i>Kyanwa</i>	“cat”
	papatu	<i>Duka</i>	“all”
	papka	<i>mallam bude litafi</i>	“butterfly”
	peri	<i>Bari</i>	“leave”
r	ragəu	<i>Daidai</i>	“equal”
	fari	<i>Kwashe</i>	“gather/collect”
	kwara	<i>Jaki</i>	“donkey”
	kyar	<i>Harshe</i>	“tongue”
	tsər	<i>Wake</i>	“beans”
s	sal	<i>Miji</i>	“man”
	sar	<i>Konkoso</i>	“waist”
	suwa	<i>Aika</i>	“send”
	səgau	<i>Kawu</i>	“uncle”
	cisu	<i>Takwas</i>	“eight”

sh	shilgäu	<i>Ciwo</i>	“disease”
	shili	<i>Maza</i>	“men”
	shuni	<i>Mafalki</i>	“dream”
	shuni	<i>Wari</i>	“odour”
	shashilga	<i>Tauraro</i>	“star”
t	təfau	<i>diba tuwo</i>	“removing food out”
	tagu	<i>Doki</i>	“horse”
	kwatam	<i>Gimbiya</i>	“queen”
	tiwi	<i>Kuka</i>	“cry”
	malatəsal	<i>gwauruwa</i>	“widow”
thl	thla	<i>Saniya</i>	“cow”
	thləm	<i>Suna</i>	“name”
	thləthləmhi	<i>Kumba</i>	“toenail”
	pathlu	<i>ɗaya</i>	“one”
	məthləpi	<i>Bako</i>	“stranger”
ts	tsi	<i>Hannu</i>	“hand”
	tsər	<i>Wake</i>	“beans”
	litsau	<i>Guza</i>	“monitor lizard”
	mətsa	<i>Beguwa</i>	“porcupine”
	tsam	<i>Rumbu</i>	“granary”
v	vaɗau	<i>Kale</i>	“glean”
	virki	<i>Pegi</i>	“plot”
	vuya	<i>Damuna</i>	“rainy season”

	favau	<i>Kwari</i>	“insects”
	ləvari	<i>Zaki</i>	“lion”
w	wu	<i>Itace</i>	“tree”
	wita	<i>Gauta</i>	“garden egg”
	wahau	<i>dadi</i>	“enjoy”
	tawul	<i>kadangare</i>	“lizard”
	ciwar	<i>Giwa</i>	“elephant”
y	ya	<i>Haifu</i>	“to give birth”
	yina	<i>darwaya</i>	“rinse”
	yuwa	<i>Tambaya</i>	“ask”
	yambadu	<i>Iska</i>	“wind”
	vuya	<i>Damuna</i>	“rainy season”
z	zəm	<i>Shiru</i>	“quiet”
	zam	<i>dan' uwa</i>	“brother”
	zuwa	<i>Sanda</i>	“staff”
	pəzau	<i>sa kwai</i>	“lay eggs”
	səzəfəna	<i>Tatsa</i>	“flush”
zh	zhəmbul	<i>Bultu</i>	“large black bird”
	zhinagəu	<i>Gimina</i>	“ostrich”
	zhigətagu	<i>kamar zaifadi</i>	“about to fall”
	bazhi	<i>Aboki</i>	“friend”
	shazhigərli	<i>Gira</i>	“eyebrow”

'*	'yar	Hayaki	“smoke”
	u'u	Wuta	“fire”
	i'i	Kasa	“ground”
	u'wa	Nono	“milk”
	kwa'alau	'yar fari	“first daughter”

We recommend the above letters for the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm consonants.

Exercise: Read the following words paying special attention to the sounds **ng**, **hy**, **zh**, **dz**, **dl**, **thl**, and **gh**. Notice how words with these sounds are different from words with similar letters.

ng	nga	<i>Da</i>	“with”
	na	<i>Waka</i>	“sing”
	ga	<i>Ka</i>	“you”
hy	hya	<i>Kare</i>	“dog”
	ha	<i>harbi</i>	“shoot”
	ya	<i>Haifu</i>	“produce”
zh	zha	<i>maimaita</i>	“repeat”
	za	<i>Kai</i>	“you”
	ha	<i>Randa</i>	“water pot”

* The letter ' , as in Hausa, symbolizes the closure in the throat that occurs between vowels in some words. It can also occur at the beginning of a word. This letter is called “glottal”.

