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Tables of Contents, abstracts and guidelines are available at www.benjamins.com

Temperature terms in northern Vanuatu

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Oceanic languages generally have a small set of lexemes encoding temperature predicates – no more than two or three words in each language. Focusing on a sample of languages from northern Vanuatu, this study describes their temperature terms, analyses the syntax of their various case frames, and highlights relevant semantic contrasts. Their temperature lexicons in this area appear to display a limited array of polysemies across semantic domains – whether compared to other languages of the world, or to other semantic domains in the same languages.

One of the purposes of this collective volume is to describe the cross-linguistic diversity in the domain of temperature terms, and their various semantic extensions. A fair part of this diversity takes the form of elaborate polysemies and metaphors that can be observed in some parts of the world while not in others. The present short study tackles diversity from a different angle – by reporting on a region, Vanuatu, where temperature terms show few significant semantic extensions. While this report promises to provide little substantial contribution to the typology of temperature polysemies, its interest lies precisely in the “negative evidence” it brings to the debate: should anyone claim the universality of certain semantic extensions, then this empirical study should illustrate a case where no such extensions are found.

I will first situate the languages of northern Vanuatu in their geographical and social context, including notes on the experience of temperature in this part of the world (Section 2). After presenting the nature of my data, a brief section will mention some key aspects of grammar, relevant to this study (Section 3). This will be followed by observations on major temperature terms and the various case frames in which they are used (Section 4). I will show, for example, that the experiencer of temperatures is treated sometimes as the syntactic subject, sometimes as the object, and is occasionally left out altogether.

The remainder of the article will delve into the semantic properties of the temperature lexicon, including their etymologies, their semantic contrasts, and their polysemies when they exist (Section 5). I will argue that the Oceanic languages here studied show relatively little by way of semantic extension – both by contrast with

other parts of the world, and by language-internal comparison with other semantic domains.

1. The languages of Vanuatu

One of the archipelagos of Island Melanesia, the modern country of Vanuatu – known as the New Hebrides until its independence in 1980 – hosts the world's highest density of languages *per capita* (Crowley 2000). A total of 106 vernacular languages have been recorded there (Tryon 1976; Lynch & Crowley 2001) for a current population of 234,000 inhabitants. The population lives scattered in the country's various islands, where for the most part they pursue traditional activities of farming and fishing, in line with the way of life of their ancestors during the last 3000 years of settlement in the region. Figure 1 situates Vanuatu within Island Melanesia and the Pacific. The present study will focus on the northernmost area of Vanuatu, the island groups known as the Torres Islands and the Banks Islands. Figure 2 provides a linguistic map of the Torres and Banks Islands.

All these languages share a common ancestor, Proto Oceanic – itself a member of the vast Austronesian family. In a way similar to the fragmentation of Latin into a multitude of Romance languages and dialects, the linguistic diversity observed today in Vanuatu results from three millennia of *in situ* diversification from what was once a single language spoken across a vast social network (François 2011a, 2011b).

Even though the languages of northern Vanuatu have long diverged so as to lose mutual intelligibility, their linguistic structures display considerable similarities, due to their shared ancestry as well as to sustained relations of contact (François 2011b). This is true of their grammars – which show massive areal isomorphism – but also of their lexicons, whose structural organisation is usually parallel across neighbouring languages. Even when historical processes of lexical replacement have resulted in different word *forms* across neighbouring languages, these words' semantic outlines and polysemies typically align from one language to the other. This point will be relevant to this survey of temperature terms: it will mean that most statements that can be made about the lexical semantics of a sample of languages can generally be considered representative of the whole area. Of course, this general principle of widespread lexical isomorphism does not preclude the possibility that certain lexical structures can be specific to just some languages – as will appear below.

The present study rests on primary data collected by the author, during a number of field trips in northern Vanuatu since 1997. These surveys involved the study

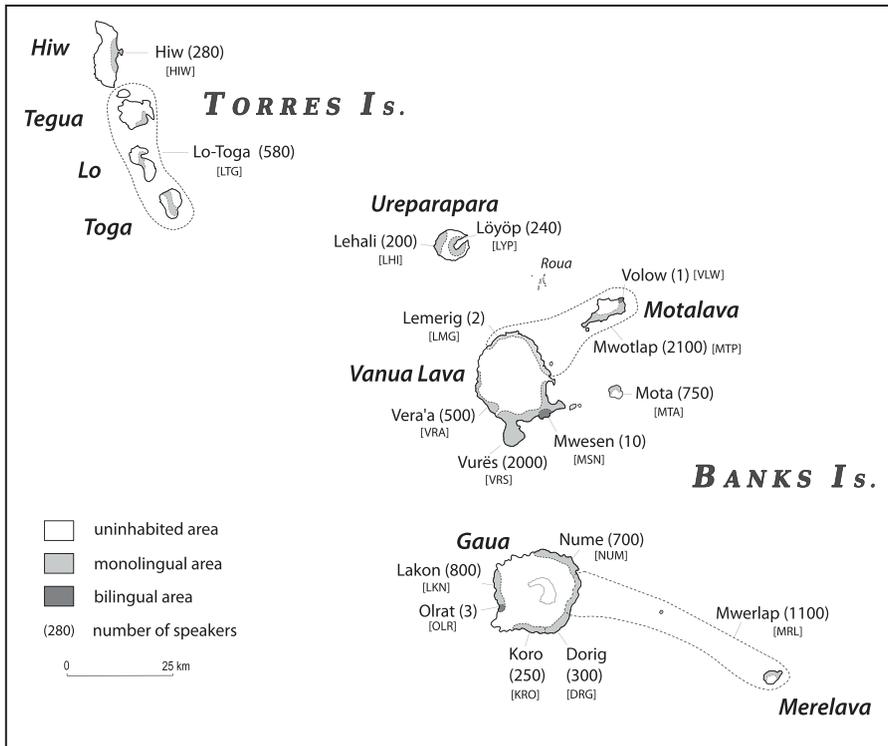


Figure 1. Situation of Vanuatu, and in particular Torres–Banks Islands, in the Pacific

of 18 different languages – i.e. the 17 languages of the Torres and Banks Islands, plus Araki further south.¹ Publications on these languages include a grammar and lexicon of Araki (François 2002, 2008a), a description of Mwotlap (François 2001, 2005), as well as a number of works currently in preparation: a dictionary of Mwotlap; a lexicon of Lo-Toga; a grammar of Hiw; text collections in the languages of Gaua.

