DICTIONARY OF
EASTERN PENAN

INCORPORATING PRINCIPLES OF A LEXICOGRAPHIC MODEL
KNOWN AS THE

EXPLANATORY-COMBINATORIAL DICTIONARY

INCLUDING A GRAMMAR AND
AN ENGLISH-PENAN INDEX

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FOREWORD

1. The Penan language and people

The Eastern Penan language belongs to the Bornean branch of the Austronesian language family. It is spoken in the eastern part of the Malaysian state of Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The number of its speakers is often estimated to be ten thousand. Since the government census does not distinguish between different groups that call themselves Penan, this figure is highly approximate. The population of speakers appears to be rising at least for the moment; however, an increasing number of Penans are moving to cities where their cultural identity may be ultimately doomed.

The data in this dictionary come primarily from two different regions -- the Upper Baram River, and the Tutoh River (the Tutoh is a major tributary of the Baram). The speech of these areas does not differ phonologically or morphologically, and only a relatively small number of vocabulary items distinguish them.

The language most closely related to Eastern Penan is Western Penan, spoken in the Belaga and Silat River drainages and elsewhere. While Eastern Penan is the name of a single language, "Western Penan" is an umbrella term covering a number of different speech communities, some of them so different from each other they are probably separate languages rather than dialects. Thanks to a collection of myths that was published in Belaga Penan,[*] I have been able to compare one of these speech variants with Eastern Penan, and find myself unable to read it with comprehension, the reason being that something like 20% of the words differ between the two languages.

Unlike the majority of the indigenous peoples of Borneo, the Penans have no history of sedentary rice farming. They were the last nomadic hunter-gatherers to inhabit the vast virgin rainforest that covered northeastern Borneo until recently.

2. A new kind of dictionary

This is a new kind of dictionary: it is designed for *production*, not just interpretation. It is based on a model of lexicology known as the Explanatory-Combinatorial dictionary, or ECD. This will be explained in the next section.

It is relatively meaningless to ask how many "words" a dictionary contains. What is a word? In any case a "word" cannot be an idiom, yet idioms make up a significant percentage of any natural language. It is only meaningful to talk about the number of dictionary entries. In the ECD approach, each distinct word sense or idiom has its own entry.[†] The dictionary you see here contains something like eight thousand entries. At this point in my research I have no evidence pointing to Penan being less lexically rich than any of the world's other languages -- at least in their oral forms. Therefore, a complete dictionary of Penan would doubtless contain tens of thousands of entries.

(The text you are viewing here dates from 2006. Since that time I have accumulated a vast amount of lexicographic data, roughly doubling the number of entries. But these recent additions are still in rough form, and years of editing will be necessary before I can include them in a published version.)

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[*] Langub, Jayl. *Suket: Penan Folk Stories*. University Malaysia Sarawak, 2001

[†] For example, in an ECD of English, there would be three entries for the noun "Yankee": 1. a person from New England. 2. a person on the Northern side in the war between the states. 3. a citizen of the United States. A more complex example is the form "spring". The following capitalized words or phrases must all be separate entries in a complete ECD (the definitions are abbreviated): SPRING¹ = 'source of water emerging from the ground'; SPRING² = 'season that follows winter'; SPRING³ 1. = 'an elastic device'; SPRING³ 2. = 'degree to which something is elastic' (e.g. *the spring of the board*); SPRING CHICKEN 1. = 'young chicken'; SPRING CHICKEN 2. = 'young person, as if that person were a "spring chicken 1". (Of course, the vocable SPRING is a component of many more entries than those listed.)

Not only do the number of entries in the current work fall far short of a complete dictionary, but so does their content. Definitions are often provisional, examples unrepresentative, and lists of collocations[‡] incomplete.

3. History and methodology of the project

I first visited Sarawak in 1991, and have been returning ever since to conduct linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork, normally two or three times a year. As of 2020 my cumulative time in the field exceeds three years. The dictionary began with my first Penan word list, collected in 1993. I assembled it by questioning native speakers using the medium of Malay, a language spoken by most younger Penans. In 1995 I met Jokim, who became my primary language informant. He has a high school education, and although he speaks both Malay and English, our interactions have always been in Penan. Jokim is intelligent and patient, good at explaining meanings, and creative in constructing illustrative sentences. He is the author of a significant number of the examples in the present work.

In 2001 I met Galang Ayu, who became my primary ethnographic informant. He is a man with great fondness for Penan tradition, and has a formidable memory. Among all Penans I know, he alone recalls most details of traditional culture, and remembers the ancient religion. (Christian missionaries arrived on the scene beginning in the late 1940s.) Over the years he has dictated thousands of pages of ethnographic information, amounting to hundreds of thousands of words, and the resulting texts are a rich source of linguistic material. Citations from them make up a large percentage of the examples in this dictionary.

4. A work in progress

The dictionary before you contains errors. Most of these will be invisible to the casual reader, or even to the beginning student of the language. However, it is to be expected that mistakes of a trivial nature also occur; it is a daunting task to proofread such a massive manuscript.

Over the years, a surprising range of people, including aid workers, filmmakers, social activists, researchers, even long-term "tourists", have asked for preliminary versions of this dictionary. In general I have acceded to their requests. As a result, there are a number of copies in circulation, including early, inferior versions, some of which have been photocopied (with or without my consent). It is in the interests of all that only the best available version be in circulation. It is for that reason, and to meet the ongoing need, that I have decided to make freely available a work with so many shortcomings.

Ian Mackenzie
Vancouver
February 2020

[‡] A *collocation* is a group of two or more words that frequently co-occurs and thus becomes lexicalized, without being a full-fledged idiom. It may be unpredictable or idioscyncratic, but only to a degree. Here are some examples, all of which must be listed under some of the entries for "spring" mentioned in a previous footnote: "thermal spring", "artesian spring", "early spring", "false spring", "release a spring", "compression spring", "X is no spring chicken". (It is usually, but not always clear whether a given idiomatic expression should be treated as a collocation, or as a full-fledged idiom with an entry of its own.)

FORMALISMS OF THE DICTIONARY

1. GENERAL

This is a new kind of dictionary, incorporating as it does principles of the Explanatory-Combinatorial lexicographic model.[§] Conventional dictionaries are *interpretation* dictionaries; they enable one to decipher texts in the language in question, but provide little or no information on how to create new texts. This dictionary aims to be a *production* dictionary; that is, in principle, even a person with little knowledge of the language should be able to use it (in conjunction with an appropriate grammar) to produce well-formed Penan texts.

A complete Explanatory-Combinatorial Dictionary (ECD) of Eastern Penan, along with a complete grammar, would, in principle, constitute a complete written record of the language.

Each entry of an ECD thoroughly describes a given unit of vocabulary, defined as either an individual word taken in one of its senses (a *lexeme*) or an idiom (a *phraseme*). The meaning of each item is precisely specified, and so too are the particular rules that govern how it combines with other elements in a sentence -- rules that do not belong to the general grammar of the language.

In what follows, I explain the formalisms of this dictionary. It is important to note that I will not be describing a fully fledged ECD, but rather a simplified version adapted to the current task.

I have not sought to create a fully developed ECD for two reasons. First, the data is incomplete; the biggest obstacle is that I am not a native speaker of Penan, and therefore am unable to reliably fill in missing information from my own intuition. Second, even with complete data, the writing of even one complete ECD entry is a major task, and often takes days to accomplish; a typical entry is a page long, and some may extend for several pages.

The present dictionary, its simplified formalisms notwithstanding, strives to fulfill the promise of the two goals implied in the name "Explanatory-Combinatorial".

The "Explanatory" component of the name refers to the first major goal of the dictionary, namely defining the meaning of every lexical item in a rigorously correct and complete fashion. When providing a definition of any lexeme or idiom, most dictionaries make do with a list of partial synonyms. The ECD, on the other hand, uses a single expression consisting of lexemes that are less complex (=more primitive) than the lexeme being defined. By this approach we avoid a number of pitfalls of traditional lexicography, including circularity (e.g. giving "select" as the definition of "choose", and then "choose" as the definition of "select".)

In principle the definitions in an ECD of a given language are written in that language. For a number of reasons this principle has not been followed here: definitions and explanations are given in English. As a result, and because of my often provisional understanding of the meaning of a given lexeme, these definitions are often less formally rigorous than those in a fully developed ECD.

The "Combinatorial" component of the name refers to the second major goal of the dictionary, namely the description of the criteria governing all possible co-occurrences of each lexical item. That is, the dictionary aims to show the user how to combine a given lexical item with other items to produce well-formed utterances.

The two most striking features of the present dictionary correspond to the dual goal just enunciated. These are, first, the logical form of the definition, and second, the compilation of collocations.

[§] Mel'cuk, Igor A., and Alexander K. Zholkovsky, *Tolkovo-kombinatornyj slovar' sovremennovo russkovo jazyka*, Vienna, 1984 ('Explanatory combinatorial dictionary of modern Russian', which includes an introduction in English explaining its basic principles.) Also see Mel'cuk, Igor et al., *Dictionnaire explicatif et combinatoire du français contemporain*, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1984. (First of a series: three further volumes were published, in 1988, 1992, and 1999.) Also see Mel'čuk, Igor A. (1988). *Dependency syntax: Theory and practice*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

2. LOGICAL FORM OF THE DEFINITION

Most lexical items -- whether lexemes or phrasemes -- fall into two semantic classes: (1) those that name objects or classes of objects -- e.g. "sun, water, squirrel" -- and (2) those that label predicates, that is to say relations, properties, actions, states, events and so on -- e.g. "mother, employee, pride, height, war, decay". The former class of lexical items can only be defined by a simple reference to the object they label -- a picture for example -- while the latter class must be defined with reference to what we call their actants. The actants in the above examples are as follows: "mother of X, employee of Y in job Z, pride of X about Y, height of X above Y, war between X and Y over Z, X decays from Y into Z". Each of these expressions illustrates what we call the *propositional form* of the lexeme in question. In an ECD, the propositional form of a lexeme plays a central role in the latter's dictionary entry. Consider, for example, a portion of the entry for the Penan lexeme *bet*:

X bet Y jin lem Z tai W = 'X removes Y from Z and moves Y into <onto> W'

The upper-case letters "X", "Y" etc. are variables. We use the term "variable" in an algebraic sense, except that our variable symbols represent lexical items rather than numbers. In this case the letters denote all possible actants of the lexeme *bet*. (In the present dictionary, the letters "X, Y, and Z" are normally reserved for nouns, whereas the variable "V" is normally reserved for verbs -- see the next example. For more on which letters are used for which kind of variable, see the section "Other Formalisms and Conventions".) In the above example, one could for example substitute *redo* ('woman'), *Daud* ('David'), *pengeja'au* ('headman') for X; for Y one could substitute *ba* ('water'), *napun* ('sand'), *kekat éh maréng nelih* ('everything that was just bought'); for Z, anything that has a *lem* ('inside'), e.g. *luvang* ('hole'), *kerita* ('car'), and for W anything that can serve as a location -- e.g. *alut* ('boat'), or *jalan* ('road'). Thus this definiton could be expanded into an almost infinite number of utterances -- e.g. *Redo bet napun jin lem luvang tai alut*. 'The woman removes sand from the hole and puts it into the boat.' or *Daud bet kekat éh maréng nelih jin lem kerita tai jalan*. 'Daud removes everything that was just bought from inside the car [and puts it] onto the road.'

Similarly, the propositional form

payo X V = 'it is to X 's liking to V'

permits an almost infinite number of substitutions: e.g. *Payo ké' lakau seminga*'. 'It is to my liking to take walks.' or *Payo lakei inah pakai keleput*. 'It is to that man's liking to use a blowpipe.'

3. COLLOCATIONS

In an ECD, most collocations are described using a kind of semantic metalanguage making use of the notion *lexical function*. In keeping with the simplified formalisms of the present work, we dispense with this metalanguage, and simply translate each collocation into English. I will therefore avoid a discussion of semantic theory, and simply say that many lexemes combine with others in idiomatic ways. For example, in English one says "throw a party", "deliver a lecture", and "launch an attack" -- but not "*deliver a party", "*launch a lecture", "*throw an attack'. Such usage is idiomatic, and must be learned when one learns the lexemes "party, lecture, attack". But unlike the expressions "kick the bucket" or "it's a piece of cake" (where neither a real bucket nor a real piece of cake are involved), the former expressions are not full-fledged idioms. We are, after all, dealing with a real 'party', a real 'lecture', an actual 'attack' -- not metaphorical ones -- and the idiomatic ways in which these lexemes combine with others must be listed in the entries for "party, lecture, attack" respectively. (Note that full-fledged idioms -- e.g. "kick the bucket', "with a high hand", "put one's best foot forward"-- are given separate entries in an ECD, since they are distinct lexical items.) Collocations are listed after the definition, and in the present dictionary each is prefixed by the + sign. Here are examples of some collocations, namely those belonging to the Penan lexeme *penyakit* 'disease that causes pain'.