dz	dza	<i>Wawa</i>	“foolish”
	da	<i>Buga</i>	“kick”
	za	<i>Kai</i>	“you”
dl	dla	<i>Iso</i>	“arrive”
	da	<i>Tushe</i>	“block”
	la	<i>Tuna</i>	“dig”
thl	thla	<i>Yanka</i>	“cut”
	ta	<i>Ciki</i>	“stomach”
	la	<i>Tuna</i>	“dig”
gh	gha	<i>Talauçi</i>	“poverty”
	ga	<i>Gyatsa</i>	“burp”
	ha	<i>Saka</i>	“put on”

Consonant combinations

There are four types of consonant combinations which generally occur only at the beginning of a word:

1) A number of consonants occur in combination with 'w' (labialization):

bw	bwa	<i>Gaskiya</i>	“truth”
	bwal	<i>Kwallo</i>	“ball”
	kwambwal	<i>kwalekwale</i>	“canoe”
bw	bwa	<i>Dafa</i>	“boil”
	bwabwa	<i>Dafefe</i>	“cooked”
	bwabwatu	<i>Wuya</i>	“difficulty”
fw	fwa	<i>Kuna</i>	“burning”
	fwi	<i>Tsira</i>	“germinating”
	ufwa	<i>mugun dabba</i>	“wild animal”
gw	gwa	<i>Shiga</i>	“enter”
	gwagwavi	<i>Huhu</i>	“lungs”
	dlugwam	<i>Rakumi</i>	“camel”
hw	hwava	<i>bada tsoro</i>	“frightening”
	hwadlau	<i>Kabewa</i>	“pumpkin”
	hwahwang	<i>Duduge</i>	“ankle”

kw	kwatam	<i>Gimbiya</i>	“queen”
	kwakwadu	<i>Zafi</i>	“hot”
	ndzəkwa	<i>dango</i>	“locust”
mw	mwa	<i>Gaba</i>	“front”
	mwata	<i>Moto</i>	“car”
	mwamwalu	<i>Tsami</i>	“sour”
pw	pwa	<i>karan abu</i>	“echo”
	pwali	<i>Kwasa</i>	“yield”
	pwahəu	<i>fari fat</i>	“whitish”
vw	vwa	<i>Kanuri</i>	“ethnic group”
	avwa	<i>Gyara</i>	“over numbered”
	vwagwa	<i>shiga ciki</i>	“go inside”
'w	u'wa	<i>Nono</i>	“breast”
	o'wi	<i>Gaiwa</i>	“mudfish”
	mishi'wa	<i>Yashi</i>	“sand”

2) The consonants **g, h, k, and '** may occur with “**y**” (**palatalization**). (Note that **ny** is not included here because it is considered one of the basic consonants):

gy	gyuliya	<i>Wuya</i>	“neck”
	agyu'yi	<i>Akasa</i>	“on ground”
	ngyabiya	<i>Rayuwa</i>	“way of life”
hy	hya	<i>Wata</i>	“moon”
	Hyal	<i>Allah</i>	“God”
	hyemdi	<i>Tsutsa</i>	“worm”
ky	kyar	<i>Harshe</i>	“tongue”
	kyau	<i>Biya</i>	“to pay”
	kyagəu	<i>Makeri</i>	“blacksmith”
'y	'ya	<i>Cinya</i>	“thigh”
	'yar	<i>Hayaki</i>	“smoke”
	'yagəu	<i>Tsuntsu</i>	“birds”

3) “m”, “n”, or “ng” can occur before a consonant at the beginning of a syllable: Examples:

mb	mbəl	<i>Hanta</i>	“liver”
	mbəla	<i>Tsamiya</i>	“tamarind”
	yambadu	<i>Iska</i>	“wind”
nd	nduwama	<i>Biri</i>	“monkey”
	ndəlbau	<i>Gafiya</i>	“rat”
	undi	<i>Gwiwa</i>	“knee”
ndz	ndzau	<i>bace</i>	“spoil”
	ndzəkwa	<i>dango</i>	“locust”
	kundzəgəu	<i>Magani</i>	“medicine”
nj	nji	<i>Mutane</i>	“people”
	njila	<i>Kunnya</i>	“ridge”
	kwanjili	<i>Amarya</i>	“bride”
ngg	ngga	<i>Lafiya</i>	“well”
	nggari	<i>Kira</i>	“call”
	nggaba	<i>dakin dabba</i>	“stable”