1. For each language, I collected lexical and grammatical information, and recorded a number of stories. My total Vanuatu corpus includes 660 text recordings in these 18 languages, with a total of 73 hours. Among these, the best documented language is Mwotlap, with 314 recordings among which 110 were transcribed, yielding a text corpus of over 100,000 words.

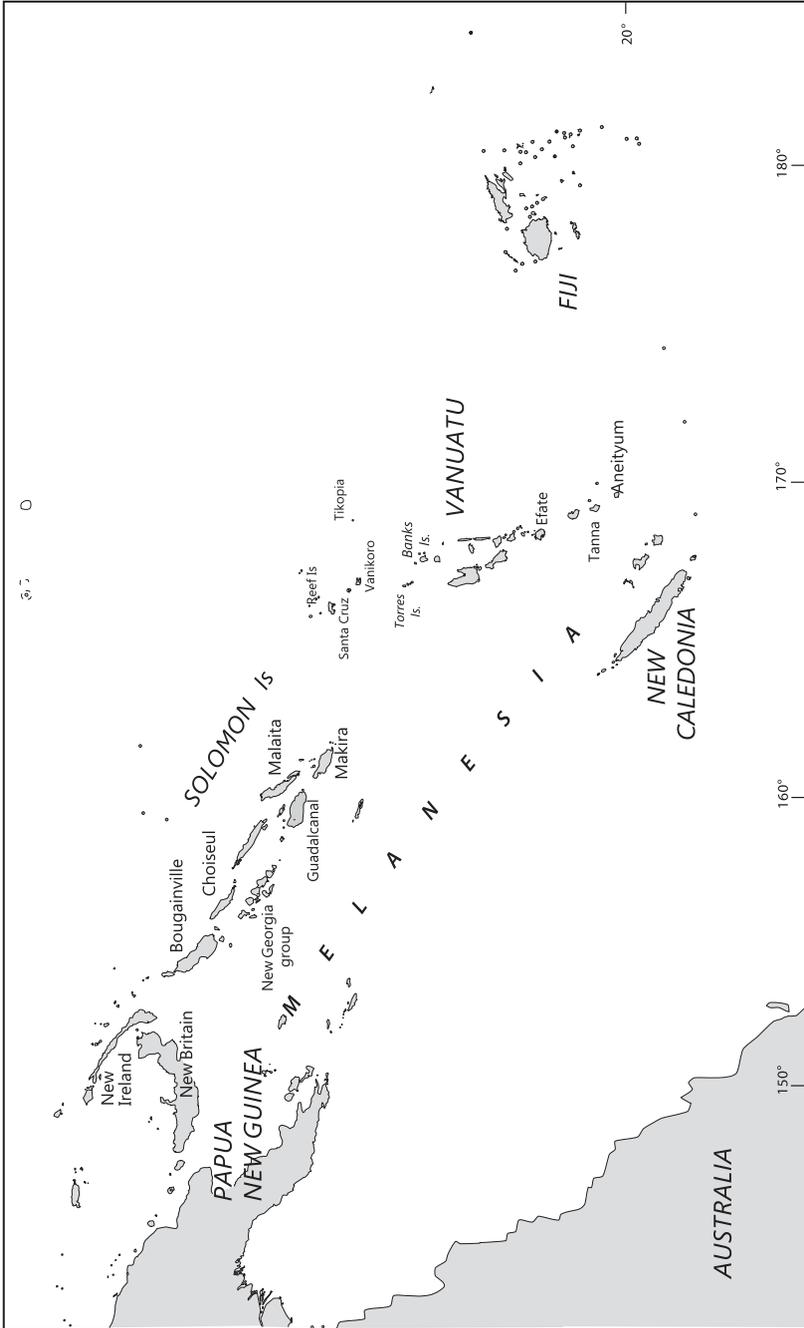


Figure 2. The 17 languages of northern Vanuatu (Torres and Banks Islands)

2. Experiencing temperature in Vanuatu

The archipelago of Vanuatu is located close to the equator, ranging in latitude from 13° to 20° south. Its sub-tropical climate is characterised by approximately eight months – from October to May – of warm to hot rainy weather with frequent cyclones. Around the month of June, that wet season is followed by a relatively drier season of about four months when the weather cools down, thanks to the trade winds blowing from the southeast. Depending on the season and on the time of the day, the breeze blowing from the sea can be felt to be warm, or refreshing.

Daily temperatures are relatively stable during the year, ranging on average from +20°C to +32°C. The temperature of the sea ranges from +22°C in winter to +28°C in summer. The experience of weather temperatures is essentially limited to this rather narrow range. One context where people can feel cold, though, is at high altitude: this is especially the case on volcanic islands (e.g. Vanua Lava or Gaua in the north, Santo or Tanna further south) where some villages are located inland, up to about 900 m in altitude. Temperatures there can go down dramatically to about +13°C at night, setting the local standard for extreme cold.

Another context where relative cold can be experienced is simply when, during a very hot moment, some thermal contrast can be found in the shade, a sudden rain, or by bathing in cool water. Houses are traditionally made with walls of bamboo and with a thatched roof made of sago leaves; these materials are efficient at keeping temperatures cool even when outside temperatures are high. Natural caves tend to have much cooler temperatures, yet they are only inhabited when people take shelter during hurricanes. As we shall see, local lexicons have no separate word for ‘cool’: because time in the shade or contact with water are the only moments when bodies can feel a drop in temperatures, these will always be described simply using the word for ‘cold’ – generally with a positive connotation.

Traditional cultures have no technology for cooling down anything below ambient temperatures. Fridges or ice are unknown in the rural areas of the country, where electricity is rare and intermittent. Technology for increasing temperatures revolves around the use of fire. Except for some occasional cool moments in the mountains, fire is hardly ever used as a way for people to warm up; its main function is for providing light, cooking food, or boiling water. While traditional ways of cooking also include roasting or frying, the main techniques involve the “earth oven”. This is an 80-cm-wide round pit dug in the ground, in which a fire is lit so as to heat a number of stones; once red-hot, these stones will store heat for several hours, and form a hot bed above which food will be laid, covered with leaves, and baked. This way of cooking, common throughout the Pacific (and known in Polynesia as *umu*) sometimes involves the production of hot steam, as water – often salt water from the sea – is poured directly onto the hot stones so as to steam food rather than bake it.