+ **penyakit ja'au** 'serious illness' + **penyakit keta <éh peketa>** 'serious and painful illness' + **X maneu penyakit** 'X causes disease' + **penyakit X kabit <pekabit> tai Y jin Z** 'disease X spreads to Y from Z' + **penyakit éh lumang pekabit** 'contagious disease' + **X kabit penyakit Y** 'X catches disease Y' + **X keta neu penyakit Y** 'X suffers severely from disease Y' + **penyakit X tai vat vat** 'disease X spreads or gets worse' + **X matai neu penyakit Y** 'X dies from disease Y' + **X ngeretep neu penyakit Y** 'X manages to endure disease Y' + **penyakit X pegaha'** 'X 's illness is getting better' + **X pawah jin penyakit Y** *or* + **X ma'o jin penyakit Y** 'X recovers from disease Y' + **X peposot penyakit Y** 'X relieves Y's disease' + **X ngema'o <ngepawah> penyakit Y** 'X cures Y's disease' + **penyakit X ma'o neu Y** 'X's disease gets better because of (treatment) Y' + **penga'o penyakit X** 'end of X 's illness' + **X nahan penyakit** 'remedy X alleviates disease for a while' + **X ngeju usah X jin penyakit** 'X protects X -self from disease'

STRUCTURE OF AN ENTRY

We will now outline the structure of an entry and the formalisms used therein. Every entry consists of a series of as many as eleven components, but in practice most entries do not display values for all of these. We will label these components as follows:

1. Indexing term

2. Part of speech

3. Usage and regional variation

4. *Definiendum*

5. Semantic and other conditions

6. Definition

7. Informal note[s], including encyclopaedic information

8. Collocations

9. Examples

10. Cross references

11. English equivalent

1. INDEXING TERM

The indexing term is the expression, consisting of one or more words written in **boldface**, that immediately follows the " § " sign that stands at the head of each entry.

In the event that a given lexeme is homophonous with other lexical items (cf. English box 1 'six-sided container' with box 2 'square that is printed on a form that is meant to be checked'), the indexing term displays a numerical index to disambiguate it. There are four types of numerical indices; three of them are illustrated in the following four entries.

§ **tepun**[1] I.1. n. § -- **tepun** X = 'X 's grandparent'
§ **tepun**[1] I.2. n. § -- **tepun** X = 'ancestor[s] or forebears of X'
§ **tepun**[1] II. n. § -- **tepun** X = 'owner or master of X'
§ **tepun**[2] n. § -- **tepun** = 'tiger'

As can be seen, when two or more homophones exist having no semantic relationship, they are distinguished by Arabic numeral superscripts. In this way **tepun** meaning 'tiger' is distinguished from the group of three **tepun** which all denote a person.[*] This latter group of lexemes falls itself into two groups, and since the semantic

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[*] There may in fact be an historical connection between *tepun* 'ancestor' and *tepun* 'tiger', insofar as tigers are one of the Penan mythical ancestors. (To add a further twist, as far as we know they have never existed on Borneo, yet tiger skins, brought from elsewhere in the archipelago, have been known for centuries.) However, the definitions of these two lexemes share no non-trivial semantic component; put

relationship between these two groups is rather loose, they are labelled with Roman numerals. Thus, "I." applies to the two **tepun** which denote human forbears, and "II." applies to the **tepun** that denotes a person enjoying authority or ownership. (The semanteme 'person' underlies each of these lexemes, insofar as the term 'person' is needed to define 'grandparent', 'ancestor', and 'owner'.) The last degree of differentiation is provided by normal Arabic numerals, which thus distingish the lexeme meaning 'grandparent' from that denoting 'ancestor'.

If a finer degree of differentiation is needed, the letters "a, b, c" etc. are used. Thus:

 § **anak** 1.a. n. § -- **anak** X = 'baby or child of human X'
 § **anak** 1.b. n. § -- **anak** X = 'child, son, or daughter, of any age, of human X'
 § **anak** 2. n. § -- **anak** X   = 'a person junior to X in age and authority and under the leadership of X, as if X were "anak 1" of X'

The purpose of the indexing term is not only to uniquely label each lexeme or idiom, but to position it in its appropriate place in the dictionary. This is no trivial issue in the case of Penan, since it is the initial phonemes of words, not their endings, that undergo morphological modification. In English, for example, *king*, *kingdom*, *kingly*, and *kingmaker* all naturally fall together on the same page of the dictionary, allowing the reader to easily compare the members of this family of lexemes. But by placing the following two Penan lexemes in alphabetical order, we would be widely separating them, and make it more difficult to grasp their semantic relationship. It would make the language learning process more difficult.

 § **olong** 1. n., adj. § -- **X olong Y** = 'animal X that is domesticated or kept alive by Y'

 § **molong** 1. v. § – **X molong Y** / **nolong**[*] = 'X keeps animal Y as a pet or as a domesticated animal'

Instead, we choose to group them together under their common root, **olong**, by the expedient of re-writing the latter entry in the following fashion:

 § **olong** - **molong** 1. v. § – **X molong Y** / **nolong** = 'X keeps animal Y as a pet or as a domesticated animal'

Thus, whenever the indexing term consists of two expressions separated by a single dash " – ", it is the second of these expressions (in this case, **molong** 1.) that actually labels the lexeme being defined. The first expression (in this case, **olong**) serves purely to position the entry in the dictionary.

It behoves me to offer some further justification for this method of ordering the dictionary. It is true that departing from strict alphabetical order often makes looking for a word a roundabout process; even, as is the case, when the reader invariably finds a cross-reference to guide him on his way. But I am following the tradition of Malay and Indonesian lexicography. In those languages too the initial phoneme of a word frequently undergoes modification, and dictionary writers long ago decided that it was better to group together all words of a given family, rather than scattering them about. (For example, **mengadakan** 'bring into existence', **keadaan** 'situation', **berkeadaan** 'in the state of', **keberadaan** 'existence', are all grouped under their root word **ada** 'exist'.) In fact, Penan is considerably more extreme than Malay in its modification of word-initial phonemes; while Malay uses suffixes as well as prefixes, Penan never does; all morphological changes operate on the beginnings of words.[†]

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another way, there is no semantic bridge between them. The relationship between them, if it exists, is diachronic, not sychronic, and an ECD is not an historical dictionary. What is more, the Christianized Penans are rapidly losing their old belief system, and for increasing numbers of children *tepun* is just another animal they see in school books or nature documentaries.

[*] **nolong** is the passive voice; more on this shortly

[†] One minor problem that arises while determining the appropriate order of entries relates to certain compounds. In order to avoid ambiguity, Penan speakers often prepose the generic terms **juhit** 'bird', **seluang** 'fish', **laka** 'vine' etc. in front of the names of certain animals and plants. For example, **ujung bolo** is the name of a fish, but it also quite literally means 'bamboo leaf', so one always preposes the word meaning 'fish' to prevent confusion – thus, **seluang ujung bolo**. Expressions of this type are listed alphabetically under the generic term – in the above example, after **seluang** rather than after **ujung**. Similarly, **kelit bolo**, which literally means 'bamboo bat', is listed under **kelit** 'bat', and not under **bolo** 'bamboo'. However, in the majority of cases botanical and zoological terms are quite unambiguous, and are therefore listed under their names proper, rather than after the generic term. For example, **benua'** is listed under the letter **b**, because although it is always correct to say **kayeu benua'** 'benua' tree', one usually says just **benua'**, because no confusion is possible.

In general, idioms are listed under the first letter of the first component of the idiom; thus, **lamin besara'** 'court house' and **lamin gebala** 'pastor's house' occur in alphabetical order, right after the entry **lamin** 'house'.

2. PART OF SPEECH

The next component of an entry is an indication of the formal category or part of speech to which the lexical item belongs – this is usually given in abbreviated form, and includes the following terms: n. 'noun', v. 'verb', adv. 'adverb', adj. 'adjective', pron. 'pronoun', idiom n. p. 'idiomatic noun phrase'. (A complete list is given under the section "Symbols and Abbreviations".)

3. NOTE ON USAGE AND REGIONAL VARIATION

Next may follow an expression, in parentheses, giving certain kinds of general information about the lexeme in question, including:

(a) Regional Variation

As mentioned earlier, I have encountered different regional variants. The notation (Tutoh) indicates that the expression in question is used in the Tutoh River area, and not in the Upper Baram. Conversely, the notation (Upper Baram) implies that an expression is not used in the Tutoh River area. These are the two regional variants of Eastern Penan with which I have consistent contact. I have occasionally encountered a third population, the people who live in the Upper Limbang River area. My impression is that their language usage is closer to that of the Tutoh people than to the Upper Baram people.

(b) Neologisms

Sometimes the notation (neol., from M.) appears. This should be read as 'neologism, from Malay'. This is used to indicate "marked" expressions, that is, Malay words that have very recently been borrowed and are not fully integrated into the language and acceptable to all speakers. Malay is by far the greatest source of borrowing, and has been so for some time; and it is therefore important to distinguish between those words of Malay origin that have been adopted by all speakers, versus those that are only current among younger, bilingual Penans. It should be emphasized, however, that there is a continuum between fully integrated Malay words and those that have only taken the first tentative steps on the path to assimilation. Generally speaking, I am more likely to use the designation (M) in those cases where Penan already has a perfectly adequate expression for the meaning in question. Fully assimilated borrowings from Malay – and there are many of these -- are not marked; if you know Malay, you will easily identify many of them.

There are also a few lexemes marked (neol., from E.). These are borrowed from English directly, or via Malay. Like the above-mentioned marked borrowings from Malay, they are in general not known to all speakers.

(c) Archaisms

I sometime indicate if a lexical unit is archaic, obsolete, or rare. Another notation that occasionally appears is (dilem). *Dilem* is a Penan word with the primary meaning 'deep', and a secondary meaning that signifies any linguistic expression which the speaker views as archaic, *recherché*, or unlikely to be understood by the uninitiated, including children. It is a term supplied by my informants, and which I include only in those cases when it is the only datum concerning usage that I have so far obtained. A future edition of the dictionary will replace all instances of this vague term with more precise designations.

4. *DEFINIENDUM*

Definiendum is Latin for 'that which is to be defined'. It is the expression that immediately follows the second occurrence of the symbol " § ", which in turn is followed by a double dash " – ". It is written in **boldface,** and consists of one or more words, and usually other symbols as well.

When the lexical item represents a predicate, that is, has actants, then this expression is written in what we call *propositional form*, that is its actants are represented by the algebraic variables **X**, **Y**, and so on. Here is one example, chosen at random from among thousands.

 § **payo** 4. v. § -- **X payo tong Y** = 'Y suits X'

The expression **X payo tong Y** is the *definiendum,* and since **payo** denotes a logical predicate, it is written in *propositional form*.

Thus, the first **payo** in this entry is part of the indexing term, while the second **payo** is part of the *definiendum*.

Before going further we will mention a systematic exception to the convention we have just expounded. A whole class of entries does not display a *definiendum* separate from the indexing term; instead, the latter does double duty, seving both as a label for the entry and its *definiendum* as well. This occurs only in the cases of those lexical items that (a) have no homophones, and therefore no need for a numerical index to disambiguate them; and (b) not naming predicates, have no government pattern. Examples of these entries are easy to find; here is just one.

§ **aseu** n. = 'dog'

Strictly speaking, this entry should be written

§ **aseu** n. § -- **aseu** = 'dog'

It is obvious why I opt for the abbreviated form: information is not lost, nor is confusion generated.

Occasionally the *definiendum* is presented as two distinct alternative propositional forms, which are followed by a single definition. For example,

 -- **X tuai [tong] Y jin Z** ‖ **X tuai jin Z tai Y** = 'X comes to Y from Z'

Thus, using the above propositional forms one could construct the two following synonymous texts:

Balang tuai tong Long Kerong jin Long Leleng. or *Balang tuai jin Long Leleng tai Long Kerong*. 'Balang comes to Long Kerong from Long Leleng.'

In the case of transitive verbs, the *definiendum* normally terminates with one or more elements introduced by a slash " / ". Each such slash introduces one of the voices of the verb. The form that is represented in the *definiendum* is always in the active voice; the form that follows a slash without any other notation is in the passive voice; the form that follows a slash and the acronym "nvp" is in the nonvolitional passive voice; and the form that follows a slash and the abbreviation "reciproc." is in the reciprocal voice. (For information on these latter voices, see the grammar.) Only a few verbs display all four voices; here is one example.

 § **muja'** 1. v. § -- **X muja' Y pala Z** / **nuja'** / nvp **puja'** / reciproc. **pepuja'** = 'X strikes [at] Y with the sharp end of object Z, thrusting Z longitudinally'

In this example, four different patterns are shown, one in full, and three by means of conventional abbreviations. These conventional abbreviations are always to be expanded in the same, predictable fashion. This is best explained by example.

The passive form, represented by / **nuja'**, should be read as follows:

Y nuja' X pala Z = 'Y is struck by X with the sharp end of Z, thrust longitudinally'

The nonvolitional passive, represented by / nvp **puja'**, should be read as follows:

Y puja' neu Z = 'Y gets struck by Z, which is thrust longitudinally'

The reciprocal voice, represented by / reciproc. **pepuja'**, should be read as follows:

X ngan Y pepuja' pala Z = 'X and Y strike each other with Z, which is <are> thrust longitudinally'

5. SEMANTIC AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Sometimes following the *definiendum* is an expression introduced by a colon " : ". This is a condition or conditions that apply to one or more elements of the *definiendum*. Here are just two of many possible examples:

§ **kemedut** adv. § -- **X V kemedut** : **V** denotes travel = 'X V -s backwards (=backing up)'

§ **kelaset** - **ngelaset**[2] v. § -- **X ngelaset N Y kelebé** : **N** denotes a number, **Y** denotes an interval of time = 'X goes hungry, intentionally or unintentionally, for N Y' (roughly speaking, 'fast')

6. DEFINITION

Then comes the definition proper, or *definiens* (Latin for 'that which is doing the defining'). This follows the equal sign " = " and is enclosed in single quotes.

In a full-fledged ECD considerable care is taken in the choice of the terms used in the definition. Among other things, these must always be more semantically "primitive" than the lexical item being defined. This condition is essential in the case of a definition written in the same language as the expression being defined. However, as mentioned earlier, my definitions are written in English, and this gives me a significant degree of freedom in how I write them. This is because there may be more than one English expression which is synonymous with a given Penan lexical item. (Note that, in strict ECD terms, these are not definitions at all, but simply English translations; but they do match what people normally understand as "definitions", namely expressions used in dictionaries to describe the meanings of words. At this point I should repeat a caveat I have already expressed: given the provisional nature of the data, many of these English translations are bound to be inaccurate to one degree or another.)