4) **There is a fourth combination that is more complex.** These have a nasal combination followed by an additional consonant, **w** or **y**, at the beginning of a syllable:

mbw	kwambwal	<i>kwalekwale</i>	“canoe”
	umbwa	<i>ɗaki</i>	“room”
	gumbwa	<i>Tairaure</i>	“marriage”
ngw	ngwabau	<i>Tankware</i>	“bend”
	ngwaba	<i>Taki</i>	“fertilizer”
	ngwamə	<i>Gefe</i>	“edge”
ngy	ngya	<i>Zama</i>	“sit”
	ngyina	<i>Kone</i>	“burn”
	həngya	<i>Wuka</i>	“knife”

Exercise: Read the following pairs of Margi Tiwi Nga Təm words. Notice how the words in each pair are different.

Margi	<i>Hausa</i>	English
babal	<i>fili</i>	“field, plains”
babal	<i>tauri</i>	“hard”
bwa	<i>gaskiya</i>	“truth”
bwa	<i>dafa</i>	“boil”
da	<i>tushe</i>	“block”
da	<i>faru</i>	“happen”
heri	<i>tashi</i>	“stand”
həri	<i>dauka</i>	“take”
nga	<i>da</i>	“with”
ngga	<i>kira</i>	“call”
sili	<i>kunya</i>	“shame”
shili	<i>zo</i>	“come”
nga	<i>da</i>	“with”
nya	<i>chika</i>	“full”
da	<i>bugar</i>	“hit”
dla	<i>fadi</i>	“fall”
da	<i>harbi</i>	“sting”
dza	<i>wawa</i>	“foolish”

garu	<i>katanga</i>	“wall”
gharu	<i>dari</i>	“hundred”
ta	<i>ciki</i>	“stomach”
thla	<i>shanu</i>	“cow”
siya	<i>sake</i>	“allow”
tsiya	<i>kashe</i>	“kill”
zama	<i>danuwa</i>	“brother”
zha	<i>maimaita</i>	“repeat”

Chapter 3

The Margi Tiwi Nga Təm alphabet

After having carefully examined the pronunciation of the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language and studied the vowels and consonants, we recommend the following alphabet for the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language:

a b ḅ c d ḍ dl dz e ə f g gh h i j k l m n
ng ny o p r s sh t thl ts u v w y z zh '

A note on tone (pitch) in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

In addition to the consonant and vowel sounds, Margi Tiwi Nga Təm words are also different according to the pitch, or tone, of the voice. Each syllable is either high tone or low tone.

In most cases, when a word occurs in the context of a sentence, speakers of the language will recognize the meaning of the word and will read it with the correct tone.

Here are some examples of words that differ only by tone:

(high tone)	sár	<i>ciyawa</i>	“weed”
(low tone)	sàr	<i>konkoso</i>	“waist”
(high tone)	kwá	<i>zurfin ruwa</i>	“depth of water”
(low tone)	kwà	<i>shida</i>	“six”

(high tone)	pī	<i>sheka</i>	“winnow”
(low tone)	pì	<i>rai</i>	“life”
(high tone)	nggáři	<i>ji</i>	“hear”
(low tone)	nggàři	<i>kira</i>	“call”
(high-low)	shíli	<i>maza</i>	“men”
(low-low)	shìli	<i>zo</i>	“come”
(high-low)	ámà	<i>uwa</i>	“mother”
(low-low)	àmà	<i>amma</i>	“but”

With words like **nggáři** “hear” and **nggàři** “call”, the context may not help distinguish the meaning of the word. In such cases, it will be necessary to mark the tone on the word. We recommend the standard method, as in the examples above: a rising accent mark for “high tone” (for example, **á**) and a downward accent mark for “low tone” (for example, **à**).

Chapter 4

Some notes on the grammar of Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

1. Subject pronouns in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

Like most languages, the pronouns in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm distinguish first person (“I”, “we”), second person (“you”), and third person (“he, she”, “they”), and they distinguish singular from plural (for example, “he” vs. “they”). In addition, the Margi Tiwi Nga Təm pronouns also distinguish *dual* (“the two of us”) from singular and plural, and the *exclusive* and *inclusive* forms of “we” or “us”. The *exclusive* form excludes the one spoken to and the *inclusive* form includes the one spoken to.

As will be seen in the examples below, we suggest writing the pronouns as separate words, thinking this will be easier for people to recognize and read.