Temperature as such is not involved prominently in any social event or ritual that I know of. The main potential connection between temperature and social activities would be through fire and cooking. Indeed, social events such as weddings, village celebrations, inaugurations or farewell parties, invariably involve a collective meal as a key element in the unfolding of events. As a corollary, major social events often involve gatherings the night before, so as to prepare large quantities of food for the next day. Food would be prepared, and the earth oven lit up, so as to bake the whole night long. Entire families would stay up all night in the vicinity of the oven – not too close to avoid the smoke or the steam – and tell stories or spend time together. It is frequent to hear phrases that associate metonymically village celebrations with the domain of fire and cooking. Thus on Motalava island, as a young man addresses his prospective parents-in-law with respect and modesty, the elliptical phrase “*I’d like to go fetch some firewood*” sometimes suffices to evoke the whole wedding ceremony, and thus functions effectively, in a Gricean kind of way, as a marriage proposal.

3. Preliminary notes on grammar

This section presents some grammatical features that are shared among the languages of northern Vanuatu, and which are relevant to the discussion of temperature terms. Unless otherwise specified, the examples are in the Mwotlap language (MTP).

3.1 Parts of speech in northern Vanuatu languages

Northern Vanuatu languages all have accusative alignment, and a strict SVO word order (that is, SV and AVO). Core arguments are assigned case on the basis of word order only.²

(MTP.1) nɔ̃ n-ɪylal ki, m̩ba ki ɛt= ɪylal =tɛ nɔ̃.³
 1SG STAT-know 3SG but 3SG NEG₁= know =NEG₂ 1SG
 ‘I know her, but she doesn’t know me.’

2. Throughout this study, forms will be spelled phonemically using IPA conventions rather than local orthographies, to facilitate cross-linguistic comparison.

3. Abbreviations for language names include: HIW: Hiw; LKN: Lakon; LTG: Lo-Toga; LYP: Löyöp; MRL: Mwerlap; MTA: Mota; MTP: Mwotlap; VRS: Vurës; POC: Proto Oceanic. Example sentences are glossed according to the Leipzig rules. More specific abbreviations are listed here: ADV adverb, AOR aorist, APPREH apprehensive mood, ART article, CTFC counterfactual, DEIX deictic, EXCL exclamative, DU dual, INTSF intensifier, COORD coordinator, CPLT complete aspect, HUM human article, IPFV imperfective, IRR irrealis, OBL oblique, POSS possessive, PRF perfect, PROSP prospective, RESULT resultative, STAT stative.

The system of major parts of speech in these languages distinguishes between nouns, adjectives and verbs.

Unlike other parts of speech, nouns can be the head of a REFERENTIAL PHRASE. For that purpose, most nouns must be prefixed by an article *nV*- encoding referentiality: thus *lomyep* ‘boy’ becomes *nu-lomyep* ‘a/the boy’ in (2).

(MTP.2) *ki ni-etsas_v nu-lomyep_N su_{ADJ} vitway.*
 3SG AOR-see ART-boy small one
 ‘He saw a small boy.’

Unlike verbs, adjectives can fill the function of modifier in a noun phrase – e.g. *su* ‘small, young’ in (2). As for verbs, they can neither head a referential phrase, nor act as a direct noun modifier; their main function is to head a PREDICATE PHRASE, in which case they are inflected for Tense-Aspect-Mood – like *iyal* ‘know’ in (1), or *etsas* ‘see’ in (2).

The function of TAM-inflected predicate is open not only to verbs, but also to adjectives and nouns:

(MTP.3) *ki ni-in ε ki ni-su_{ADJ} lɔk.*
 3SG AOR-drink COORD 3SG AOR-small again
 ‘He drank it and became young again.’

(MTP.4) *ki ni-in ε ki ni-lomyep_N lɔk.*
 3SG AOR-drink COORD 3SG AOR-boy again
 ‘He drank it and became a boy again.’

There are no reasons to consider that the adjective *su* ‘small’ in (3), or the noun *lomyep* ‘boy’ in (4), have been converted into verbs. A more accurate formulation is to consider that these are two examples of TAM-predicates which are headed, not by verbs, but by (respectively) an adjective and a noun. Indeed, like most Austronesian languages, the languages of northern Vanuatu are “omnipredicative” (cf. Lemaréchal 1989:55; Launey 1994): that is, all major syntactic categories are equally compatible with the predicate function, with no need of any copula.

In sum, the syntactic function of *predicate* is open to nouns, adjectives and verbs alike, and cannot be taken as a criterion to tell them apart. The features which distinguish these syntactic categories have to be found outside the predicate, such as in the internal structure of referential phrases (NPs). Each syntactic category is characterised by its own set of syntactic compatibilities, which are summarised in Table 1. For a more detailed discussion of parts of speech in Mwothlap, see François (2001, 2003).

Table 1. Syntactic functions of major categories in Mwotlap

| | <i>Noun</i> | <i>Adject</i> | <i>Verb</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| be head of predicate | + | + | + |
| modify head of predicate | + | + | + |
| be head of referential phrase | + | - | - |
| modify head of ref. phrase | + | + | - |

3.2 The polyfunctionality of reduplication

One morphological feature shared by northern Vanuatu languages, and by Oceanic languages in general, is the common use of reduplication to encode a variety of meanings. Among its many uses (François 2004a), I will mention briefly the ones most relevant for the understanding of the sentences cited in the next sections – based on Mwotlap examples.