7. INFORMAL NOTES, INCLUDING ENCYCLOPAEDIC INFORMATION

Following the definition there is sometimes a note enclosed in parentheses. This is additional explanatory material, often further clarifying the meaning, and presented in an informal fashion. Sometimes this includes encyclopaedic information, which is non-linguistic information about that part of the real world connected with, or labelled by, the lexical item in question.

8. COLLOCATIONS

Next are the collocations, each prefixed by the symbol " + ". Each collocation has its own *definiendum* and *definiens*. In a full-fledged ECD collocations are listed in a conventional order, and defined using a kind of semantic metalanguage (making use of the already mentioned theory of *lexical functions*.) Because of the provisional nature of this dictionary we follow no particular order, and go no further than translating them into simple English. (We have already seen an illustration of a collocation zone, the one pertaining to the entry for *penyakit*, 'disease'.)

9. EXAMPLES

The symbol | is used to introduce the examples. These are normal Penan texts that use the lexical item being defined. I gloss almost all of them in English.

10. CROSS REFERENCES

Many entries have cross references appended to them. These are introduced by such terms as "see", "cf", "syn", and "ant". (N.B. In a fully developed ECD, synonyms and antonyms are listed among the lexical functions. In this dictionary I present them as cross references.)

11. ENGLISH EQUIVALENT

Finally, there may be an English equivalent, indicated by the sign •. Note that perfect synonymy between lexical items of different languages is rather rare. This is particularly true when one is dealing with cultures as mutually alien as English and Penan. Only about a quarter of Penan lexical items can be translated, with reasonable accuracy, by a single English word. That is why full-fledged definitions, often consisting of many words, are so necessary. We supply an "English equivalent" to a particular lexical item in Penan only if the meaning of both the English and Penan terms are quite close. When this "English equivalent" differs at all from the definition, it is of course the definition that takes precedence.

OTHER FORMALISMS AND CONVENTIONS

I. BRACKETS

1. ANGLE BRACKETS < >

Consider the following example:

 -- **X menyat Y ngan <jin> Z / nenyat** = 'X asks for Y from Z'

The angle brackets < > enclose an alternative element. That is, this definition can be read in two ways:

X menyat Y ngan Z / nenyat

X menyat Y jin Z / nenyat

When interpreting angle brackets (wherever these may be used in the Penan text, e.g. in the definition or example zones), the following conventions apply.

(a) When the angle brackets contain a single element, then this element is an alternative to the element immediately preceding the angle brackets. For example,

Pala ojo <tapong> ma'ung ba. 'Use one's hand <a hat> to scoop up water.'

(b) When the angle brackets contain more than one element, then this group of elements is an alternative to the single element immediately preceding the angle brackets. For example,

Pala ojo <ujung kayeu> ma'ung ba. 'Use one's hand <a leaf> to scoop up water.'

(c) When the angle brackets contain more than one element, *and* when the first of these elements is a repeat of an element in the text immediately preceding the angle brackets, then the group of elements in the angle brackets is an alternative to the group of elements in the preceding text beginning with the element that is repeated. The following examples make this clear:

 Luten jin malem keto mahang <keto bé' pata'> uban kayeu meden. -- This should be read as either -- Luten jin malem keto mahang uban kayeu meden. *or* Luten jin malem keto bé' pata' uban kayeu meden. 'The fire from last night is still burning because the wood is very resistant to going out.'

Tana' mapé neu levam <neu besalé> <neu kereja batang>. 'The land was washed away by the flood <swept away in the landslide> <levelled by the logging>.'

2. SQUARE BRACKETS [   ]

Square brackets [ ] enclose an optional element. For example:

Anak éh [jam] ngaken. 'a clever child'

This text can be read in either one of two ways, namely

Anak éh ngaken.

Anak éh jam ngaken.

3. "SYMMETRICAL" INTERPRETATION OF BRACKETS

When either angle or square brackets are used in both the *definiendum* and *definiens*, they are to be interpreted in a "symmetrical" fashion. That is, if the *definiendum* is read as including the bracketed text, then the *definiens* must also be read in the same way. Conversely, if the *definiendum* is read as not including the bracketed text, then the *definiens* must be read likewise. Some examples will make this clear.

  -- **X nekuja' jin Y tai [bau] Z** = 'X jumps up from Y onto [the top of] Z'

must be read as either

-- **X nekuja' jin Y tai Z** = 'X jumps up from Y onto Z'

or

-- **X nekuja' jin Y tai bau Z** = 'X jumps up from Y onto the top of Z'

II. CHOICE OF LETTERS TO REPRESENT VARIABLES

In some entries we specify how a given variable must be interpreted, e.g.

X V Y pekua' éh W Z : **W** is the passive form of verb **V**, **Z** is its agent = 'X V -s Y in the same way as Y is W -ed by Z'

However, in those entries (the majority) where no such specification is given, the letters standing for variables are to be interpreted as follows:

To represent nouns and noun phrases, we use the following letters, in order of preference: **X**, **Y**, **Z**, **W**, and **U**. e.g.,

X tengé = 'X alone'

X medai Y = 'X is afraid of Y'

X belah Y ngan Z = 'X is in the space between Y and Z'

X miso Y jin Z tai W / **niso** = 'X moves Y from Z to W'

X pala Y ma'ung Z jin W tai U / **na'ung** = 'X uses Y to scoop up liquid Z from W and pour <throw> it onto U'

To represent verbs or adjectives, we use, in order of preference, **V** and **W**. e.g.,

X juk V = 'X will or shall V'

nyeliko X V, Y W : **V** and **W** are verbs = 'at the same time as, and to an extent proportional to X 's V -ing, Y W -s'

Note the use of the English verb morphology markers, -ing and -s, that we have attached to the variables; these have no formal status in the definition and could be omitted, but we include them to improve readability.

To represent clauses, we use, in order of preference, **Q** and **P**. "Clause" is meant in the widest possible sense: as an expression containing, or acting as, a predicate -- and since in Penan not only verb complements but also the

subject can be omitted, **Q** and **P** may designate anything from a single verb or adjective to an expression that could stand on its own as an independent sentence.

Q jak = 'Q now, before anything else' (e.g., Jian ke' purung surat si'ik iteu jak. 'Kindly read this small book first.')

sadat Q hun P = 'Q (will be caused) if P' (e.g., Sadat ké' nebet bilun hun tuah tosok lebé. -- lit., reason my get-left-behind-by plane if we-two talk for-a-long-time -- 'I will miss the plane if we talk too long.')

To represent cardinal numerals, we use **N**.

N X [éh] lepah = 'N units of time X ago'

III. PAKAI versus PALA

It will be noticed that many *definienda* make use of an instrumental phrase introduced by either **pakai** or **pala**. e.g.

-- **X nawan Y pakai Z** / **tenawan** = 'X treats Y with medicine Z'

-- **X muja' Y pala Z** / **nuja'** = 'X strikes [at] Y with the sharp end of object Z , thrusting Z longitudinally'

Both **pakai** and **pala** mean 'with, by means of, using', and I believe that they are synonymous. It would seem that **pala** is the original Penan word, and **pakai** is a Malay borrowing that has become so thoroughly implanted in the language that it is nowadays used more often than **pala**. The fact that some entries use **pala** while others use **pakai** is a result of happenstance -- some examples I collected contain one, some the other.

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

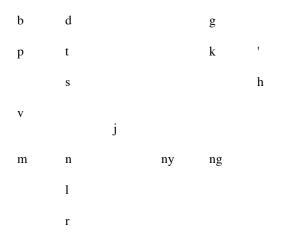| *symbol*	*meaning*
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
ant	antonym
cf	"see" (an invitation to look at another related entry)
conj.	conjunction
dilem	a Penan word meaning 'profound, hard to understand' (cf. explanation above)
E	English
interj.	interjection
n.	noun
idiom n. p.	idiomatic noun phrase
idiom v. p.	idiomatic verbal phrase
idiom adj. p.	idiomatic adverbial phrase
idiom adv. p.	idiomatic adverbial phrase
LF	lexical function (in future editions I will not use this term, but rather "collocation".)
M	Malay
neol., from E.	neologism, from English
neol., from M.	neologism, from Malay
nvp	nonvolitional passive voice
poss. adj.	possessive adjective
pron.	pronoun
reciproc.	reciprocal voice
see	you must go to the entry indicated to find the information you need
syn	synonym
v.	verb
var	variant of

BIBLICAL CITATIONS (The Penan translation of the Bible is a useful source of texts)

B30:23	Genesis chapter 30 verse 23 (the form of a biblical quote)
P10:12	Exodus chapter 10 verse 12 (the form of a biblical quote)

PENAN PHONOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHY

Penan has a phonemic inventory similar to that of Malay, and the orthography devised for it by missionaries in the 1970's is similar to that of Malay. The spelling system created at that time is adequate in principle, but has been applied in a flawed manner in Bible translations. More on this presently.

The consonants are as follows:

b	d		g	
p	t		k	'
	s			h
v				
		j		
m	n		ny	ng
	l			
	r			

There are also the glides *y* and *w*.

Most of these letters are sounded as they are in IPA (the International Phonetic Alphabet). For those not familiar with the latter system, they may safely give these letters the value they have in Malay or Indonesian orthography. " v " is a voiced bilabial fricative (the upper lip is pressed against the lower lip, rather than, as in English, against the lower teeth). " ' " is a glottal stop -- the sound which we produce in English when we distinguish the phrase "a nice house" from "an ice house" -- written phonetically, these are respectively [a nais haus] and [an 'ais haus]. " ng " is a velar nasal, and " ny " is a palatal nasal -- both having the same value as in Malay, or in the English words *singer* and *canyon*, respectively. " r " is flapped, as in Malay, Spanish, or Italian. " j " is as in English or Malay.

All consonants may occur word initially. This includes /'/, the glottal stop; however, its presence in that position is not phonemic, which is another way of saying that it *automatically* precedes any word initial vowel. For example, *éh ta'an ké*, 'what I saw', is always pronounced '*éh ta'an ké*'. Because this pronunciation is predictable, there is no need to mark it, and so " ' " is never written word initially.

Only seven consonants may occur word finally, viz. /p/, /t/, /k/, /h/, /'/, /n/ and /ng/.

Penan has six vowels, represented by the letters *u, i, o, a, é*, and *e*. The first four of these letters have the same value as they have in Malay or Spanish. *é* is somewhere between the *e* in "bed" and the *é* in "café".
e represents a schwa (the neutral vowel, present in many languages including English - the second vowel in each of the words *bucket, malice, pigeon* is a schwa). In Penan the schwa has a high functional load (= is used a great deal and often distinguishes meaning), and, unlike in English, a schwa can occur as the vowel of a stressed syllable.

Any of the vowels /a/, /é/, /i/, /o/, /u/, if occurring in a word-final syllable, can be either long or short. The vowel is pronounced long if the word-final syllable is open, that is if the vowel forms the last sound of the word - e.g. *pala, bé, kari, mero, ngelepu*. The vowel is short if the syllable is closed, i.e. if any consonant, including the glottal stop, is the last sound of the word - e.g. *tana', bé', suhat, térék, murip*. (Note that final long vowels are

often, and optionally, pronounced with a glottal creak (i.e. a glottal semi-closure), which is never to be confused with the abrupt phonemic glottal stop /'/ which can only follow a short vowel.)

The schwa may not appear in a word-final open syllable – i.e. it must always be followed by a consonant. (e.g. *merem, pet, ke'*, but never **ke, *te, *me*, etc.) However, there is a single exception to this rule -- *e*, 'mummy' or 'mom' (This is also the single case where a schwa may occur as the first phoneme of a word!).

The following diphthongs occur: /ai/, /au/, /éu/, /oi/, /eu/, /ei/. These only occur as word final syllables, and are never followed by a phonemic consonant -- e.g. *barei, pesikeu, malai*. The diphthongs /eu/ and /ei/ are pronounced [eu'] and [ei'] respectively, but the presence of the final glottal stop is predictable, and cannot affect meaning. Diphthongs -- and the schwa for that matter -- do not participate in the aforementioned long-short vowel variation.

Note that the letter combinations *ia, ie, iu* and *io* do not denote true diphthongs, even though they are written as such in words like *iah* 'he, she, it', *ieng* 'there is none', *keviu* 'whistle' and *tio* 'directly'. These represent, phonetically, /iyah/, /iyeng/, /keviyu/, and /tiyo/. Similarly, the letter combinations *ua, ue, ui* and *uo* -- in e.g. *lua', ueng, uit,* and *keruong,*   -- also do not denote diphthongs. In fact they represent /uwa/, /uwe/, /uwi/, and /uwo/ respectively. However, since in both sets of cases, *y* and *w* are phonetic, not phonemic (= they are predictable in their occurence, and not meaning-differentiating) we refrain from writing them. In those cases where *y* and *w* are written – e.g. *awah, liwen, ayah, oyoi* – they are full-fledged phonemes, and serve to distinguish meaning (cf. *liwen* vs. *lisen, ayah* vs. *anah*).

The only possible syllabic structures are V, CV, CVC, CVCV, CVCVC, etc. ("V" means 'vowel' and "C" means 'consonant'.) In other words, there are no consonant clusters in Penan, not even combinations of a nasal and following homorganic stop. For example, when Malay words like *sendiri* or *belanja a*re borrowed into Penan, they become *sediri* and *belaja*. Consonant clusters can only occur across word boundaries, e.g. *kang kaput* 'Indian cuckoo', *jalan tekelet* 'shortcut', *sakit kenin* 'to feel emotionally hurt'.