The subject pronoun forms can occur before a verb or after a verb. Both forms have the same translation. (Note that, in the present tense, if the pronoun does not occur before the verb, then the vowel **a** is found before the verb). These pronouns are illustrated below with the verb **na** “sing.”

before the verb	after the verb	Translation
yu na	a na yau	“I sing”
gu na	a na gau	“you (sg) sing”
ju na	a na ja	“he or she sings”
ma na	a na ma	“we two sing”
mən na	a na mən	“we sing (with you)”
'yu na	a na 'ya	“we sing (but not you)”
hyu na	a na hi	“you (pl) sing”
ndu na	a na nda	“they sing”

Emphatic pronouns

There is a set of pronouns that are usually used to mark special emphasis:

nayau yu na	“me, I sing”
nagau gu na	“you (sg), you sing”
naja ju na	“him, he sings”
nama ma na	“we two, we sing”
namən mən na	“we, with you, we sing”
na'ya 'yu na	“we, not you, we sing”
nahyi hyu na	“you (pl), you sing”
nanda ndu na	“them, they sing”

2. Object pronouns

In the following examples, the verb is **lar** “see.” The subject is **Avumani** or the pronoun **ju** “he”:

The object pronouns follow the verb, as in the following examples.

Avumani wu lar ɗa.	“Avumani sees me.”
Ju lar ɗa.	“He sees me.”
Ju lar ngau.	“He sees you (singular).”
Ju lar nyi.	“He sees him/her.”
Ju lar ma.	“He sees us (two).”
Ju lar mən.	“He sees us (with you).”
Ju lar 'ya.	“He sees us (not you).”
Ju lar hi.	“He sees you (plural).”
Ju lar nda.	“He sees them.”

3. Tense/Aspect

Tense or aspect in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm is indicated either by tense particles preceding the verb or by the form of the pronoun. We are provisionally calling the more common tenses “past” (completed), “present” (continuous), “future,” and “progressive.” More research is needed in this area.

3.1 Past tense:

The following examples are in the past (completed) tense. When the subject of the sentence is a noun or an emphatic pronoun, the particle **ngə** marks past tense. It precedes the verb. When the subject is a regular pronoun, no tense marker is present. Tense must be indicated by a time word such as na “yesterday.”

noun emphatic pronoun	regular pronoun	
Avumani ngə na		“Avumani sang”
nayau ngə na	yi na (na)	“I sang (yesterday)”
nagau ngə na	gə na (na)	“you (sg) sang (yesterday)”
naja ngə na	ji na (na)	“he or she sang (yesterday)”
nama ngə na	mə na (na)	“we two sang (yesterday)”
namən ngə na	mən na (na)	“we (with you) sang (yesterday)”
na'ya ngə na	'yi na (na)	“we (but not you) sang (yesterday)”
nahi ngə na	hi na (na)	“you (pl) sang (yesterday)”
nanda ngə na	ndə na (na)	“they sang (yesterday)”

3.2 Present tense:

The following examples are in the present (continuous) tense. When the subject of the sentence is a noun or an emphatic

pronoun, the particle **wu** marks present tense. It precedes the verb. When the subject is a regular pronoun, tense is only indicated by the form of the pronoun.

noun/ emphatic pronoun	regular pronoun	
Avumani wu na		“Avumani sings”
nayau wu na	yu na	“I sing”
nagau wu na	gu na	“you (sg) sing”
naja wu na	ju na	“he or she sings”
nama wu na	ma na	“we two sing”
namən wu na	mən na	“we (with you) sing”
na'ya wu na	'yu na	“we (but not you) sing”
nahi wu na	hyu na	“you (pl) sing”
nanda wu na	ndu na	“they sing”

3.3 Future tense:

The following examples are in the future tense. When the subject of the sentence is a noun or an emphatic pronoun, future tense is indicated by the marker **a sa**. When the subject is a regular pronoun, future tense is indicated by **sa**. The future tense marker precedes the verb **na** “sing.”

noun/ emphatic pronoun	regular pronoun	
Avumani a sa na		“Avumani will sing”
nayau a sa na	yu sa na	“I will sing”
nagau a sa na	gu sa na	“you (sg) will sing”
naja a sa na	ju sa na	“he or she will sing”
nama a sa na	məu sa na	“we two will sing”
namən a sa na	mən sa na	“we (with you) will sing”
na'ya a sa na	'yu sa na	“we (not you) will sing”
nahi a sa na	hyu sa na	“you (pl) will sing”
nanda a sa na	ndu sa na	“they will sing”