Certain nouns, adjectives or verbs optionally use reduplication to encode plurality:

- *lomɣɛp* [N] ‘boy’ → *lomlomɣɛp* [N] ‘boys’
- *su* [ADJ] ‘small:SG’ → *susu* [ADJ] ‘small:PL’
- *mat* [v] ‘die’ → *matmat* [v] ‘die in numbers’

Reduplication can also encode intensity, particularly with adjectives:

- *su* [ADJ] ‘small’ → *susu* [ADJ] ‘very small, tiny’
- *sɛw* [ADJ] ‘hot’ → *sɛwsɛw* [ADJ] ‘very hot’

We will see various examples of intensifying reduplication with *sɛwsɛw* in our next sections, e.g. (40)–(41). The form will then be glossed ‘hot~INTSF’, using the tilde sign recommended by the Leipzig glossing rules for reduplication.

Among its possible aspectual meanings, reduplication encodes progressive or imperfective aspect – as in example (19) below with *sɛwsɛw* (‘hot~IPFV’, i.e. ‘was heating up’).

Finally, reduplication is also used in causative serial constructions, when the second lexeme (verb, adjective) has resultative meaning. For example, *tɛŋ* means ‘cry’, but it is reduplicated when used as a resultative predicate in a verb serialising pattern:

- (MTP.5) imam nɔnɔn mu-wuh *tɛŋtɛŋ* kl.
 father his/her PFT-slap cry~RESULT 3SG
 ‘Her father made her cry by slapping her.’
 [lit. ‘slapped her to cry’]

We will see below examples of resultative reduplication with *sɛw*, this time glossed ‘hot~RESULT’ – e.g. (11) or (43).

Even though reduplication is highly productive for a large part of the lexicon, it is not available for all lexemes. Indeed, it is common for a given root to have historically lost its simplex form, and become lexicalised in its reduplicated form; most of the time, the resulting (formerly reduplicated) word has become immune to any further morphological reduplication. In fact, several of the temperature words cited in Table 2 below are in this case. Etymologically, the adjective **tutunu* ‘hot’ results from the reduplication of a verb **tunu* ‘heat up, roast’ (Section 5.1). But the reflex of this protoform **tutunu* in modern languages – for example *ʔiʔin* in Lemerig – has become insensitive to reduplicative morphology: it lacks a simplex form **ʔin*, and also lacks the ability to reduplicate further (**ʔiʔiʔin*). This principle applies to most forms in Table 2, whether they reflect **tutunu* ‘hot’ or **mamadridri* ‘cold’, as both result from earlier processes of reduplication. As a consequence, while Mwotlap *sɛw* ‘hot’ – as we just saw – is highly sensitive to reduplicative morphology, its counterpart *mɔmjij* ‘cold’ (a regular reflex of **mamadridri*) is unable to reduplicate.

4. Form and syntax of major temperature terms

4.1 Major temperature terms

The most relevant terms for our discussion of temperature lexicons in northern Vanuatu are adjectives. Table 2 provides the forms for ‘cold’ and ‘hot’ in the languages of the Torres and Banks Islands. While several languages in the corpus have only these two temperature words, some also have an additional term (see Section 5.2 below).

4.2 Syntax and phraseology

4.2.1 *Attributive vs. predicative function*

Temperature adjectives are found with various syntactic functions, in conformity with the combinatorial possibilities of adjectives in these languages (Section 3.1). Thus Mwotlap *mɔmjij* ‘cold’ is used attributively in (6):

(MTP.6) ni-^mbi *mɔmjij*
 ART-water cold
 ‘cold water’

In (7), *sɛw* ‘hot’ is used predicatively, with a TAM marker and an adverbial modifier:

Table 2. Temperature-related lexemes in Torres and Banks languages

| | 'hot' | 'cold' | Other words |
|---------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Hiw | <i>ttin</i> | <i>maetit</i> | + ADJ <i>məwmiw</i> 'cold' |
| Lo-Toga | <i>tʉn</i> | <i>meləhih</i> | + NOUN <i>məla</i> 'cold' |
| Lehali | <i>ssow</i> | <i>mamⁿdin</i> | |
| Löyöp | <i>ssow</i> | <i>mamⁿdin</i> | |
| Mwotlap | <i>sɛw</i> | <i>məmijj</i> | |
| Volow | <i>sɛw</i> | <i>mamijj</i> | |
| Lemerig | <i>ʒiʒin</i> | <i>mamwit</i> | + ADJ <i>vəvæt</i> 'hot' |
| Vera'a | <i>ʒiʒin</i> | <i>mamyin</i> | |
| Vurës | <i>tütün</i> | <i>mamryin</i> | + NOUN <i>malas</i> 'cold' |
| Mota | <i>tutun</i> | <i>mamarir</i> | + NOUN <i>malaso</i> 'cold' |
| Nume | <i>ttun</i> | <i>mamirir</i> | + NOUN <i>malas</i> 'cold' |
| Dorig | <i>ttun</i> | <i>mamrir</i> | |
| Lakon | <i>tutun</i> | <i>misiŋ</i> | |
| Mwerlap | <i>səw</i> | <i>mmerir</i> | + VB <i>malas</i> 'feel cold' |

(MTP.7) na-lɔ̃ nɛ-sɛw mɛh!
 ART-sun STAT-hot too.much
 'The sun is too hot!'

As suggested in Table 1 (Section 3.1), a third syntactic function open to adjectives is that of secondary predicate, that is, modifier of a verb: this will be exemplified in (10)–(11) and (45) below.

4.2.2 Stative dynamic interpretation

When combined with the stative aspect prefix *nV-*,⁴ temperature adjectives in predicate position translate as 'BE cold/hot', a stative property assigned to an object at a given point in time – as in (7). Other TAM markers trigger a dynamic reading of the adjective: this is enough to make it refer to a change of state rather than to a property

4. The apparent homophony between the stative prefix *nV-* and the noun article *nV-* is a coincidence. It can be shown that the stative is underlyingly /nɛ-/, and the noun article /na-/ (François 2000:55).

(François 2003:49). The predicate then translates as ‘GET cold/hot’, or using English intransitive (unaccusative) verbs, ‘cool down/warm up’.

For example, the TAM marker in (8) is the “apprehensive”, a type of detrimental modality. The mere use of a TAM other than the stative results in a change-of-state interpretation:

(MTP.8) ni-^mbi tiple mɔmjij lɔk.
 ART-water APPREH cold again
 ‘The water might *cool down* again.’