All syllables are equally stressed.

The spelling used in the Penan Bible is deficient in respect of word-final syllables. The most frequently occurring defect of this orthography is its marking of a phonemic (=distinctive) glottal stop where it does not occur - e.g. **palaa'* instead of *pala*, **leboo'* instead of *lebo*, **avéé'* for *avé*, **akeu'* for *akeu*, **iteu'* for *iteu*.[*] The second most important defect is the arbitrary way in which final vowels in open syllables are represented. Most are written with a double vowel letter, but some are not. Although any given word is spelled in a consistent way throughout the text, there is no logic as to which words are spelled how - thus although *pané* is always written correctly, *beté*, a word having the same long final vowel sound, is always spelled **betéé'*. Similarly, while *bé* is always rendered correctly, *sé* is written **séé'*.

With the agreement and encouragement of our principal linguistic informant, Jokim, we have chosen to correct these deficiencies and inconsistencies. Therefore all double vowel graphemes have been suppressed, and /'/ only marks glottal stops that are phonemic.

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[*]When linguists place an asterisk in front of a word or expression, they are identifying the latter as being ill-formed or ungrammatical. I believe there are two reasons for these errors made by the missionary. First, a vowel at the end of a word is pronounced long, and often with what linguists call a "glottal creak". The glottal creak is predictable and therefore not phonemic (=not meaning-bearing), but the missionary heard it and wanted to represent it, so she used the symbol normally reserved for the glottal stop. Second, the diphthongs /ei/ and /eu/ terminate with a true glottal stop, and in a "narrow" or phonetic transcription, as opposed to a phonemic one, it is not incorrect to spell e.g. *iteu'* rather than *iteu*. However, this glottal stop is not phonemic; it is entirely predictable and therefore should not be represented in a practical orthography.

PENAN GRAMMAR – A SKETCH

What follows is a brief and very provisional outline of Penan grammar. Some areas of grammar are dealt with in much more detail than others; some areas are left out entirely. I have decided to include it despite its obvious deficiencies, since it will be of considerable utility to those interested in learning the basics of the language.

The discussion of verbs -- in particular, verbal voice (sections 3.4 and beyond) was radically reworked and improved in March of 2020.

1. BASIC SYNTAX

Nouns, adjectives, and intransitive verbs lack any form of inflection. Penan lexemes do not undergo morphological changes which signify case, number, sex, gender, or tense.

1.2 WORD ORDER AND THE BASIC SENTENCE

The word order of a sentence containing a transitive verb is Subject - Verb - Object.

Labang na'at lamin. 'Labang see house.' (Labang sees a house.)

Thus word order determines semantic relationship.

Aseu nga'at anak. 'Dog bite child.' (The dog bites the child.)
Anak nga'at aseu. 'Child bite dog.' (The child bites the dog.)

In Penan sentences it is quite normal for the object or other complements to be omitted, as well as the grammatical subject. This can result in a sentence that is quite ambiguous unless used in context.

Bé' kelo. 'No want.' "We don't want it" or perhaps "They don't want it" or perhaps "I don't want to do it", etc.

There is no verb "to be", so a complete sentence can be formed without an element that is obviously a verb.

Lakei merek, redo besau. 'Man angry, woman sad.' (The man is angry, the woman is sad.)

However, note that an expression such as

Lakei merek

can constitute either a sentence, as in the preceding example, or a noun phrase, as it appears in the following sentence:

Lakei merek bé' moko siteu. 'Man angry not stay here.' (The angry man is not staying here.)

Noun phrases may be constructed using the relativizing particle *éh*, meaning 'that, which, who'.

Akeu temeu ngan lakei éh merek. 'I meet with man who angry.' (I met with the angry man.)
lamin éh lepah potong. 'House that already get-burned. (The house that has burned down.)

The normal order of nouns and their modifiers is noun first - modifier following.

lamin maréng. 'house new' (a new house)
kerita peritah 'car government' (a government car)

redo iteu 'woman this' (this woman)

However, sometimes adjectives are used in front of nouns – compare the two following examples.
Lakei inah merek. 'Man that angry.' (That man is angry.)
Merek lakei inah. 'Angry man that.' (That man is **angry**.)

It is more accurate to speak of the preposing of predicates rather than the preposing of adjectives. Consider the following pair, in which the second example contains a preposed verb:

Akeu lakau. 'I leave.' (I am leaving.)
Lakau akeu. '*Leave I.* (I am **leaving**.)

Such preposing of a predicate serves to present it as the most important element in the sentence, one that denotes, for example, new or vital information.

It can also serve to create a declarative sentence, where the corresponding post-posed form would simply be a noun phrase. E.g.,

ba pana 'water hot' (hot water)
Pana ba. 'Hot water.' (The water is hot.)

The above cases should be distinguished from that of complex adjectives, which are phrases consisting of a noun and a preposed adjective. Some of these are idiomatic. For example,

jian adet 'well behaved'

Anak iteu jian adet. 'Child this well behaved.' (This child is well-behaved.)

Jian adet anak iteu. (This child is **well**-behaved.'

sa'at akam 'in bad health'

Iah sa'at akam. 'He bad health.' (He is in ill health.)

besau kenin 'sad, sorrowful'

Redo éh besau kenin. 'Woman who sad hearted.' (A woman who is sad.)

Besau kenin redo inah. 'Sad hearted woman that.' (That woman is **sad**.)

2. DEMONSTRATIVES, DEFINITE VS INDEFINITE

The demonstrative adjectives are *iteu* 'this, these' and *inah* 'that, those', and *itai* 'yon (= far from both the speaker and the hearer)'. The first two of these are often abbreviated to *teu* and *nah*, respectively. They always follow the noun they modify.

lakei iteu 'this man <these men>'
lamin inah 'that house <those houses>'

iteu, inah and *itai* can also be pronouns, 'this one <these ones>' and 'that one <those ones>' respectively.

There is no indefinite article; nor is there an obligatory definite article. Thus,

Babui kuman bua. '*Pig eat fruit.*'

is vague, and would most likely mean 'pigs eat fruit'. To give a definite referent to either of the two nouns, we can use demonstrative adjectives, such as *iteu* or *teu* ('this'), or *inah* or *nah* ('that'), which thus often play the role of definite article. Also commonly used is the element *ri'* -- *X ri'* means 'the X just mentioned'. Thus,

Babui nah kuman bua. 'That pig eats fruit.'

Babui nah kuman bua ri'. 'That pig ate the fruit.'

Babui kuman bua ri'. 'A pig (or pigs) ate the fruit.'

3. VERBS

Penan verbs do not change in form or add affixes to denote number, mood, aspect, or tense. For example,

Akeu suai alut. 'I make boat.'

could be glossed as 'I made a boat <boats> *or* I am making a boat <boats> *or* I make boats.

Vague sentences like the above are not a problem as long as the context indicates when the action denoted by the verb occurs. However, one may add certain elements to the sentence to clearly indicate whether the past, the present or the future is meant, as outlined in the following section.

3.1 "TENSE" MARKERS

There is no obligatory tense; that is, it is possible, even normal, to use verbs without reference to the time frame of the event they denote. However, both the past and the future can be denoted by the preposed auxilliary verbs *juk* 'will', *lepah* 'already', and *maréng* 'just'.

(a) *juk* 'shall, will' (denotes any future time)

Akeu juk lakau. 'I will travel.'
Kitong juk tai beté sagam. 'Kitong will go hunting tomorrow.'

(b) *lepah* 'already' (denotes any past time)

Akeu lepah tai Marudi. '*I already go Marudi*.' (I went to Marudi.)

(c) *maréng* 'just, recently' (denotes a time in the very recent past)

Lakei inah maréng ala babui. '*Man that just get pig*.' (That man just bagged a pig.)

Note that adverbs of time can often be used instead of these tense markers, and in some cases can be used along with them. Unlike the tense markers, when an adverb of time occurs immediately next to a verb, it follows it. Some examples:

(d) *malem* 'yesterday', *dau iteu* 'today', *sagam* 'tomorrow', *hun iteu* 'now', *sahau* 'before, long ago, in the old days'

Iah peleka malem. 'He leave yesterday.' (He left yesterday.)
Lejeng lakau sagam. or *Lejeng juk lakau sagam*. 'Lejeng (will) travel tomorrow.'
Akeu suai alut hun iteu. 'I make boat now.'
Sahau iah moko tong tana'. 'In the old days she stay on land.' (She used to live in the forest.)

3.2 IMPERATIVE AND HORTATIVE

Penan verbs have two moods: indicative and imperative. Commands and exhortations are denoted by the normal active verb, and/or by certain lexical elements.

(a) An imperative can consist of an active verb without subject.

Tuai! 'Come!'
Moko sitai! 'Stay there!'

(b) A pronoun acting as subject can be used for additional clarity or emphasis.

Lakau ketenah ke'. 'Travel ahead thou.' (**You** go straight ahead.)

(c) Very frequently the element *jian* 'good' is anteposed to a command. Some examples:

Jian ke' mihin tinen ko'. 'Good thou bring mother thy.' (Bring your mother.)
Jian ka'au teu éh moko uban sagam pina kelunan juk tuai miting. 'Good thou this who remain because tomorrow many person will come meeting.' (It would be best if it were you who stayed because tomorrow many people will come to the meeting.)
Hun néh kenat, jian lu' moko, amé pané. 'If it thus, good we remain, we speak.' (If such is the case, let us stay, we will speak.)
Boh lakei inah seruh, "Hun mé' la'au ri' jian ku' put ka'an iteu na' péh éh bu'un néh malui." 'So man that think, "If we hungry like-this, good I shoot animal this al though (two words) it beginning it transform.' (And the man thought, "Since we are hungry, let me just shoot this animal, even though it has started to transform.)
Jian tuah petat. 'Good we move_apart.' (Let us go separate ways.)
"*Jian pa' éh avé da' mai awah ke' kelap*. 'Good even_though it arrive for_sure do_not only thou flee.' (Even if he comes right up to you, do not run away.)

(d) The lexemes *kejera* or *turut*, both meaning 'let', can be used :

Kejera jak redo lemanai inah moko ngan amé ngio avé jah polo dau. 'Allow now woman unmarried that remain with us approximately until ten day.' (Let that unmarried woman stay with us for about ten days.)

Turut ke' tuah tai kuman jak. 'Let in_order we go eat now.' (Let's go and eat now.)

(e) An extremely common way of expressing an imperative meaning is by means of the particle *da'*. *Da'* occurs at the end of a clause. A speaker appends *da'* to a clause in order to signal that the action or state denoted by that clause is prescribed, desirable, or necessary. As such it has a broad meaning, or perhaps a number of meanings, only one of which can be described as imperative. Here are some examples of its use in an imperative sense:

Hun inah da' tuai keteleu. 'When that IMPERATIVE_PARTICLE come you_three.' (Kindly come at that time.)
Kivu jalan iteu ke' da'. 'Follow path this thou IMPERATIVE_PARTICLE.' (Follow this path here.)
Jam jam ke' lakau da'. 'Be_good_at be_good_at thou travel IMPERATIVE_PARTICLE.' (Be careful while travelling -- lit., 'be very good at travelling')

(f) Negative commands are denoted by the anteposing of *mai* 'do not'.

Mai kon! 'Do_not eat [it]!'
Mai pemung ngan kelunan éh sa'at. 'Do_not associate with person who bad.' (Do not associate with bad people.)

Mai pekerek medok inah, dai néh nga'at ka'au. 'Do_not anger pig_tailed_macaque that, lest it bite thee.' (Do not make that monkey angry or it will bite you.)

3.3 SERIALIZATION OF VERBS

In Penan the same subject can govern two, three or even four verbs in series.

Irah ngelangan nyelapang paka'. '*They aim-at shoot-at branch*.' (They aimed and shot at the branch.)
Irah pekelawan ngelangan nejau pakai inan tobo. 'They mutually-fight aim-at throw-in-spear-fashion use stalk ginger.' (They fought each other by hurling stalks of ginger at each other. (presumably in fun!))
Ka'au nekedéng petem nerokon maneu réh. 'Thou stand be-immobile dig-in-heels assault them.' (You stand immobile with your feet dug in the ground and fight them.)

A clause containing serialized verbs refers to a single circumstance or activity which is characterized by a series of events or states. The order of the verbs corresponds to the chronological or logical order of those events or states.

Note that passive verbs can also be serialized:

Ba Buto napit kelapah néh malem rai. 'Tutoh River was-crossed was-passed-over by her last night.'

3.4 VOICE AND THE MORPHOLOGY OF VERBS

NOTE: 3.4 with all its subsections was substantially rewritten in March of 2020

While, as already stated, Penan verbs do not have number, mood, aspect, or tense, they do express voice, and do so by changing their form.

Transitive verbs may have as many as four voices: active, passive, nonvolitional passive, and reciprocal.

Each of these voices is identified by a different modification of the root.

For example, **uja'** is a noun denoting a pounding stick or pestle (used, for example to dehusk rice grains). This noun is the root of a verb **muja'** 'to strike vertically with the end of a long object'.

The voices of this verb are formed thus:

Active: **muja'** 'strike with a long object' (*Labang muja' babui*. 'Labang spears/stabs [a] pig')

Passive: **nuja'** 'be struck with a long object' (*Babui nuja' Labang*. '[A] pig is speared/stabbed by Labang')

Nonvolitional passive: **puja'** 'get struck with a long object' (*Labang puja' [neu atap éh peloho]* 'Labang gets-stabbed-accidentally [by [a] spear that falls]'

 Reciprocal: **pepuja'** '*strike each other with long objects*' (*Labang pepuja' ngan ayau*. 'Labang fights with [an] enemy -- both stabbing/spearing'

The four forms cited above, as well as all other forms of Penan verbs, while following fairly regular patterns, are not always predictable. Therefore, strictly speaking, the morphology of verbal voice should not be dealt with in a grammar: each instance must be listed in its respective dictionary entry. However, because of the relative predictability of Penan verbal voices, the rules that generally give rise to them are useful for the learner of the language, and are covered below.