In the future tense, the future marker **sa** is interchangeable with the marker **nda**. For example:

ju sa na

Or

ju nda na

“he will sing”

3.4 Progressive tense

The following examples are in the progressive tense. When the subject of the sentence is a noun or an emphatic pronoun, progressive tense is indicated by progressive marker **a vər**. When the subject is a regular pronoun, progressive tense is indicated by **vər**. The progressive tense marker precedes the verb **na** “sing.”

noun emphatic pronoun	regular pronoun	
Avumani avər na		“Avumani is/was singing.”
nayau avər na	ya vər na	“I am/was singing.”
nagau avər na	ga vər na	“you (sg) are/were singing”
naja avər na	ja vər na	“he (or she) is/was singing”
nama avər na	ma vər na	“we two are/were singing”
namən avər na	məna vər na	“we (with you) are/were singing”
na'ya avər na	'ya vər na	“we (not you) are/were singing”
nahyi avər na	hya vər na	“you (pl) are/were singing”
nanda avər na	nda vər na	“they are/were singing”

This example could also be translated as “I used to sing,” depending on the context.

3.5 Pronoun summary Chart

The following chart lists the subject pronouns that precede the verb and the object pronouns.

Pronouns in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm						
	Subject				Object	
	Past	Present	Future	Progr.		
“I”	yi	yu	Yu	ya	me	da
“you ^{sg} ”	gə	gu	Gu	ga	you ^{sg}	ngau
“he/she”	ji	ju	Ju	ja	him/her	nyi
“we ^{two} ”	mə	ma	Məu	ma	us ^{two}	ma
“we ^{incl} ”	mən	mən	mən	məna	us ^{incl}	mən
“we ^{excl} ”	'yi	'yu	'yu	'ya	us ^{excl}	'ya
“you ^{pl} ”	hyi	hyu	Hyu	hya	you ^{pl}	hyi
“they”	ndə	ndu	Ndu	nda	them	nda

4. Possessive Pronouns

The basic pattern

As noted above, the subject and object pronouns that occur with verbs are also used to mark possession of nouns. Only the pronouns that follow the verb are used to mark noun possession.

Most nouns mark possession using the pronouns that are the same as the *object* pronouns.

patu	“cat”
patu da	“my cat”
patu ngau	“your cat”
patu nyi	“his/her cat”

If more than one person is the possessor (for example, “our cat”), the letter **r** is added to the noun before the object pronoun:

patur ma	“our (2 of us) cat”
patur mən	“our (including “you”) cat”
patur 'ya	“our (excluding “you”) cat”
patur hyi	“your (plural) cat”
patur nda	“their cat”
zam	“brother”
zam da	“my brother”
zam ngau	“your brother”
zam nyi	“his/her brother”

zamər ma	“our (2 of us) brother”
zamər mən	“our (including you) brother”
zamər 'ya	“our (excluding you) brother”
zamər hyi	“your (plural) brother”
zamər nda	“their brother”

Body parts

Unlike the examples above, the pronouns that mark possession of body parts are the same as the *subject* pronouns in the present tense:

tša yau	“my arm”
tša gau	“your arm”
tša ja	“his/her arm”

When the phrase refers to more than one possessor, the noun is understood to be plural, even though there is no plural marking on the noun:

tša ma	“our (2 of us) arms”
tša mən	“our (including you) arms”
tša 'ya	“our (excluding you) arms”
tša hyi	“your (plural) arms”
tša nda	“their arms”

If the simple noun ends in a letter other than **a**, an **a** is added between the noun and the pronoun, as in the following examples with the noun *cir*, “nose”:

cira yau	“my nose”
cira gau	“your nose”
cira ja	“his/her nose”
cira ma	“our (2 of us) noses”
cira mən	“our (including you) noses”
cira 'ya	“our (excluding you) noses”
cira hyi	“your (plural) noses”
cira nda	“their noses”

5. Demonstrative adjectives in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

The two demonstrative words (meaning “that” and “this”) follow the noun:

ki kau “this house” **tagu kau** “this horse”

ki ta “that house” **tagu ta** “that horse”

5. Plural nouns in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

For most nouns, the plural form is marked by the addition of *'yar*. The demonstrative comes after the plural form:

thla'yar kau “these cows”

ki'yar kau “these houses”

If the plural noun is possessed, the pronoun form occurs after the noun and before the plural form:

tagu ɗa 'yar kau “these, my horses”

tagu ɗa ngə 'yar kau. “These are my horses.”