In (9), the predicate *sɛw* combines with the “aorist”, whose various meanings include the marking of consecutive clauses:

(MTP.9) nik wɪⁿdɪ hay nɛ-vet ki ni-sɛw ɛvɛj.
 2SG (heap.up) up ART-stone 3SG AOR-hot INTSF
 ‘Then you lay out the stones [on the earth oven] until they *become red-hot*.’

As mentioned before, the syntactic functions open to adjectives include the modification of a predicate head – typically a verb. The adjective then forms with that verb a serial construction with a resultative meaning (François 2006:235), parallel to (5) above. This is also a context that favours a dynamic (change-of-state) reading. Thus in (10), the complex predicate ‘sit cold’ means ‘[s.th.] remain in place until cooling down’. The construction is syntactically monovalent:

(MTP.10) nɛ-ɣɛnɣɛn sɔ ni-hay mɔmjij tusu.
 ART-food PROSP AOR-sit cold a.bit
 ‘Let the food (rest and) *cool down* a little.’

In (11), the action is agentive, and the structure is that of a reflexive construction: that is, a formally transitive macro-verb in which the subject and the object are coreferent (François 2004b: 118).

(MTP.11) nɔk sɔ ŋm^wihil sɛwsɛw nɔ van l-ɛp.
 1SG PROSP dry.off hot~RESULT 1SG thither LOC-fire
 ‘I want to *warm* myself up (by standing) close to the fire.’
 [lit. ‘I will dry myself *warm* at the fire’]

Notice here the use of reduplication *sɛwsɛw* to encode a resultative meaning (Section 3.2).

The languages under study lack any causative lexeme whose meaning would be directly linked to temperatures, like English *heat (s.th.) up*, *cool (s.th.) down*. In the absence of any causative morphology, these meanings will be expressed by constructions such as (10)–(11), in which the adjectives *cold* and *hot* are used in resultative secondary predicates after a verb. We will encounter figurative uses of such causative constructions in Section 5.4.4.

4.2.3 Valency and case frame

The syntactic subject of temperature predicates is normally the carrier of temperature: that is, the theme to which this property is inherently assigned, whether a liquid (6), a solid (10) or a source of heat like fire or even the sun (7).

Northern Vanuatu languages normally do not allow *experiencers* to be the subject of a temperature predicate:

(MTP.12) ^{??}*nɔ* *nɔ-mɔmjij*.
 1SG STAT-cold
 ‘I am cold.’

I found only one exception to the latter principle: the verb *malas* in the language Mwerlap. This verb, which can be glossed ‘(s.o.) be cold, feel cold’, is the only temperature-related predicate that can take the experiencer as its syntactic subject:

(MRL.13) *litneāk nu-mm̄erir lakan, yeān nu-malas neā*.
 place STAT-cold DEIX 1inc:pl STAT-feel.cold OBL:ADV
 ‘It’s cold here, that’s why we *feel cold*.’

The Mwerlap verb *malas* is unique of its kind in the northern area. Even though Table 2 includes cognate forms *malas* or *malaso*, in other languages this is a noun (Section 5.2.1), whose valency properties differ from the Mwerlap form.

Setting aside the Mwerlap exception, northern Vanuatu languages resort to other syntactic strategies to express the functional equivalent of a PERSONAL-FEELING construction (Koptjevskaja-Tamm, 2011) such as English *I am cold*. One strategy is to simply use an AMBIENT construction, which leaves the identity of the experiencer implicit. Weather-like statements referring to ambient temperature involve a dummy subject, which is always the noun for ‘place, location’. An example was the first clause of (13) above for Mwerlap; see also (14) for Mwotlap, (15) for Hiw:

(MTP.14) *mahi nɔ-mɔmjij mɛh!*
 place STAT-cold too.much
 ‘It’s too cold (here)!’ [lit. the place is too cold]

(HIW.15) *nə ŋ^wutə ne tin tniŋ!*
 ART place STAT hot INTSF
 ‘It’s very hot (here)!’ [lit. the place is very hot]

This construction is parallel to statements about times of the day, for example:

(HIW.16) *nə ŋ^wutə ne kəŋ.*
 ART place STAT night
 ‘It’s night.’ [lit. the place is night]

There are three ways to make the experiencer explicit in such statements. One is to embed ambient statements like (14) as a dependent clause under a verb of feeling:

(MTP.17) *nək jəntɛy <maɦɪ nɔ-məmji>*.
 1SG feel place STAT-cold
 ‘I’m feeling cold.’ [lit. ‘I feel <the place is cold>’]

(HIW.18) *sisə ɛLOŋ <nə ŋ^wutə ne ttin (mi sisə)>*.
 3pl feel ART place STAT hot with 3pl
 ‘They’re feeling hot.’ [lit. ‘they feel <the place is hot (on them)>’]

When the language has a temperature-related noun, it can sometimes replace the object clause in a construction like (17): see the Vurès example (25) below.

A second construction is attested with the Mwotlap adjective *sɛw* ‘hot’. Like a handful of other adjectives in this language, it can be used transitively. The subject is the source of the heat, while the object is the thing or person affected by the heat:

(MTP.19) *n-ɛp ni-sɛwsɛw nɔ-toti ɣiviy ɛn*.
 ART-fire AOR-hot~IPFV ART-tree Syzygium DEF
 ‘The fire was starting to *heat up/burn* the apple tree.’

(MTP.20) *maɦɪ tɛ-sɛw kɸ^wijiy nɪk*.
 place FUT₁-hot FUT₂ 2SG
 ‘You’re going to feel hot.’ [lit. The place will be hot (on) you]

This transitive use of the adjective is not attested with *məmji* ‘cold’, nor does it seem to be found in other languages. It is lexically specific to the verb *sɛw* of Mwotlap.

Finally, a very common construction treats temperature terms, figuratively, as agentive subjects. Indeed, some adjectives can be derived into nouns, either by reduplication (Section 3.2) or zero-conversion, and become compatible with noun determiners. Thus the adjective *məmji* converts into a noun *məmji*, which is commonly prefixed with the article, yielding *nɔ-məmji* ‘[N] cold, coldness’. The expression of cold vs. hot sensation is syntactically parallel to all non-controlled sensations such as hunger, thirst, sickness, sleepiness etc.: they involve an SVO construction, in which an NP referring to the feeling is the subject of a verb ‘do’ or ‘affect’ (François 2005: 136). In (21) from Mwotlap, the subject is *na-matmajye* ‘sleepiness’; in (22), it is the noun *nɔ-məmji* ‘[N] cold, coldness’, itself the result of a zero-conversion from the adjective.