3.4.1 ACTIVE VOICE: MORPHOLOGY

In some cases the active voice is the same as the root of the verb. However, in most cases the active is derived from a distinct root, which is normally a noun or adjective, and has a meaning related to that of the verb. There are several rules governing these processes, mostly regular, but there are a few exceptions.

3.4.1.1 ROOTS WITH INITIAL VOWEL

In cases where the root begins with a vowel, the phoneme /m/ is prefixed.

uja' --> muja' pestle --> pound-with-long object *tr vb*[*]
ukap --> mukap object-designed-to-block-an-opening-yet-be-removable --> open *tr vb*
otong --> motong burnt-thing --> burn *tr vb*
anyam --> manyam woven-thing --> weave *tr vb*
iting --> miting meeting *n* --> meeting *tr vb*[†]

AN EXCEPTION

utui --> memutui, rather than the predicted *mutui 'broken-length-of-a-long-object --> break-long-object *tr vb*

3.4.1.2 ROOTS WITH INITIAL CONSONANT

3.4.1.2.1 INITIAL CONSONANT REPLACED WITH ANOTHER

s --> ny

selapang --> nyelapang long-gun --> shoot-with-a-long-gun
satek --> nyatek piece-of-something-chopped-through --> chop-through
surat --> nyurat thing-written --> write

t --> n

tanem --> nanem place-of-burial --> bury
tolong --> nolong help *n* --> help *tr vb*
teranying --> neranying sharpened-to-a-point *adj* --> sharpen-to-a-point

k --> ng

kaléng --> ngaléng something-thrown --> throw
kasau --> ngasau messed-up --> mess-up

g --> ng

ga'at --> nga'at be-bitten --> bite *tr vb*
goréh --> ngoréh get-scratched --> scratch *tr vb*[‡]

3.4.1.2.2 PREFIX *NGE*

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[*] *tr vb* denotes 'transitive verb', *intr vb* 'intransitive verb', and *n* 'noun'.
[†] *miting* is a recent borrowing from English "meeting". As a result, *miting* is often used as a noun as well as a verb; however, the derivational rule is so strong in the minds of speakers, that *iting*, a back formation, is now the most common way of pronouncing the noun -- despite the fact that its use leads to ambiguity, since *iting* also means 'row, things in a line'.
[‡] the roots in these two examples are, respectively, a passive and a non-volitional passive.

lepik --> ngelepik bend *n* --> bend *tr vb*
jeku --> ngejeku fold *n* --> fold *tr vb*
jaji --> ngejaji promise *n* --> promise *tr vb*
paléu --> ngepaléu change *intr vb* --> change *tr vb*
bala --> ngebala red --> redden *tr vb*

3.4.1.2.3 PREFIX *MEM* REPLACES INITIAL BILABIAL CONSONANT

b --> mem

bekat --> memekat fissure *n* --> cut through *tr vb*
bila' --> memila' fragment *n* --> smash

p --> mem

pana --> memana hot --> heat *tr vb*
pata' --> memata' extinguished --> extinguish *tr vb*
pirih --> memirih things-scattered-about --> carelessly-abandon <drop, scatter about>

m --> mem

matai --> mematai dead --> kill
meto --> memeto which-falls-off/out-bit-by-bit --> remove-bit-by-bit

AN EXCEPTION

paléu --> ngepaléu (and not *memaléu) change *intr vb* --> change *tr vb*

3.4.1.2.4 NO MODIFICATION

As mentioned, the active voice of a verb may be its own root, and by definition no modification occurs.

kahang light (start fire)

taket climb-onto

seva' respect

kivu follow

pitah look for

purung count

menyat ask for

nabah add to

neteng question

3.4.1.2.5 PREFIXING MONOSYLLABIC ROOTS

Penan has only a handful of active verbs that are monosyllables, and they serve as their own roots -- see subsection 3.4.3.4.2 below. When a monosyllabic noun serves as a verbal root, the resulting form is disyllabic, formed by prefixing.

pam --> ngepam pump *n* --> pump *tr vb* (compare the impossible *mam)

lat --> ngelat pith-stopper-of-a-blowdart --> whittle-pith-stopper

sap --> ngesap smoke *n* --> create-smoke (compare the impossible *nyap)

tut --> ngetut fart *n* --> fart *intr vb* (compare the impossible *nut)

kep --> mekep thing-that-covers/blocks --> block-view-of (not the expected disyllabic *ngekep.)

3.4.2 ACTIVE VS PASSIVE: ROLE OF EACH

In English, and European languages in general, use of the passive voice is "marked": that is to say, the active is the privileged voice, and the passive is used less often, and sometimes really can't be used at all.

In English, even the form of the passive is "marked" -- its syntax is more complex than the active, insofar as you form it not just by inverting the order of the two noun phrases and changing the shape of the verb (which Penan also does), but also by adding *by* to identify the agent of the action. In Penan, as our examples above show, the passive differs syntactically from the active only by inversion of the two nouns.

To see how the passive voice is used differently in the two languages, consider the English example

(i) *A pig was speared by me*

While not ungrammatical, this is a strange thing to say, except in a context where one is arguing over a particular pig and the identity of the successful hunter:

(ii) *That pig was speared by <u>me</u>.*

However, in Penan both the active and passive form of the equivalent sentence are equally normal in all circumstances:

(iii) *Babui nuja' ké'* 'Pig is-speared by-me' (= The pig is speared, and it is I who do it)

is just as natural as

(iv) *Akeu muja' babui* 'I spear pig' (I spear a pig/pigs)

As in English, the passive is used to topicalize an element in the sentence by promoting it from direct object to grammatical subject. Consider examples (iii) and (iv). In (iii) you are being told something about a pig, and in (iv) you are being told something about "I", the speaker. You only want to topicalize *babui* 'pig' when you have a *particular* pig in mind, and that is why we choose to say "<u>the</u> pig" in the informal translation of (iii). Since Penan does not use articles, one of the functions of the passive is therefore to add determinacy to the meaning of a noun or noun phrase by promoting it to subject.

3.4.3 PASSIVE VOICE: MORPHOLOGY

The passive is formed in two general ways.

(1) By inserting an infix into the first syllable of the *root*[*] or, rarely, the *active form*.

(2) By replacing the initial phoneme(s) of the *active form*.

3.4.3.1 INFIXING THE ROOT

In each of the examples that follow, there are two words in **bold**: the first is the root (a noun, an adjective, a transitive verb, or a non-volitional passive verb); the second is the passive form derived from it by the rule being illustrated. (In some cases there is a third word in **bold**, in parentheses, which shows another form of the verb: this is purely for reference.) We then supply two example sentences: the first illustrates the root, and the second the passive form derived from that root.

When the initial phoneme of the root is one of the following consonants

p, t, k, s

then the passive form is created by inserting the infix *en*, thus:

CVCV --> CenVCV

(C is a consonant, V is a vowel)

Some examples:

pV --> penV

pata' --> penata' goes-out --> is-put-out \<turned off, extinguished\> **(memata'** extinguish)

Luten pata'. 'Fire goes out' *Titui létrik penata'* 'An electric light is turned off.'

pitah --> penitah search-for *tr vb* --> be-searched-for)

Pitah ka'an ngan ké'. 'Look for food for me'. *Ka'an éh penitah*. 'Food that was looked for.'

purung --> penurung   read *tr vb* --> be-read

Anak purung surat. 'The child reads the book.' *Surat penurung anak*. 'The book is read by the child.'

tV--> tenV

taket --> tenaket place-where-one-steps-up-onto --> be-stepped-up-onto **(taket** step-up-onto *tr vb*)

Taket ko. 'The place you step up onto.' *Lamin tenaket redo*. 'The house is stepped into by the woman' (i.e., the woman climbs into the house -- Penan houses are elevated)

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[*] See 3.5 below which discusses the identity of the roots of verbs.

tanem --> tenanem place-of-burial --> be-buried **(nanem** bury**)**

Tanem patai. 'Place-of-burial of-corpse (i.e. grave)' *Patai éh tenanem néh.* 'The corpse is buried by her.'

tutup --> tenutup covering *n* --> be-closed (**nutup** close *vb tr*)

Tutup usit tapé. 'movable-covering [for] opening [in] wall' (i.e., door)' *Usit tapé tenutup [ké'].* 'The door is closed [by me].'

kV --> kenV

kahang --> kenahang light *tr vb* --> lit-by

Kahang luten létrik. 'Light an electric lamp.' *Luten éh kenahang.* 'a fire that has been lit.'

kaléng --> kenaléng get-thrown --> be-thrown (**ngaléng** throw)

Kekat pengena' kenat bé' éh barei kaléng lem ba awah. 'Gifts like that aren't the same as money getting thrown into the river (i.e. getting wasted)' *Bateu kenaléng anak.* 'A stone is thrown by a child.'

kasau --> kenasau disturbed, in-a-mess --> become-messed-up (**ngasau** mess-up)

Kasau utek 'be mentally confused' (lit., messed-up brain) *Lamin éh kenasau buang.* 'A house that is messed up by a bear.'

kivu --> kenivu follow --> be-followed

Labang kivu jalan iteu. 'Labang followed this trail.' *Jalan éh kenivu Labang tai sitai.* 'The trail followed by Labang goes there.'

nV --> tenV

nabah --> tenabah increase/add-to *tr vb* --> be-increased

Akeu juk nabah gaji. 'I shall increase the wages.' *Ba éh tenabah redo.* 'The water added by the woman.'

nakat --> tenakat kick *tr vb* --> be-kicked

Iah nakat bun. 'He kicked the ball.' *Aseu tenakat payau.* 'The dog was kicked by the deer.'

neteng --> teneteng question *tr vb* --> be-questioned

Jian ke' neteng pengeja'au. 'Kindly ask the headman.' *Kelunan éh nekau gahang teneteng polis.* 'The thief was vigorously questioned by the police.'

ngV --> kenV

ngoréh --> kenoréh be-scratched --> scratch *tr vb* (root is **goréh** 'get-scratched')

Buang ngoréh éh. 'The bear scratched him'. *Iah kenoréh buang.* 'He was scratched by a bear.'

ngaji --> kenaji hire --> be-in-the-hire-of (root is **gaji** 'wage')

Kepeni ngaji pina Idon. 'The company hires a lot of Indonesians.' *Iah kenaji kepeni ngamit lipan.* 'He is hired by the company to drive a bulldozer.'

sV --> senV

salin --> senalin translate --> be-translated

Guru salin surat. 'The teacher translates the book.' *Surat senalin guru*. 'The book is translated by the teacher.'

satek --> senatek piece-of-something-chopped-through --> be-chopped-through (**nyatek** chop-through)

Satek uai. 'piece of cut rattan' Uai senatek néh. 'The rattan is cut through by him.'

seva' --> seneva' respect *tr vb* --> be-respected

Anak tekep seva' tinen. 'A child should respect a mother.' Tinen tekep seneva' anak. 'A mother should be respected by a child.'

suai --> senuai create --> be-created

Labang suai lamin. 'Labang builds a house.' *Lamin senuai Labang*. 'The house is built by Labang.'

surat --> senurat thing-written --> become-written (**nyurat** write)

Surat éh kebit 'A long letter' *Surat iteu senurat néh*. 'This letter was written by him.'

3.4.3.2   REPLACING INITIAL PHONEME(S) OF THE ACTIVE VOICE

3.4.3.2.1 m --> n.

As we saw in 4.1.1, when the root begins with a vowel, the active voice is formed by prefixing /m/ to it. A similar rule obtains for the passive: when the root begins with a vowel, /n/ is prefixed to form the passive. However, it is better to view the latter process as governed by a rule which replaces the initial /m/ of the active voice by /n/. This latter rule is more general than the former one: it applies even where there is no root beginning with a vowel -- cf the third and fourth examples below.

motong --> notong burn --> be-burned (the root is **otong** 'thing-that-is-burnt')

Iah motong kayeu. 'She burns wood.' *Kayeu éh notong néh*. 'Wood burned by her.' (*Otong bupen*. 'Burnt fire log'.)

mukap --> nukap open *tr vb* --> be-opened (the root is **ukap** 'thing-that-can-be-moved-to-make-opening')

Iah mukap tapé. 'She opens the door' *'The door is opened by her.'* (*Bateu inah ukap luvang*. 'That [movable] stone serves as the door of the cave.' *Tapé nukap néh.*)

mekep --> nekep block-view-of --> be-blocked (the root is **kep** 'thing-that-serves-to-block')

Tokong mekep lamin. 'The ridge is blocking the view of the house.' *Babui nekep kayeu*. 'The pig is hidden behind the tree.'

menyat --> nenyat ask-for --> asked-for (the root is the active form, **menyat**. There is no ***enyat**.)

Amé menyat penolong jin peritah. 'We ask for help from the government.' *Penolong éh nenyat mé' jin peritah*. 'The

help that is asked by us from the government.'