There are several nouns that have irregular plural forms:

Margi TNT	<i>Hausa</i>	“English”
sal	<i>Miji</i>	man
shili	<i>Maza</i>	men
zər	<i>Yaro</i>	child
wazha	<i>Yara</i>	children
kwa	<i>Nyarinya</i>	girl
ku'i	<i>Yammata</i>	girls
zərsal	<i>Yaro</i>	boy
wazhashili	<i>Yammaza</i>	boys
mala	<i>Mace</i>	woman
mathləkə'i	<i>Mata</i>	women

When an irregular plural form is possessed, the possessive pronoun follows the plural form:

wazhar nda	“their children”
mathləkə'ir 'ya	“our wives”

Chapter 5

Counting and times in Margi Tiwi Nga Təm language

	Margi Tiwi Nga Təm	<i>Hausa</i>	English
1	ta' u, zəmu, pathləu	<i>ɗaya</i>	one
2	səɗa' u, məthləu	<i>biyu</i>	two
3	makəru	<i>uku</i>	three
4	fwadəu	<i>fudu</i>	four
5	Tufu	<i>biyar</i>	five
6	Kwa	<i>shidda</i>	six
7	mədəfau	<i>bakwai</i>	seven
8	Cisu	<i>takwas</i>	eight
9	ədlau	<i>tara</i>	nine
10	kumou	<i>goma</i>	ten
11	kumou sərtang	<i>goma sha ɗaya</i>	eleven
12	kumo apə məthləu	<i>goma sha biyu</i>	twelve
13	kumo apə makəru	<i>goma sha uku</i>	thirteen
14	kumo apə fwadəu	<i>goma sha fudu</i>	fourteen
15	kumo apə tufu	<i>goma sha biyar</i>	fifteen
16	kumo apə kwa	<i>goma sha shidda</i>	sixteen
17	kumo apə mədəfau	<i>goma sha bakwai</i>	seventeen
18	kumo apə cisu	<i>goma sha takwas</i>	eighteen
19	kumo apə ədlau	<i>goma sha tara</i>	nineteen
20	məthləkumunyi	<i>ashirin</i>	twenty
21	məthləkumunyi asərtang	<i>ashirin da ɗaya</i>	twenty one
22	məthləkumunyi apu məthləu	<i>ashirin da biyu</i>	twenty two
23	məthləkumunyi apu makəru	<i>ashirin da uku</i>	twenty three
24	məthləkumunyi apə fwadəu	<i>ashirin da fudu</i>	twenty four
25	məthləkumunyi apə tufu	<i>ashirin da biyar</i>	twenty five
26	məthləkumunyi apə kwa	<i>ashirin da shidda</i>	twenty six
27	məthləkumunyi apə	<i>ashirin da bakwai</i>	twenty

	mədəfau		seven
28	məthləkumunyi apə cisu	<i>ashirin da takwas</i>	twenty eight
29	məthləkumunyi apə ədlau	<i>ashirin da tara</i>	twenty nine
30	makərkumunyi	<i>talatin</i>	thirty
31	makərkumunyi asərtang	<i>talatin da ɗaya</i>	thirty one
39	makərkumunyi apə ədlau	<i>talatin da tara</i>	thirty nine
40	fwadəkumunyi	<i>arba'in</i>	forty
50	tufukumunyi	<i>hamsin</i>	fifty
60	kwakumunyi	<i>settin</i>	sixty
70	mədəfəkumunyi	<i>saba'in</i>	seventy
80	cisukumunyi	<i>tammanin</i>	eighty
90	ədlukumunyi	<i>tasa'in</i>	ninety
100	gharu	<i>ɗari</i>	one hundred
200	gharu məthləu	<i>ɗari biyu</i>	two hundred
300	gharu makəru	<i>ɗari uku</i>	three hundred
900	gharu ədhau	<i>ɗari tara</i>	nine hundred
1,000	dubu	<i>dubu</i>	one thousand
100,000	duburam	<i>dubu ɗari</i>	one hundred thousand
1,000,000	dubu duburam	<i>miliyan ɗaya</i>	one milion

Days of the week

Sugu Lassa	<i>Litini</i>	Monday
Sugu Həghyau (Hildi)	<i>Talata</i>	Tuesday
Sugu Muvi	<i>Laraba</i>	Wednesday
Sugu Wuba	<i>Alhamis</i>	Thursday
Sugu Wandī	<i>Jumma'a</i>	Friday
Sugu Betsau	<i>Sati</i>	Saturday
Sugu Ladi	<i>Lahadi</i>	Sunday