(MTP.21) *na-matmajye m-ak nɔ*.
 ART-sleepiness PRF-do 1SG
 ‘I’m feeling sleepy.’ [lit. *Sleepiness is doing me*]

(MTP.22) *nɔ-mɔmjij* m-ak ki.
 ART-coldness PRF-do 3SG
 'She's (feeling) cold.' [lit. *Coldness is doing her*]

The nominalisation of 'hot' in Mwotlap is slightly different from that of 'cold', as it involves a compound noun *mahi-sew* (lit. 'hot place') based on *mahi* 'place' [cf. (14), (20)].

(MTP.23) *na-mahi-sew* m-ak ki.
 ART-place-hot PRF-do 3SG
 'She's (feeling) hot.' [lit. *Hot-place is doing her*]

The various case frames involving temperature predicates are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Case frames involving temperature predicates

| | <i>Subject</i> | <i>Predicate</i> | <i>Object</i> | <i>Frequency</i> |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| (7)–(10) | theme | TEMP. PRED. | — | common |
| (14)–(15) | dummy N 'place' | TEMP. PRED. | — | common |
| (20) | theme ~ 'place' | TEMP. PRED. | experiencer | rare: only Mwotlap <i>sew</i> 'hot' |
| (22)–(23) | TEMP. NOUN | verb 'do, affect' | experiencer | common |
| (13) | experiencer | TEMP. PRED. | — | rare: only Mwerlap <i>malas</i> 'feel.cold' |
| (17)–(18) | experiencer | verb 'feel' | embedded temp. clause | average |
| (25) | experiencer | verb 'feel' | TEMP. NOUN | rare |

5. Lexical semantics

This last section will explore the lexical contrasts and semantic extensions which characterise temperature terms.

After a look at etymologies, I will discuss the cases where more than two terms are found in the domain of 'cold'. Second, I will briefly discuss other terms belonging to the semantic domain of temperature. Finally, I will come back to the two basic terms for 'hot' and 'cold', and survey their semantic extensions.

5.1 Etymologies

Most of the forms in Table 2 are cognate across languages of the area. Apart from the innovative form *misij* in Lakon, of unknown origin, most of the words for 'cold' reflect

the Proto Oceanic etymon **mari(d)ri(ŋ)* (Ross, Pawley, Osmond 2003:217) with the same meaning, via a reduplicated form **mamadridri*. Hiw and Lo-Toga reflect a dissimilated variant **maladridri*, while Lemerig, Vera'a and Vurës reflect another form of dissimilation **mamayidri*. These forms illustrate sound change, and do not affect meaning.

The adjectives for 'hot' split up in two distinct cognate sets. Nine languages reflect an etymon **tutunu*, while five reflect **savu*. Both of these forms reflect historical innovations compared to the etymon **panas* which has been reconstructed (Ross et al. 2003:217) for Proto Oceanic 'hot'. Interestingly, these two innovations make reference to cooking practices. Thus, **tutunu* 'hot' results from the reduplication of **tunu* 'roast (food) on embers or fire' (Clark 2009:205). As for **savu*, it originally refers to the hot steam that is produced when steaming food in the earth oven (Clark 2009:176) – see Section 2.

5.2 Two words for 'cold'

Languages of northern Vanuatu normally have just one term for 'hot'. The only exception is Lemerig, which has *zizin* and *vævæt*; the two words were described as synonyms, and my corpus doesn't suggest any clear semantic contrast. The case is a bit different for the 'cold' domain, as the languages with two different terms (Table 2) seem to treat them differently. These are the object of the next pages.

5.2.1 Syntactic distinctions

Four languages have a dedicated noun for 'cold' or 'coldness', which is not derived from the adjective. These nouns reflect a Proto Oceanic etymon **malaso(ŋ)*, which is also reconstructed as a noun '[N] cold' (Ross, Pawley & Osmond 2003:218; Clark 2009:135).

When using a nominal construction such as (22) above, some languages can choose freely between two strategies, with no major difference in meaning. Thus Vurës can use its noun *malas*:

(VRS.24) ▷ *malas* ma=ⁿda nɔ
 ART coldness PRF=do 1SG
 'I am cold ~ I have fever.'

...but the same language can also easily resort to the faculty to convert (i.e. zero-derive) adjectives into nouns, and thus nominalise its adjective *mamiyin*:

(VRS.24') ▷ *mamiyin* ma=ⁿda nɔ
 ART cold PRF=do 1SG
 'I am cold ~ I have fever.'

The noun *malas* can be the object of a verb ‘feel’:

(VRS.25) na mʊ=ɾʊŋ ɔ malas.
 1SG PRF=feel ART coldness
 ‘I am cold.’ [lit. ‘I feel the cold’]

Besides its reference to plain cold temperature, the reflexes of **malasɔŋ* colexify⁵ ‘cold’ with ‘fever’ or ‘malaria’ – as in Vurës (24), or in Lo-Toga (26):

(LTG.26) niə na mʊɔ t' e nə məla.
 3SG PRET₁ sick PRET₂ OBL ART coldness
 ‘He was sick with fever.’

The two cognate sets **mamadridri* and **malasɔŋ* apparently target the same range of temperatures. Their only difference seems to be morphosyntactic, as they belong to two different parts of speech. Many languages have historically lost one of the two terms, presumably due to their semantic redundancy. As for the Mwerlap verb *malas* ‘feel cold’ illustrated in (13), it reflects a change of the root’s syntactic category from noun to verb – an innovation which is apparently specific to this language.

5.2.2 Semantic distinctions

Hiw is a different case: it has two distinct adjectives for ‘cold’, *məwmiw* and *maetit*, with differences in meaning. A possible description of the Hiw terms would involve a contrast between ‘subjectively cold’ (*məwmiw*) and ‘objectively cold’ (*maetit*).