3.4.3.2.2 ngV --> kV

ngelepik --> kelepik bend *tr vb* --> be-bent (root is **lepik** 'which-is-bent')

Labang ngelepik kayeu iteu. 'Labang bent this stick.' *Kayeu iteu kelepik Labang*. 'This stick was bent by Labang.' (*Ei, mapah mu'un akeu na'at balun gelan keteleu iteu, uban néh lepik teu. Putui keteleu teu da' de'*. Hey, I'm really concerned about that floor joist of yours, because it's bent. It could break on you.')

ngejeku --> kejeku fold *tr vb* --> be-folded (root is **jeku** 'that-is-folded')

Redo ngejeku kerayung inah. 'The woman folds that shirt.' *Kerayung inah kejeku redo.* 'That shirt is folded by the woman.' (*Méu menyun bau jeku gem ké'.* 'The cat is sitting on my folded legs.')

ngepaléu --> kepaléu change *tr vb* --> be-changed (root is **paléu** 'change *intr vb*')

Redo ngepaléu lamin néh, nabah patah. 'The woman altered her house; she added a deck. *Lamin kepaléu redo inah*. 'The house was changed by that woman.' (*Bateu bé' jam paléu*. 'A stone is not likely to change.')

3.4.3.2.3 mem --> pen

memutui --> penutui break-laterally (something that is a long object) --> be-broken (root is **utui** 'broken-length-of-a-long-object')

Iah memutui tulang. 'She breaks a bone.' *Tulang éh penutui*. 'A bone that is broken [by someone].' (*Utui tulang*. 'Length of broken bone.')

mematai --> penatai kill -->killed (root is **matai** 'dead')

Labang mematai babui. 'Labang kills the pig.' *Babui penatai Labang*. 'The pig is killed by Labang.' (*Babui matai*. 'The pig is dead'.)

3.4.3.3 SAME FORM AS THE ACTIVE

In the case of causative verbs formed by prefixing with **pe-** (see 7.1.1), the passive has the same
form as the active. For example,

pekelap --> pekelap frighten-away --> be-frightened-away (The root is **kelap**, run away)

Iah pekelap ka'an. 'He frightens the animals away.' *Bé' pina ka'an éh pekelap néh*. 'The animals frightened away by him are not many in number.'

pepesep --> pepesep feed-drink-to --> be-fed-drink (The root is **mesep**, drink *tr vb*)

Iah pepesep anak. 'She feeds liquid to the child. *Anak pepesep néh*. 'The child is fed liquid by her.'

peposot --> peposot stop *tr vb* --> be-stopped

Alut posot. 'A boat stops.' *Sara' peposot alut*. 'Sarah stops a boat.' *Alut peposot Sara'* 'The boat is stopped by Sarah.'

It must be noted that passive verbs of this type are problematic when ambiguity with the active forms would result.

For example, in the last example we assume that *Alut poposot Sara'* means that Sarah is controlling the boat, and not the other way round: people stop boats more often than boats stop people. *Sara' pepesep Balang* could logically mean either 'Sarah fed liquid to Balang' or 'Sarah was fed liquid to by Balang'; it would be interpreted as the former if we knew that Balang was either sick or was a small child. Only by using the Class 3 pronouns *ké'* 'me', *ko'* 'thee', *néh* 'her, him, it', which are used to identify the agent of a passive verb, can these passive verbs be disambiguated from the homophonous active forms. Refer to the section on pronouns.

3.4.3.4 ANOMALOUS PASSIVE FORMS

3.4.3.4.1 PASSIVE FORM IS SAME AS THE ROOT

teranying be-sharpened-to-a-point (active form, derived from it, is **neranying**, sharpen-to-a-point . **Teranying** is also an adjective meaning 'being a thin object that happens to have a sharp end'. If the active form were the root, the derived passive would be *teneranying*.)

Kayeu teranying néh. 'The wood was sharpened to a point by him.' *Akeu menyun bau ujau teranying uban tu'et.* 'I sat down on top of a sharp stump [of a shrub that had been cleared with a machete].'

ga'at be-bitten (active form, derived from it, is **nga'at.** If the latter were the root, the passive would be *kena'at*)

Lakei ga'at aseu. 'The man was bitten by a dog.' (cf *Aseu nga'at lakei.* 'The dog bit a man.')

ta'an be-seen; identical to the root **ta'an**, a noun meaning 'eyesight, ability to see' -- e.g. *Iah sa'at ta'an* 'She has poor eyesight'. The active form of the verb is **na'at**. If the latter were the root, the passive derived from it would be *tena'at*. Conversely, an active derived from the passive would be *na'an*.

Lakei inah ta'an Sara'. 'That man was seen by Sarah.'

selapang be-shot-with-a-long-gun (active form is **nyelapang**, 'shoot-with-a-long-gun'. The root is the noun **selapang,** 'long-gun' -- if the passive were derived from this, it would be *senelapang*.

Iah tojo selapang tong babui 'He points a gun at a pig' *Babui selapang lakei inah.* 'A pig was shot by that man.'

3.4.3.4.2 IRREGULAR PASSIVES

kinan be-eaten. There are two active forms: **kon** and the perfectly synonymous **kuman.** Thus, one might have expected a passive form *kenuman*.

Anak kuman <kon> sin babui. 'A child eats pork.' *Sin babui éh kinan anak.* 'Pork eaten by a child'.

apit --> napit (papit) crossing-place --> be crossed over (cross)

Here, the noun **apit** 'crossing-place' is the root; but the active form, **papit** 'cross-over/traverse' is formed irregularly; it should be *mapit*. Perhaps the passive ought to have been *penapit*?

Ha' réh pu'un long ba Apai nah pu'un jah kelunan éh pu'un alut moko tong sera apit. 'They say that at the mouth of the Apai there is a person waiting with a boat at the point on the bank where you [embark to] cross.' *Ba napit néh.* 'The river is crossed by him.'

jam --> kejam (jam) know --> be-known (know)

Akeu jam ha' Penan. 'I know the Penan language.' *Kekat ha' éh kejam Galang.* 'All the languages known by Galang.'

The passive form **kejam** is not formed, as one might expect, from a hypothetical active form *ngejam.

peng --> nepeng (peng) block [a cavity]' --> be-blocked (block)

pung --> nepung (pung) cut-into [to extract something]' --> be-cut-into (cut-into)

Inan éh nepeng tam rai nepung kelunan éh jah, uban iah bé' na'at uban nepeng tam rai. 'The trunk that was blocked up by us has been holed by someone else, because he did not see the signs of our having blocked it up.'

In these last two cases, the passive forms are not, as one might initially guess, derived from hypothetical actives *mepeng and *mepung.

Note that these last three cases -- **jam**, **peng**, and **pung** -- may be the only verbs in Penan that are monosyllables.

3.4.4 NONVOLITIONAL PASSIVE VOICE

As mentioned, in addition to the active and the passive, many transitive verbs present a third voice, which I have chosen to call the nonvolitional passive. While the normal passive, described above, preserves the propositional meaning of the active form, the nonvolitional passive alters the meaning in a particular way. It is used to denote changes of state that are viewed as accidental, for example acts of nature, and therefore not brought about as a result of anyone's will or volition.

3.4.4.1 SYNTAX

As in the regular passive, the order of the elements denoting the agent and the patient of the action is inverted. For example,

Po'é nyuhat babui '[the] machete wounds [the] pig' --> *Babui suhat neu po'é* '[the] pig is <gets> wounded with [the] machete' (cf the regular passive form, *Babui senuhat lakei inah pakai po'é.* 'The pig was wounded by that man using a machete.')

Unlike in the regular passive, the element *neu* 'caused by' must be inserted between the verb and the element denoting the agent -- naturally, only in those cases where the latter is named in the sentence: it is perfectly normal to say *Babui suhat.* 'The pig gets/is wounded'.

Note that *neu* is an abbreviated form of *naneu*, the past participle of *maneu*, which means 'make' or 'cause'. The longer form can also be used: e.g.

Babui suhat naneu po'é. 'The pig gets wounded with a machete.'

3.4.4.2 FUNCTION

I will explain by way of example.

Take the active verb *nasa'* and its passive form *tenasa'.* *Akeu nasa' lipan.* 'I destroy the bulldozer' vs. *Lipan tenasa' ké'.* 'The bulldozer is destroyed by me.' But this verb also has the nonvolitional passive form: *tasa'.* Thus, *Lipan tasa' neu keloho bateu.* 'The bulldozer is destroyed by a falling rock.'

The active verb *meseng* and its passive form *neseng* mean 'prevent from moving'. Thus, *Seradu meseng kerita* means

'The soldiers prevent the car from travelling onwards.' The passive form would be *Kerita neseng seradu*. *Peseng* is the nonvolitional passive of this verb, and allows such sentences as *Ayau peseng neu jawin uai*. 'The enemy is immobilized by the (thorny) rattan vines (i.e. because he got caught up in them).'

Here are some more examples containing nonvolitional passives, followed by the active and passive forms of the relevant verbs in parentheses.

Lamin néh **potong**. 'His house got burned.' (**motong / notong** 'burn')
Kekat ujung kayeu **purat** *[neu kepu]*. 'All the leaves got scattered [by the wind].' (**murat / nurat** 'scatter')
Utang **putui**. 'The staff got broken.' (**memutui / penutui** 'break')
Tajau **bila'**. 'The urn got shattered.' (**memila' / benila'** 'shatter')

Note that sometimes either the regular passive or the nonvolitional passive can be used, even where one and the same event is being described. However, there is an important difference in meaning between the two forms. For example, you could say both *Lipan tenasa' néh* and *Lipan tasa' neu néh* -- but while the first means simply 'The bulldozer was destroyed by him', the second means 'The bulldozer got destroyed on account of him', that is, the event in question is viewed as the accidental result of his action. Similarly, *Lem pasa vam, ka'au adang juk senopé ké'* uses the regular passive, **senopé**, of the verb **nyopé**, 'defeat'; it means 'In the coming race you will surely be defeated by me.' However, *Kayan sitai sopé neu ayau réh*, which uses the nonvolitional form **sopé**, means 'The Kayans there got defeated by their enemies' -- in other words, in the latter case the defeat is depicted as an accident or misfortune, and their adversaries the mere instruments of this misfortune, rather than its conscious agents.

3.4.4.3 MORPHOLOGY

Typically, but not always, the nonvolitional passive form begins with the consonant /p/. In most cases, it has the same form as the root. (For discussion of how to identify a verbal root, see 3.5)

Here are some more examples.

ACTIVE / PASSIVE	N.V. PASSIVE	ROOT
mujek / nujek spill	**pujek** get-spilled	**pujek**
mavut / navut pull out	**pavut** get-pulled-out	**pavut**
mikah / nikah scatter	**pikah** get-scattered	**pikah**
migu' / nigu'	**pigu'** get-banged-against	**pigu'**
mohé / nohé clean	**pohé** get-cleaned	**pohé**
mepa' / nepa' squash	**pepa'** get squashed	**pepa'**
ngelepu / kelepu set free	**pelepu** get free	**pelepu**
mejé / nejé tear	**pejé** get-torn	**jé** tear *n*
memutui / penutui break	**putui** get-broken	**utui** broken-piece
ngaténg / kenaténg tighten	**pekaténg** get taut	**katéng** something-that-is-taut
nanem / tenanem bury	**tanem** get buried	**tanem** burial-place
melen / nelen roll up	**pelen** get rolled up	**len** roll *n*
meseng / neseng plug *tr vb*	**peseng** get-plugged	**seng** plug *n*

3.4.5 RECIPROCAL VOICE

The roots of many transitive verbs accept a prefix *pe-* to create a fourth voice, which, for convenience, we call the *reciprocal voice*.

In the majority of cases, it denotes a **mutual or reciprocal action or state**, that is, it typically describes two or more actors performing the action of the verb on each other. However, it can have two other meanings: **quasi-reciprocal action** and **common action**.

We begin with examples where it is used to describe

3.4.5.1 MUTUAL OR RECIPROCAL ACTION OR STATE

tosok 'talk' --> **petosok** 'talk to each other'   Irah petosok. 'They talk to each other.'

nuyang 'have illicit sex with' --> **petuyang** 'Have illicit sex with each other.' Rawah petuyang. 'Those two have illicit sex with each other.'

nga'at 'bite' --> **pega'at** 'bite each other'   Aseu pega'at. 'The dogs bite each other.'

nesen 'remember' --> **petesen** 'remember each other' Rawah keto petesen. 'The two of them still remember each other.'

These verbs accept the transformation *X ngan Y pe-V <--> X pe-V ngan Y*. For example,

Amé ngan irah éh tuai nepah petosok. --> *Amé petosok ngan irah éh tuai nepah*. 'We and those who drop in to visit are mutually-talking' –> We mutually-talk with the people who drop in to visit'
Redo inah ngan lakei iteu petuyang. --> *Redo inah petuyang ngan lakei iteu*. 'That woman and this man have illicit sex with each other' --> 'That woman has illicit sex with this man.'

(Some adjectives and intransitive verbs also have reciprocal forms. For example,

tengé [jin] 'distinct, different [from]' --> **petengé** 'separate from each other' *Duah lamin inah petengé*. 'Those two houses are separated from each other.'

pemung 'connected or mixed with' --> **pepemung** 'mixed together' *Tulin jelai pepemung ngan tulin parai*. 'The maize grains are mixed in with the rice grains.')

3.4.5.2 QUASI-RECIPROCAL ACTION

One of the actors performs the action on the other(s), but not vice versa; however, there is a larger interaction between them.

mematai 'kill' --> **pepatai**   *Hun néh pepatai ngan ayau rai dat, barei arang segoléng rai réh éh petiwet keteu ketai rigah mu'un mu'un, inah maneu ayau bé' omok muja' ngan meta éh.* 'When he was fighting with the enemies and killing them, [he moved] like a *segoléng* bird does in flight, twirling this way and that at great speed so that the enemy couldn't stab or slash him.'

