

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

This thesis has described some discourse features of Makuri Naga narratives in order to understand how Makuri people tell their narratives, using boundary markings, salience schemes and participant reference. A summary of each chapter and proposed further research are presented below.

#### 6.1 Summary findings

The first two chapters provided the basis for the analysis of these three chapters. Chapter one presented an introduction to the Makuri language and its people. It presented a phonological sketch and the grammatical features of the language. The grammar description introduced different kinds of structures at phrase and clause level, which serves as a foundation for charting the texts and prepares for the later analysis. Chapter two presented a brief overview of discourse typology in relation to narrative discourse and a synopsis of the texts.

Chapter three provides macro-segmentations of the texts. The texts are broken into chunks using boundary marking features and internal unity features. The following features are most frequently found to mark the boundaries in Makuri Naga: time change, participant change, location change, grammatical marker and overlap clause. Direct address, descriptive clause, and summary statements are used less frequently. The most prominent markers are time change and

participant change. Internal unity within the chunk is marked by having the same participants, the same time, the same location, topic continuity, lexical coherence, logical coherence and parallel forms.

More boundary markers occur at the prepeak episodes than later in the Wild Pig Hunting text and the Thief on Bus text. But the Barking Deer Hunting text has more boundary markers at the peak episode. Stronger boundary markings also occur at the post-peak episode in the Barking Deer Hunting text and the Thief on Bus text. Thus more texts need to be analyzed to propose this as a pattern.

Chapter four proposes a salience scheme for Makuri narratives. This salience scheme has six bands. The storyline band is the most salient band in the hierarchy of this scheme. In this language the storyline verbs are marked by the past tense marker *net* with or without other final particles and sequential conjunctions preceding or following the clause. The second band in the scheme is the background band. Flashback also is included in this band. The verbs of the background events are marked by present tense, perfect tense and continuous tense markers. Durative aspect markers in this band are marked by reduplication of the event verbs and by using repetitive particles. The third band is the setting band. These clauses contain equative particles, descriptive verbs, existential verbs, and stative verbs. The irrealis band is marked by the use of negative markers and the conditional conjunction. The evaluative band is the author's intrusion in the narrative. The last band is the cohesive band. It uses overlap clauses and adverbial clauses. The above description is again summarized in Table 28.

Band	Storyline ranking	Markers
1	Storyline	event verb + <i>net</i> 'past tense' event verb + <i>ceot</i> 'CMPL'+ <i>net</i> 'past tense' event verb + <i>tat</i> 'PROMP' + <i>net</i> 'past tense' event verb + <i>līv</i> BEN / <i>pit</i> NO.BEN + <i>net</i> 'past tense' event verb + <i>sit</i> causative marker + <i>net</i> 'past tense' event verb + sequential conjunctions [ <i>a/ anē/ rē/ rēnē, asa/ asanē, nē</i> 'and' / 'then' / 'and then', <i>te/ tenē</i> 'then', <i>te pushit</i> 'then', <i>u shūv/ uche/ zēsa</i> 'after that']
2	Background	event verb + <i>le</i> 'present tense' event verb + <i>lei / leilei</i> 'perfect' event verb + <i>shē</i> 'continuous tense' event verb + <i>-tei</i> -repetition event verb + event verb -duplication event verb + <i>kha</i> 'keep-durative' flashbacks
3	Setting	N + N + <i>net</i> 'EOC' (equative final particle) <i>sūh</i> 'be' + <i>lei / leilei</i> 'exist' + <i>net</i> 'past tense' Adj + <i>net</i> 'past tense' <i>zhat</i> 'stand' -stative verbs
4	Irealis	<i>ma/ mē, mē...ti, yiu, nū</i> 'not' <i>pu (net)</i> 'will' (future tense) <i>khēlē</i> 'if' (conditional conjunction)
5	Evaluation	author intrusion
6	Cohesion	overlap clauses and adverbials [ <i>tū</i> 'when/ during', <i>te/ tenē</i> 'when', <i>shūv</i> 'after', <i>u shūv/ uche/ zēsa</i> 'after that', <i>u zē</i> 'like that' <i>tanē/ tanēket</i> 'but', <i>u nē</i> 'thus' <i>tal anēket</i> 'though']

Table 28: Proposed salience bands of Makuri narrative

The storyline clauses are demoted to the background band when a storyline verb is reduplicated or when a clause uses the adverbials *te* 'when' at the end of the clause. No elements that promote non-storyline bands to storyline are found in these stories. More texts need to be studied to determine whether this language does or does not have such elements.

Chapter five presented participant reference in three Makuri narratives. Noun phrases are used to introduce participants either in the subject position or object position. The default for tracking a participant which is the same subject as the subject of previous sentence (S1) is zero anaphora, it occurs 80% of the time. In

this context, the exceptions to the increased encodings are found at the episode breaks, and when the referents or events contrast with the preceding clauses and when the referent is the minor participant or prop. More encoding is required for clarity when many participants are involved in a sentence. An increased encoding is also employed for prominence of the referent.

In a narrative like the Wild Pig Hunting text, where only two human participants are involved and one of them as the main participant, the default encoding is mostly zero anaphora in all four contexts. In such cases if the participants are human versus non-human, zero anaphora is commonly employed for the human; and when there are two human participants involved, the context makes it clear who the subject is.

In a narrative where a narrator and the other participants with bystanders are involved, the S4 context uses a pronoun for the narrator and the noun phrase for other participants. Thus for this context, the default can be a noun phrase or a pronoun. If the narrator's involvement in the mainline of the story is less, this context might employ a noun phrase more often. The default for the S3 context can be zero anaphora, which occurs 50% of the time. However, default for the S2 environment cannot be proposed in this analysis.

## **6.2 Further research**

More texts of the same genre need to be analyzed to confirm the findings in this analysis. The texts studied in this research are mainly first person narratives where the narrator is a major participant with two or few other participants.

Therefore the narratives which have more participants will be valuable for future

study. Other genres, such as third person narrative, exhortation, exposition and procedure could also be studied.

This research has studied a limited set of discourse features of the Makuri language. It has only described boundary, mainline, and participant reference. Information structure, quote formula and many other discourse features have been left for further research. Examining texts which have more dialogue would clarify the default encoding for the S2 context, which is not proposed in this thesis.

It would also be interesting to compare this study with the discourse features of other Tibeto-Burman languages in the future. This is a large area of research, for discourse study has just begun in these languages.

There is also a need for further investigation in the phonology and the grammar of the language, as this thesis only gives a brief introduction. It would be good to continue collecting and interlinearizing texts for both documentation and corpus research.