The adjective *məwmiw* means ‘cold’ applying to the weather or to ambient temperature, but also to a body of water (sea, river) where someone bathes. The meaning here is the effect of the temperature on thermoregulation, whether in water or in air – that is, thermal comfort. The connotation of *məwmiw* can be positive (‘nicely cool’) or negative (‘freezing cold’) – an ambiguity which is sometimes solved by modifying adverbs.

(HIW.27) nə ŋ^wutə ne məwmiw. (*ne maetit)
 ART place STAT cold1
 ‘It (the weather) is cold.’ [whether nicely cool or unpleasantly cold]

(HIW.28) nə piyɔnə ne məwmiw tɪnniɛL. (*ne maetit)
 ART sea STAT cold1 appropriate
 ‘The seawater is nicely cool.’

(HIW.28³) nə piyɔnə ne məwmiw tɪɲ. (*ne maetit)
 ART sea STAT cold1 INTSF
 ‘The seawater is freezing cold.’

5. On the term *colexify*, i.e. ‘lexify (two or more meanings) with the same form’, see François (2008b).

Metonymically, *məwmɪw* as an attribute with ‘clothes’ means ‘light clothes’, i.e. ‘clothes that make one feel cooler’:

(HIW.29) *nə jɔjə məwmɪw* (**maetit*)
 ART clothes cold1
 ‘cold/cool/summer clothes’

The opposite phrase *nə jɔjə ttin* would refer to ‘warm clothes’ such as woolly jumpers – items which are seldom seen in Vanuatu, but occasionally mentioned.

By contrast, *maetit* means ‘cold’ in the TACTILE sense, as an inherent property of an object. An example of its use is when food meant to be served hot “gets cold” [cf. (8), (10)]:

(HIW.30) *nə təyov ne maetit pə.* (**ne məwmɪw*)
 ART pudding STAT cold2 now
 ‘The pudding is cold now (unsuitable for eating).’

The semantics of *məwmɪw* thus pertains to the domains of AMBIENT and PERSONAL-FEELING TEMPERATURE, whereas *maetit* is TACTILE. This may recall the contrast between, respectively, Japanese *samui* ‘cold [AMBIENT]’ and *tsumeta-i* ‘cold [TACTILE]’. However, the match is not perfect, because Japanese *samu-i*, which could indeed translate *məwmɪw* in (27), would be excluded from sentences like (28) or (29).

While they can be contrasted, the two adjectives of Hiw occur in free variation in a specific context: namely, when a food or drink is so cold that its consumption brings a cooling sensation, whether pleasant or not, to the whole body:

(HIW.31) *nɔkə ni nə mətu, ne maetit ~ məwmɪw tatə*Litə.*
 1SG drink ART coconut STAT cold2 cold1 suitable
 ‘I’m drinking a coconut, it is *nicely cool*.’

The two adjectives are not exactly synonymous here: while *maetit* describes the coconut juice as being objectively cold, *məwmɪw* describes its effect on the experiencer, in a way similar to English *refreshing*.

5.3 Other terms related to temperature

In sum, the languages of north Vanuatu have no more than two or three words that can, strictly speaking, be called temperature terms. In most cases, this involves a binary contrast between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’, with no further terms on the thermal scale. Worthy of notice, for example, is the absence of any term in the middle, equivalent to English *tepid* or *lukewarm*. Likewise, these languages have no lexical term to describe extreme temperatures (like *freezing* or *burning*) or nuances within the cold or hot domains (as English *cool* vs. *cold*, or *warm* vs. *hot*).

Rather than using other adjectives that would be in the same paradigm as the basic adjectives ‘hot’ and ‘cold’, most nuances on the scale are expressed by adverbs – i.e. modifiers of the predicate head. This is true of some moderating adverbs, such as Hiw *tɪnnɪsL* ‘appropriately’ in (28), *tatəsLitə* ‘suitably’ in (31), or Mwotlap *tusu* ‘a bit’ in (10). This is also true of intensifiers, such as Mwotlap *mɛh* ‘too much’ in (7), or Hiw *tnɪy* in (15) or (28’). As we saw in Section 3.2, reduplication alone can have an intensifying function – e.g. *sɛwsɛw* ‘very hot’ in (33) below. In addition, Mwotlap has lexically specific intensifiers for a large number of adjectives (François 2001: 266). The one for ‘cold’ is (*mɔmjij*) *mbelewat*, of unknown origin – it would be used to describe, for instance, some *very* cold water. The intensifier for ‘hot’ is (*sɛw*) *ɛvej* – which typically refers to red-hot (incandescent) stones in the earth oven, as in (9) above. Mwotlap *ɛvej* is cognate with Mota *vevera* ‘red-hot’, and ultimately with the root **wewela* ‘hot’ of Proto-Polynesian (>Tahitian *vera* ‘hot’, etc.).

Also indirectly related to the temperature domain would be a verb like Mwotlap *s(ɔ)kɔ̃ʷɔ* ‘scald’. The body part affected is either the subject of the verb used intransitively – as in (32) – or the object of a transitive construction, as in (33):

(MTP.32) *na-mni-k mɛ-skɔ̃ʷɔ*.
 ART-hand-1SG PRF-scald
 ‘I scalded my hands (with hot water).’

(MTP.33) *ni-mbi sɛwsɛw mɛ-skɔ̃ʷɔ na-ɣajmɛ-k*.
 ART-water hot~INTSF PRF-burn ART-tongue-1SG
 ‘I scalded my tongue with the tea.’ [lit. ‘the hot water scalded my tongue’]

Possibly related is the verb *s(ɛ)kɔ̃ʷɔ ɛŋ* ‘burn (skin) due to exposure to heat or sun’. The neighbouring language Mota has cognate verbs *sakɔ̃ʷo* ‘burn with heat, provoke a sensation of burning’ and *sakɔ̃ʷora* ‘scorch’ (Codrington & Palmer 1896:160).

Finally, the languages of the region also have rich lexicons in the domains of fire (light a fire; burn; glow; smoulder; flames; sparks; move fire from one place to another; slash-and-burn garden...) or of cooking (cook; fry; roast; bake; steam; manipulate hot stones; be cooked; etc.). These words, however, form a separate domain from the set of temperature words strictly speaking, and I will not detail them further. The same could be said of weather terms (rain; drizzle; haze; drought; wind; hurricane...) or other words which are only indirectly related to temperature (sweat; shiver; shade; etc.).