Seasons of the year

Margi TNT	<i>Hausa</i>	English
hyapuci	<i>rani</i>	“dry season” (approximately January to March)
biyargwa	<i>lokacin shuka</i>	“planting season” (approximately April to May)
vuya	<i>damuna</i>	“rainy season” (approximately June to September)
fwahəu	<i>kaka</i>	“harvest season” (approximately October to December)

Months of the year

Hya tangərma	<i>Janairu</i>	January
Hya məthlu	<i>Fabriru</i>	February
Hya makər	<i>Maris</i>	March
Hya foðu	<i>Aprilu</i>	April
Hya tufu	<i>Mayu</i>	May
Hya kwa	<i>Yuni</i>	June
Hya mədəfau	<i>Yuli</i>	July
Hya cisu	<i>Agusta</i>	August
Hya ədlau	<i>Satumba</i>	September
Hya kumou	<i>Oktoba</i>	October
Hya kumou Sərtang	<i>Nuwamba</i>	November
Hya kumou apə Məthlu	<i>Disemba</i>	December

Chapter 6

Proverbs

Karapau Nər Margi Tiwi Nga Təm

1. **Hyal nga kədlə cidī arkra thla, thla thla shu.**

“God chases flies from the cow with a cut-off tail.”

meaning – God takes care of every situation.

2. **Mala ci təm aga zəgu.**

“The woman washes pot for tomorrow.”

meaning – Prepare for the future.

3. **'Yar nga kwadza nga nyi**

“Smoke is associated with quiver.”

meaning – There is no problem without a cause.

4. **Əzəgu nga ndiya ta na.**

“Tomorrow will be better than yesterday.”

meaning – Don't worry about today, tomorrow may be better.

5. **Sugu aga nji patu.**

“Market is for everyone.”

meaning – Everyone is important.

6. **Saga la kau dūmo'yu dzəgam mai.**
“Don't plan evil”
meaning – As you plan evil, you may be the victim.

7. **Mala disha wuki ndə nga ju nya.**
“A witch woman lives in someone's house.”
meaning – Accept the situation no matter how difficult it is.

8. **Nja dar wu lagu tsi mai.**
“People should not climb trees through branches.”
meaning – If you are not invited, don't interfere.

9. **Ta, aga dəfau nga ja wacu mai.**
“The stomach is not only for food.”
meaning – Some things should be kept secret.

10. **Ma gə nya ba val nga dəgə par.**
“If you stay, the grainery will be beaten by rain.”
meaning – If you are lazy, you will suffer.

Chapter 7

Traditional stories

Patu nga Vægəm

Pumungutu arkəra patu nga vægəm. Pəci a'yi patu nga vægəm bazhi nga nda. Alaga kə nda bazhi kau, a'yi kar patu ara gal sukwar mai, ama hivər wu tə nyi ara mba təkə, ara dlengadə ja. Ma ju nggani dlengadə kau u'u ngau. Kə təkə dzugwa na anə patu abər, zam, dlengadə kau a'yi u'u ngə mai, ama kumur dza yi ngau. Kə patu ha tsi adu kra ja, ma ja tsukwari jiri kum ngau. Ma sa da əzəgə kura nyi, ma nda vər ngya, kəl pur, patu, avələri ja adar ja. Ma təkə na kuyak kuyak, patu a mbar nyiri ja nga hir. Ma ja da kukul kukul, abəkiya nyiri ja agyu'yi. Abangau awuyar ja sukwar. Daga ta ngə patu dzuguya mba təkə. Patu a shar ja aga ufwa mba təkə. əngau, ngə bazhi kura nda təkau.

Mabəlang nga Ashadi

Mabəlang na nda nga Ashadi nda vər ma'yi agwa ti. Ma nda vər bau andu tagu, ba ndə lari ka'u ndəlbau. Ashadi ju yu ja cabiya abər naja ndə tsətsəl ngau, ama mabəlang ju yu ja cabiya abər naja nga dənama. Əngra nda vər la ka'u kə ja, ba ndə lari ka'u nyi wu ngilanga mbəla nga nyi. Ma mabəlang mbari shuwa ndəlbau, də ndəlbau shuwa yi ngə mai, ngilanga mbəla ngau. Ama ma mabəlang mbar ngilanga mbəla də ndəlbau, “Shuwa yau! Shuwa yau! Shuwa yau!” Ba mabəlang dzugwa tətədau kəl ta ji thləna ngilanga mbəla. Pəci kabang kau Ashadi nə nyi kəl hwadə i'i abiya. Mabəlang bra mbari vanyi ngilanga mbəla, ndəlbə nə nyi kəl wau, “Shuwa yau! Shuwa yau! Shuwa yau!” Ndagħəu ba ngilanga mbəla thlau, vərr ndanglang mabəlang wu 'yi. Ashadi nə nyi, avwar ja thluwa ndəlbau agwar ka'u, kə ji mbar