The enemy is trying to kill the hero, but fail; he kills them.

mena' 'give' --> **pena'**   *Boh roh pena' anak inah. Hun sukup kelebé Ta'ang rawah Got seruh juk mena' ngaran ngan néh.* 'So one of them gave the baby to the other. In due course Ta'ang and Got decided it was time to give the baby a name.'

Here an adoption is described, i.e. one person gives an infant to another; but both are actively involved in the transaction; what is more, like any other "gift", there is an implicit quid pro quo.

mena 'wait' --> **pekena**   *Boh Radu pekena akeu tai bé' akeu tai*. So Radu waited for me to go, but I didn't go.

Radu wanted me to go, and I knew this, but I was staying put, thus "waiting" too.

Iah bé' nebara iah bulei inah tuman irah Jaya ngan Lilau éh peput rai. 'He didn't provide good teachings [to members of his band], and that's why Jaya and Lilau were involved in a dispute where one shot a poison dart into the other.'

Here Lilau murders Jaya to rid himself of his rival; Jaya never tried to kill Lilau, but they were involved in a dispute with each other.

3.4.5.3 COMMON ACTION

The two or more entities that constitute the subject of the sentence are performing the action on another entity, not on each other:

mesa 'cut in half lengthwise' --> **pesa** *Hun babui pu'un da', itam omok pesa éh, jah bila' sa anah ko', jah bila' sa anah amo*. 'If there is pig [bagged as game], we can cut it in two, one half to you, one half to my companion and me.'

mematai 'kill' --> **pepatai** *Sio tong penyahau tapi' irah bé' jam pepatai ngan seluang. Pu'un jelua' réh suha' pu'un jelua' réh pebuh pu'un jelua' réh peseu neu atap neu po'é,* 'It is spawning season, but those people don't know how to kill fish [in a group]. Some of them got cut with machetes or got their eyes put out with spears.'

peja' 'mock' --> **pepeja'** *Uban sahau hun Kelabit molé ngayau irah mejek seperut boh sayau jalan pepeja' rasan nala réh*. For, in the old days, when Kelabits came back from a raid they would erect *seperut* poles and dance to collectively mock their trophy heads.'

3.5 EXCURSUS: IDENTITY OF VERBAL ROOTS

NOTE: This is a new section as of March of 2020

One of the awkward aspects of Penan lexicology is identifying the roots of certain verbs. As attentive readers will have seen from the above examples, a verbal root may be (1) a noun; (2) an adjective; (3) an active verb form; (4) a non-volitional passive verb form; (5) a passive verb form (just one known case of this: *ga'at*, 'be bitten'). As we saw in Section 1 of our chapter "Structure of an Entry", each lexeme (or phraseme) in the dictionary is alphabetically ordered according to its root. In most cases it is obvious what the root is: for example, the verb *ngebu'un* 'to begin' is derived from the noun *bu'un* 'beginning'; thus the former must be placed immediately after the latter, by means of an entry having the following form:

§ **bu'un** - **ngebu'un** v. § – **X ngebu'un Y** / **kebu'un**

However, in a small minority of cases the identity of the root is not obvious. To see why this is so, we must first consider cases where the identity of the root is quite clear; examples of these clear cases follow, numbered 1 -9.

The capitalized form is the proposed root. The second word (in lower case) is the active form of the (corresponding) verb, the third word is the passive, and the fourth is the nonvolitional passive:

ROOT	ACTIVE VOICE	PASSIVE VOICE	NONVOLITIONAL PASSIVE VOICE
1. KEP thing that blocks or screens off	mekep screen off	nekep be screened off	pekep get screened off

In this example, it is obvious that the root is *kep*.

2. OTONG a thing burned	motong burn	notong be burned	potong get burnt
3. OLONG something kept as a pet	molong keep as a pet	nolong be kept as a pet	polong get kept as a pet

4. ANYAM			manyam	nanyam	panyam
something woven			weave	be woven	get woven

These three examples are also clear-cut; each has only one possible root.

5. TANEM			nanem	tenanem	tanem
place of burial			bury	be buried	get buried

6. TUTUP			nutup	tenutup	tutup
get closed			close	be closed	get closed

7. SOPÉ			nyopé	senopé	sopé
get defeated			defeat *tr vb*	be defeated	get defeated

In these cases, *tanem*, *tutup*, and *sopé* are the roots and not *nanem*, *nutup*, and *nyopé*. This is because the passives are best viewed as resulting from the insertion of an infix *en* in the nonvolitional passive form -- rather than by a transformation of the active form. This is evidence for the nonvolitional passives being the most primitive forms, and therefore the roots.

8. SUAI			suai	senuai	pesuai
create			create	be created	get created

9. PEI			pei	nepei	pepei
put			put	be put	get put

In these two cases the root does not correspond to the form of the nonvolitional passive. Rather, it is identical to the active form of the verb. Both the simple passive and nonvolitional passive are derived from it, by infixing and prefixing respectively.

Note that there is only one Penan verb where one could reasonably propose that the root is the same as the passive form. This is the previously listed *ga'at*, 'be bitten', from which the active form *nga'at*, 'bite', can be viewed as being derived. In all other cases, a verb's root has the form either of a semantically related noun (examples 1 - 5), or of its nonvolitional passive voice (examples 5 - 7),[*] or of its active voice (8 and 9).

Now we come to some problematic cases. As examples 10 - 14 stand, the roots, written in upper case, are the same as the active form of the verb. However, all but one are followed by forms in parentheses which might be proposed as alternative roots. The forms followed by question marks (?) are hypothetical.

10. MOHÉ	(OHÉ??)	(POHÉ)	mohé	nohé	pohé
clean	(clean state??)	(get cleaned)	clean	be cleaned	get cleaned

11. MUJEK	(UJEK?)	(PUJEK)	mujek	nujek	pujek
spill (v)	(spill (n)?)	(get spilled)	spill	be spilled	get spilled

12. MOLO	(OLO??)	(POLO)	molo	nolo	polo
drain liquid	(draining??)	(get drained)	drain liquid	be drained	get drained

13. MENAT		(PENAT)	menat	nenat	penat
pull		(get pulled)	pull	be pulled	get pulled

14. MENYAT			menyat	nenyat	

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[*] Note that example 5, *tanem*, has a root identical to both a noun and the nonvolitional passive.

ask for   ask for   be asked for

Cases 10 - 13 are problematic because, according to the pattern of three earlier examples (*otong*, *olong*, and *anyam*), *ohé*, *ujek* and *olo* should be the roots of 10 - 12. Unfortunately I have never attested these, either in heard speech or in the million-odd words of Penan dictation that I have taken down. It is my guess that *ohé* and *olo* never occur, given what would be their marginal semantic usefulness and/or non-concrete meanings. The form *ujek* seems plausible -- the expression *ujek nyak* 'oil spill' strikes me as acceptable. But if any of these do exist, the forms *mujek*, *nujek*, *pujek*, *mohé*, *nohé*, *pohé*, and *molo*, *nolo*, *polo* surely occur hundreds or thousands of times more frequently. (I have not tested these three forms on native speakers.)

As for 13 and 14, the roots *ENAT and *ENYAT are not theoretically possible; no Penan word begins with a schwa (other than a single strange exception -- see the section on phonology). Nor do there exist forms *NAT or *NYAT.

Note that 14 appears to be defective; it apparently has no nonvolitional passive voice *penyat*, which could conceivably be viewed as the root. This lacuna exists for semantic and pragmatic reasons; *asking* is a quintessentially volitional activity, and it would make no sense to have a verb form that meant 'get accidentally asked for'. (Although one could conceivably concoct a strange situation in which it would be appropriate.) By default, the active form *menyat* is the only possible root.

In 10 - 13, I present *pohé*, *pujek*, *polo*, and *penat* as possible alternative roots, by analogy with examples 5 -7 where the roots have the same form as the nonvolitional passive. However, I have opted against this idea, and instead propose the active forms as roots. *Mujek* and *mohé* appear roughly ten times more frequently in my corpus than do *pujek* and *pohé*; and *menat* is something like seventy times more frequent than *penat*. (*Molo* and *polo* are much rarer and therefore cannot be compared with statistical significance in a corpus "only" a million words long.) It would be contrary to the goal of a practical dictionary to force the reader to look up these words twice, with her first search ending at a cross-reference, e.g. **menat** see **penat** - **menat**. And it would be utterly absurd to insist that *ujek* be the root rather than *mujek*, with the latter being ordered not as § **mujek** but rather as § **ujek** - **mujek.** Even if the form *ujek* should turn out to exist, *mujek* surely occurs a thousand times more often. In the intuition of a native speaker it is therefore *mujek* that is the basic form, even if sometimes she might be inclined to derive *ujek* from it. But she will do so only by analogy with other, much more common derivations.

I am not enthusiastic about theoretical representations; languages are concrete, and people learn them as they hear them. The ordering of entries in a dictionary should reflect psychological reality rather than sterile theoretical or logical considerations.

4. PRONOUNS

4.1 INVENTORY, MEANINGS, FORMS

Pronouns in Penan reflect number and person, but not sex. Below is a list of the semantic categories that Penan pronouns distinguish.

1st person singular (I)   akeu
2nd person singular (thou (=singular you))   ka'au
3rd person singular (he, she, it)   iah

1st person dual inclusive (I and thou)	tuah
1st person plural inclusive (we who are here, including you)	itam
1st person plural inclusive (we who are many, including you)	uleu
1st person dual exclusive (I and he <she>, but not you)	amo
1st person paucal[*] exclusive (we few, but not you)	mételeu
1st person plural exclusive (we many, but not you)	amé
2nd person dual (you two)	kawah
2nd person paucal (you, being few in number)	keteleu
2nd person plural (you many)	ka'ah
3rd person dual (those two)	rawah
3rd person paucal (they, being few in number)	rételeu, réh teleu[†]
3rd person plural (they)	irah

Most of these pronouns have more than one morphological form, in a manner similar to English pronouns (cf he, him, his). Many have three distinct forms, and which of these is to be used in a given situation depends on the syntactic and/or stylistic role that the pronoun plays therein. It is thus convenient to distinguish three morphological classes of pronouns, and I have chosen to label these Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3. All pronouns listed above are of Class 1.

The following table lists their Class 2 and Class 3 counterparts.

CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3
akeu	ku'	ké'
ka'au	ke'	ko'
iah	éh	néh
tuah	toh	toh
itam	tam	tam
uleu	lu'	lu'
amo	mo	mo
mételeu	mételeu	mételeu
amé	mé'	mé'
kawah	koh	koh
keteleu	keteleu	keteleu
ka'ah	keh	keh
rawah	roh	roh
rételeu	rételeu	rételeu
irah	réh	réh

As can be seen, only the singular pronouns have three distinct forms. The dual and plural pronouns have just two distinct forms, their Class 2 and Class 3 forms being identical. The paucal pronouns are morphologically invariable.

With rare exceptions only Class 1 forms are used when the pronoun is a subject which is the first element of a sentence. Class I forms may also be used when the pronoun is a subject in non-initial position, or when the pronoun is

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[*] "Paucal" is from Latin *paucus*, 'a few'. The pronouns *mételeu*, *keteleu*, and *rételeu* are trial in form, in that each incorporates the word *teleu* 'three'. However, nowadays they are commonly used to refer to a group of three, four or five, and sometimes even more. Probably they were originally semantically trial: when questioned on this matter, some informants say that these pronouns can only be used correctly to denote three persons, and cases where they denote a greater number are due to laziness or a lapsus on the part of the speaker. Yet those same speakers can be readily observed using *rételeu* to denote four entities. Cf. the vagueness of English *a couple of*.
[†] In very slow and careful speech, *rételeu* may be pronounced *réh teleu*.

a direct object. They are also used in isolation, that is when the pronoun is the only element of an utterance.

(i)   *Akeu na'at iah*. 'I see him'
(ii) *Iah na'at akeu*. 'He sees me.'
(iii) *Boh akeu na'at iah*. 'Then I see him.'
(iv) *Boh iah na'at akeu*. 'Then he sees me.'
(v)   *Sé na'at iah? -- Akeu*. 'Who sees him? -- Me.'

Class 2 forms may be used when the pronoun is a subject in non-initial position, or when the pronoun is a direct object. They may not be used in isolation or when the pronoun is a subject in initial position.

(vi) *Boh ku' na'at éh*. 'Then I see him.'
(vii) *Boh éh na'at ku'*. 'Then he sees me.'

(compare the impossible

(viii) **Ku' na'at iah*. 'I see him'
(ix)   **Éh na'at akeu*. 'He sees me.')

Class 3 forms are used

(1) to represent the agent of a passive sentence

(x) *Akeu ta'an néh*. 'I am-seen by him.'
(xi) *Iah ta'an ké'*. 'He is-seen by me.'

(2) as possessive adjectives

(xii) *Lamin ké'*. 'My house.' *Lebo réh*. 'Their village.' *Aseu ko'*. 'Your dog.'

(3) after certain conjunctions and prepositions.

(xiii) *Uban néh bé' omok tuai,...* 'Because he/she [is] not able [to] come,...'
(xiv) *Jalan réh pegen*. 'So-that they [can] sleep.' (can also mean 'a place for them to sleep')
(xv)   *Ke-mé' poko tana'*. 'So-that-we [can] keep [our] land.' (*ke* is a clitic meaning 'so that')
(xvi) *Pu'un rigit ngan ko'?* 'There-is money with you?' (= 'Do you have money?')

4.2 POSSIBLE STATUS AS CLITICS

This subsection will not help you in any practical sense; it is purely of theoretical interest to linguists.

Class 2, and especially Class 3, pronouns display certain properties of clitics. They cannot be used independently, but are postposed to other elements, which one might be tempted to call their "hosts". However, they are not clitic-like insofar as they maintain complete prosodic autonomy from their "hosts"; all syllables in any Penan sentence are pronounced with an even, equal stress. Furthermore, it is hard to see how they exhibit any tendency to become affixes; they are all postposed, but Penan is completely bereft of suffixes; it has only prefixes and infixes (the latter being inserted only in the first syllable – see the section on passive verbs). Furthermore, in the above examples of Class 2 and Class 3 pronouns, with one exception, none can be in any way phonetically conjoined with its "host"; such a circumstance would violate Penan phonology, which sticks to a purely CVCV regime, and in all the examples but one, the putative "host" ends with a consonant, which constitutes, by definition, a word boundary. Note that the exception is <u>not</u> (vii) *Boh éh na'at ku'* -- as explained in the section on phonology, all word initial vowel phonemes are automatically preceded by the glottal stop -- thus, (vii) is always pronounced *Boh 'éh na'at ku'* and never **Bohéh na'at ku'*. The exception is (xv) *Ke-mé' poko tana'*, which in standard orthography is written *Kemé' poko tana'*. But in this case it is *ke* that is a clitic – a proclitic to be precise. In fact, it is a full-fledged prefix, insofar as when it is used as

a separate word -- by far the most common circumstance -- it is pronounced *ke'*. (With a single exception, noted in the section on phonology, the schwa /e/ cannot occur word finally; it must be followed by a consonant.) In this case, it is *ke* 'so that' which is the clitic, and the host is *mé'*.

4.3 PRONOUNS USED AS COMITATIVES

Certain pronouns can be used to link two nouns where, in English, we would use *and* or *along with*. For example,

Musa rawah Arun. (lit., 'Moses those-two Aaron') 'Moses and Aaron.'
O Ada kawah Sila jian koh menéng ha' ké'. (lit., 'O Ada you-two Sila kindly you-two listen word my') 'O Ada and Sila, listen to my words.'

In most cases when a pronoun is used in this way, i.e. *comitatively*, only one noun is used, and the pronoun may either precede or follow it. How this works, and what is denoted, is best explained by example:

Amé Kimu tuai malem. 'We-many Kimu arrive last-night.' (Kimu and some others of us came last night.)
Sagap amo kivu jalan inah. 'Sagap we-two follow path that.' = *Amo Sagap kivu jalan inah.* 'We-two Sagap follow path that.' (Sagap and I took that trail.)
Boh Musa rawah kivu. 'So Musa the-two-of-them follow.' (So Musa and his companion followed.)
Boh roh lakei éh singat tulat ka'an roh ri'. 'Then the-two-of-them man who-is greedy divide-up meat belonging-to-the-two-of-them the.' (Then he and the greedy man divided up their meat.)
Tovo Sagap rételeu kivu jalan inah... 'When Sagap the-three-of-them follow path that.' = *Tovo rételeu Sagap kivu jalan inah...* (When Sagap and the others took that trail...)
Irah Luti peleka malem. 'Luti and the others left last night.'

The following syntactic rule emerges from the above examples:

P X *or* X P (where P is the pronoun, and X the noun) is interpreted as 'a person or persons denoted by P, along with the other person or persons denoted by P, which includes X' (e.g. *rételeu Musa* would be processed by this rule as "a person or persons denoted by *rételeu* (=those persons who are several in number), along with the other person or persons denoted by *rételeu*, which includes Musa." -- that is to say, 'those (several) people including Musa'.

5. COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE

The comparative can be expressed by using the form

X V jin Y

where *X* and *Y* are the terms being compared, and *V* is an adjective. *Jin* is a preposition that otherwise means 'from', e.g. *Iah tuai jin Miri*. 'She comes from Miri.'

Some examples:

Surat inah ja'au jin surat iteu. lit., 'book that big from book this' -- 'That book is bigger than this book.'
Bok ké' kebit jin bok ko'. 'Hair my long from hair thy' -- 'My hair is longer than your hair.'
Urip ko' si'ik jin urip ké'. 'Life thy small from life my' -- 'Life your small than life mine.' (You are younger than me.)
Juhit marang pelapah bau jin paka' kayeu. 'Bird fly excessively high from branch tree' -- 'The bird flies much higher than the tree branches.'

If one wishes to express a meaning like

'Whose hair is longer? Sarah's? Lejeng's?'

One can say

Bok sé éh kebit? Bok Sara'? Bok Lejeng? 'Hair who the-one-that long? Hair Sarah? Hair Lejeng?

The answer might be

Bok Lejeng éh kebit. Hair Lejeng the-one-that-long.'

Yet out of context, this means only

'It's Lejeng's hair that is long.'

However, even if Lejeng has short hair, this is the only possible answer -- provided her hair is longer than Sarah's. The context, not the syntax, makes the meaning underlying this sentence clear.

Similarly, there is no syntactic means to express the superlative. While one can say that a given entity possesses a quality to a very high degree, to unambiguously express the notion 'the most' one must add an additional sentence.

For example, to suggest a superlative one would typically use a sentence of the form

X V jin kekat Y

'X is the V –est of all-or-almost-all X –s'

e.g.

Surat inah ja'au jin kekat surat. 'Book that big than all-or-almost-all book.' (roughly, 'That book is the biggest of all.')

The problem is the lexeme *kekat*. Penan has no word for 'all'. *Kekat* means 'all, for practical purposes'.

For example,

Mai taket usan lamin inah. Kekat batang gelan borok. Jah duah batang awah éh bé' jam putui hun ko' nejat éh. 'Do not climb into that abandoned house. *Kekat* of the poles that make up its floor are rotten. There are only one or two that you could step on without breaking them.'

To translate the literal meaning of the English word *all*, you would have to say

Mai taket usan lamin inah. Kekat batang gelan borok. Bé' pu'un sapét jah batang éh bé' borok. 'Do not climb into that abandoned house. *Kekat* of the poles that make up its floor are rotten. There is not a single pole that is not rotten.'

Returning to the "superlative" example given above:

Surat inah ja'au jin kekat surat.

In practice, this is a good enough way of expressing in Penan the meaning 'That book is the biggest of all.'

However, if you wanted to avoid all possible vagueness or ambiguity, you would have to add the sentence

Bé' pu'un sapét jah surat éh ja'au jin néh. 'There is not one single book that is bigger than it.'

Another way of expressing the superlative *in practice* is by using the adverb *matek*, 'to a very high degree': e.g.

Éh mah matek jian? 'Which one to-a-very-high-degree good?' (roughly, 'Which is the best?')
Tokong inah matek bau. 'Hill that to-a-very-high-degree high.' (roughly, 'That hill is the highest.')

6. NUMERALS

The cardinal numerals are as follows:

1	jah
2	duah
3	teleu
4	pat
5	lemah
6	nem
7	tuju
8	ayah
9	pi'en
10	polo *or* jah polo
11	jah polo jah
12	jah polo duah
13	jah polo teleu
20	duah polo
21	duah polo jah
30	teleu polo
100	jah ato
200	duah ato
1000	jah ibeu
2000	duah ibeu

Ordinal numbers (except for the first one) are derived by the prefix *ke-*

X bu'un 'the first X'; *keruah X* 'the second X'; *keteleu X* 'the third X'; *kepat X* 'the fourth X'; *kelemah* X 'the fifth X'; and so on.

7. DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY

Derivational morphology is the process by which a lexeme is formed from another lexeme by altering or adding to the phonemes of the latter. This process is neither entirely predictable nor regular; all lexemes so derived must appear as their own entries in the dictionary. That is to say, this process is not part of the formal grammar of a language. However, derivational processes are sufficiently regular that the learner will find it useful to be acquainted with them, and therefore we give some examples in this section. In Penan, morphological alterations operate only on the beginning of the word, through prefixing, often with replacement of the first phoneme.

7.1 VERB FORMATION

7.1.1 CAUSATIVE VERBS WITH *PE-* AND *NGE-*

Penan has many causative verbs derived from intransitive verbs or adjectives by prefixing. Here are some examples. In the vast majority of cases, the prefix used is **pe-**, and where this precedes an initial **m** or **n**, the latter transforms into the corresponding consonantal stop (third, fourth and fifth examples).

peloho fall   **ngeloho** drop *tr vb* (cause to fall)
metat disappear   **ngetat** cause-to-disappear
munyai melt   **pepunyai** melt *tr vb* (cause to melt)
menyun sit   **pepenyun** sit *tr vb* (place-in-sitting-position)
nekedéng stand   **petekedéng** stand *tr vb* (place in standing position)
posot stop   **peposot** stop *tr vb* (cause to stop)
sala' be wrong   **pesala'** blame *tr vb* (claim that someone has done wrong)

These have the meaning *X causes that Y V*, where *V* is the intransitive verb or adjective. Here are some more examples.

nesen 'be conscious of' --> **petesen** 'cause to be conscious of', i.e. 'remind' *Ko' petesen anak namung inah tong tinen néh*. 'You be sure to remind that adopted child about its mother.'
pemung 'connected or mixed with' --> **pepemung** 'cause to be mixed with', i.e. 'combine with' *Redo tulin inah pepemung tulin parai ngan tulin jelai*. 'That crazy woman mixed rice grains in with corn kernels.'
to'o 'dry' —-> **peto'o** 'cause to be dry', i.e. 'dry' *Iah peto'o kerayung tong peté*. 'She dried the shirt in the sun.'
lena 'clear, lucid' --> **pekelena** 'cause to be clear', i.e. 'explain' *Akeu pekelena tosok*. 'I explained the story.'
vun 'be piled up' --> **pepevun** 'cause to be piled up', i.e. 'pile up' *Akeu pepevun kayeu*. 'I pile up wood.'

7.1.2 VERBS FROM NOUNS OR ADJECTIVES

Many verbs are formed from a noun or adjective by prefixing **ng-** or **nge-** to the latter. This is an extremely productive process.

ngerahéng *'to groan'* from **rahéng** *'a groan'*
ngetut 'to fart' from **tut** *'a fart'*
ngebusak *'to flower'* from **busak** 'a flower'
ngelemo 'go weak as a sign of giving in' from **lemo** 'weak'
ngejajan 'to chant' from **jajan**, 'a chant'
ngeradau 'to shout' from **radau**, 'a shout'
ngavet 'wear a loincloth' from **avet**, 'loincloth'
ngebeték 'tattoo someone' from **beték** 'a tattoo'
ngejian 'to improve' from **jian**, 'good'

ngeripen 'enslave' from **ripen** 'a slave'
ngetusah 'cause difficulty [for someone]' from **tusah** 'a difficulty'
ngedalem 'pay close attention to someone to find out what they are doing' from **dalem** 'inside'

Note that the derived verb can be intransitive, or transitive, as in the last five examples. Also note that the meaning often shifts, and in an unpredictable way. For example, while **ngejian** means 'cause to be **jian** [i.e. good or better], **ngelemo** does not mean 'cause to be **lemo** [i.e. weak]', but rather 'become submissive'. **Ngetusah** could be an intransitive verb meaning 'suffer **tusah** [difficulties]', but instead means 'cause difficulties'. While **ngavet** means 'put on an **avet** [loincloth]' and not 'make a loincloth', **ngebeték** means 'tattoo a **beték** onto someone' rather than 'wear a tattoo'.

7.2. NOUN FORMATION

7.2.1 THE PREFIX *PENG-* or *PENY-*

Many nouns are formed from other words by adding the prefix **peng-** or **peny-**. As in the case of verb derivation treated immediately above, this is not an entirely predictable process, either morphologically or semantically.

For example, one might incorrectly guess that *pengeja'au* means 'size', insofar as it is formed from the adjective *ja'au* 'big'. But in fact, it has two quite different meanings: 'leader' and 'the greater part of'.

7.2.1.1 *PENG-* BEFORE A VOWEL

urip 'life' --> **pengurip** 'life' (these two words are often synonymous, but the latter is used more when discussing age)
ada 'light' --> **pengada** 'glass, mirror'

7.2.1.2 *PENG-* BEFORE *m, ng,* AND SOMETIMES *k*

This results in the replacement of the initial consonant.

mena' 'give' --> **pengena'** 'gift'
maneu 'do' --> **penganeu** 'deed'
ngelan 'rely on' –-> **pengelan** 'reliance'
kuman 'eat' --> **penguman** 'food'
kelo 'want' --> **pengelo** 'desire'

7.2.1.3 *PENG-* BEFORE OTHER CONSONANTS INCLUDING *K*

In these cases the root undergoes no modification; therefore, schwa /**e**/ must inserted between it and the prefix.

kaya' 'rich' --> **pengekaya'** 'wealth'
jam 'know' --> **pengejam** 'knowledge'
keta 'be suffering' --> **pengeketa** 'affliction'
lakau 'travel' --> **pengelakau** 'trip'
ga' 'end, final' --> **pengega'** 'end, termination'
bé 'all' --> **pengebé** 'totality'
mutau 'tired' --> **pengemutau** 'fatigue'

7.2.1.4 *PENY-*

This prefix is required in all cases where the root word begins with **s**, and the prefix replaces the latter.

suai 'create' --> **penyuai** 'creation'
seruh 'think' --> **penyeruh** 'thought'
sala' 'wrong' --> **penyala'** 'evil deed'
sakit 'be hurting' --> **penyakit** 'illness'

7.2.2 THE PREFIX *KE-*

Some nouns are derived by prefixing **ke-** to a verb or adjective. This process creates abstract nouns in much the same way as the suffix –*ness* does in English (e.g. fit –-> fitness, pale --> paleness)

ja'au 'big'--> **keja'au** 'size'
mé 'tasty' --> **kemé** 'tastiness'
menya 'ashamed' –-> **kemenya** 'shame'
gahang 'strong' --> **kegahang** 'strength' (**pengegahang** is an alternative form)