ndəlbə nyi. Acabiya ri, jiri, abər Ashadi a ndiya mabəlang nga tsətsəl kur. Əngau ngə kudiyə pumungutu kau.

Kwakurum nga Ashadi

Kwakurum nga Ashadi ndə mai adagə Hyəl ada həl wita. Kwakurum ngə dzuguya dəm wita adar lugu. Ma ja fiya wita adar lugu, ba ja təfau agyu'yi. Ama Ashadi ma ja fiya adar lugu ba nə nyi a nya.

Wu pəci kushu, kə Hyal shili kasa mbar nda wu ki nyi nda vər həl wita. Kə Hyal dzugwa na abər, “Mi hya vər məl ənga?”

Əngau ngə Ashadi hwi nakər abiya. Ama kwakurum nə nyi baji hwi nakər agu liyati ji mbunakər. Uwagu, ma mala shili aga sa mbu u'u wu liyati aga ja ta dəfau, kə ja kwakurum agu liyati.

Kə ji mbar kwakurum, ji yuwa miya ja, ji na, “Kwakurum mi ga məl ngga?”

Də kwakurum, “Nayi ngə shila gal sər səm.”

Kə Hyal na anə kwakurum, “Mi ga məl abanga?”

Də kwakurum, “Mbiya dufu ga həbiya də abiya.”

Kə Hyal həbiya kwakurum abiya, ji fiya nyi wu sar. Kə kwakurum tənə i'i wu sar, kə sar mbar u'u. Ənggərə sar mbar u'u kau, ba kwakurum uya lagur hwi avu sar, baji sanakər. Abəngau ngə pumungutu də kə kudəu.

Chapter 8

History

Əngra Njir Margi Tiwi Nga Təm Shili

Margi Tiwi Nga Təm gang kura nda wu Afrika arvi pampam məthlu nga nda, cangə Kamaru nga Najeriya.

Abang tsu, wu Najeriya a'yi nda wu Adamawa nga Borno. Wu Adamawa a'yi nda wu gwamnati kushu kushu nə Michika, Madagali, Hwang, Muvi, Gombi nga alen vi.

Nə Borno tsu, a'yi nda wu Kwandəga, Dambua, nga Askira/Wuba, ba wu Gwaza.

Kabangkau, Margi abəra sa təkər nda bwata pam pam fodu, thləməər nda ca ngə abang:

Pathlu – Margi wandala, gangə kura nda wu Kamaru nga nyi.

Methlu – ca ngə Margi Putai wu Dambua nga ja uya nda.

Makər – ca ngə Margi Babal na nda ngə njir Lassa nga məlmə kəra zuwari nyi.

Fodu kura nyi tsu – ca ngə Margi Tiwi Nga Təm kəra dədəm nja ngga nda nga Margi South.

Margi Babal nga Margi Tiwi Nga Təm, sə kushu ngə təkəbiya nda. Abangə tsu, Margi Tiwi Nga Təm kyara nda a təkəbiyar dzə kushu ama aya ndzan sə mai, ara wu nggabiya nda kər nda.

Məlmə Margi Tiwi Nga Təm bwata cisu nga nda.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| 1. Betsau | 2. Məshara |
| 3. Həghyau | 4. Uvwau |
| 5. Məva | 6. Wandı |
| 7. Məvər | 8. Wuba |

9. Mararaba//Kwarhi
11. Gajali/Pəba Betsau

10. Rumirgo/Pəba Gəu
12. Uda/Kwaheli

North
Yala / Dəkər
Arewa

West
Putai
Yamma

East
Gədi
Gabas

South Anəm Kudu

Conclusion

Finally, it is our hope that the committees will take serious note of the observations and recommendations that we have made in this booklet in order to fulfill the aims and objectives that were stated on page 2 of this booklet.

The Margi Tiwi Nga Tām group
Marama Workshop

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