5.4 Semantic extensions of HOT and COLD

5.4.1 General comment

Let us now come back to the two adjectives ‘hot’ and ‘cold’, which are the only two (or three) temperature terms, strictly speaking, found in northern Vanuatu languages. As we saw in various examples, the reference of these two adjectives is both to TACTILE and to AMBIENT temperature. One may include PERSONAL-FEELING

temperature in their semantic content, except that, with the exception of (13) above, these terms are hardly ever used as predicates taking the experiencer as their subject (Section 4.2.3).

It would be pointless to define the semantic difference between HOT and COLD in terms of absolute temperature, since it is obviously bound to the context. Water at 26°C would be described as ‘warm/hot’ or ‘cool/cold’ depending on the outside temperature or the physical condition of the experiencer. Also context-dependent are the evaluative connotations which would be carried by these terms: neither ‘hot’ or ‘cold’ can be said to be intrinsically meliorative or pejorative in these languages. Simply, given the tropical weather of Vanuatu and its typically high temperatures, it is more frequent to hear people complain about the weather being ‘hot’ than the opposite; in such a context, the use of ‘cool/cold’ would have positive connotations – as in this Mwtolap example:

(MTP.34) γIN van hay mahı *məmjjj!*
 1inc:pl go sit place cold
 ‘Let’s go sit somewhere cold/cool!’ (i.e. shady)

As mentioned in the introduction, the two temperature adjectives display little in the way of semantic extension – especially in comparison with European languages, in which this domain is fertile in polysemies. Only two or three senses, other than strict temperature meanings, can be reported for each adjective of the pair.

5.4.2 *Fever*

First, a PERSONAL-FEELING predicate equivalent of English *X is (feeling) cold* – as in (22) above – may refer not only to the feeling of temperature strictly speaking, but also, by extension, to the sensation of intense shivering that accompanies fever. In the context of tropical Vanuatu, such a condition is basically synonymous with malaria:

(MTP.35) nɔ-məmjjj mɛ-wsɛy kɪ.
 ART-coldness PRF-shake 3SG
 ‘She has a strong (malaria) fever.’
 [lit. *Coldness is shaking her*]

In Mwtolap, this sort of feverish cold is sometimes distinguished from mere temperature statements by means of a compound *nɔ-məmjjj γɔm*, literally ‘sick coldness’:

(MTP.36) nɔ-məmjjj γɔm m-ak kɪ.
 ART-coldness sick PRF-do 3SG
 ‘She has (malaria) fever.’

Löyöp uses the reverse phrase *n-γom mamⁿdin*, lit. ‘cold sickness’:

(LYP.37) *n-γom mamⁿdin m-aŋ nø.*
 ART-sickness cold PRF-do 1SG
 ‘I have (malaria) fever.’

The language Lakon would express the same meaning with a similar phrase *misinⁿ ya lektey*, literally ‘strong coldness_[N]’:

(LKN.38) *misinⁿ ya lektey in ŋin na.*
 coldness STAT strong PRF affect 1SG
 ‘I have (malaria) fever.’

The notion of fever can be expressed via both the domain of COLD – due to the experience of the shivering person – and that of HOT – due to the external manifestation of fever for an outsider. Thus, ‘be feverish’ in Mwotlap is a form *k^wɪtsew*, itself a compound of *k^wɪt-* ‘head’ and *sew* ‘hot’:

(MTP.39) *titi nonum ki mu-su k^wɪt-sew.*
 baby your 3SG PRF-DIMIN head-hot
 ‘Your baby is a bit feverish.’ [lit. ‘a little hot-headed’]

Logical though it may be, this flip-flop between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ may occasionally sound odd when the two domains are being used in the same sentence – as in (40), taken from a story:

(MTP.40) *nɔ-mɔmjij γom n-ak nɔ a uu!*
 ART-coldness disease STAT-do 1SG INTSF EXCL
tak^wɪm^wɪ-k sewsew en!
 body-1SG hot~INTSF EXCL
 ‘Hey, I’m having a terrible fever, [lit. *a terrible COLD*]
 my body’s burning HOT!’

5.4.3 Scorching sensations

The term ‘hot’ – e.g. Mwotlap *sew* – also has other semantic extensions. Besides the temperature meaning, one common use is for spicy food:

(MTP.41) *nɛ-^mbep γuh nɛ-sewsew, aj!*
 ART-chilli this STAT-hot~INTSF EXCL
 ‘Oh my god, this chilli is super hot!’

The same word would be used for the physical sensation due to a burn or stinging pain, e.g. after an insect bite or contact with a stinging nettle tree (*Dendrocnide* sp.). Note the transitive use of the adjective here (cf. 20):

(MTP.42) nɔ ma-taŋ van na-hlat, mɛ-sɛw na-mni-k!
 1SG PRF-touch thither ART-nettle PRF-hot ART-hand-1SG
 ‘I touched a nettle tree, my hand’s *burning!*’
 [lit. ‘it’s heating my hand’]

In Mota, such senses are expressed with *sakp̄^wo* ‘provoke a burning sensation’ mentioned in Section 5.3.

5.4.4 Psychological senses

I have found three psychological extensions of ‘hot’, which are all rare in spontaneous speech.

One is the Mwotlap compound verb *ak sewsew* (or *ɣaley sewsew*) literally ‘make hot, warm s.th. up’. It is sometimes used to mean ‘encourage, cheer up s.o.’:

(MTP.43) ɣin sɔ ak sewsew iyɛ m̄ba-laklak.
 1inc:pl PROSP do hot~RESULT HUM:PL for-dance
 ‘Let’s go cheer up the dancers.’ [lit. ‘warm them up’]

(MTP.44) nɔ-hɔhɔle nonom ma-ɣaley sewsew nɔ.
 ART-speech your PRF-make hot~RESULT 1SG
 ‘Your words have comforted me/given me courage.’

The other compound is from the language Vurës: *nd̄od̄om tütün*, literally ‘think hot’. It refers to the state of mind of someone who is focused and determined to achieve their goal:⁶

(VRS.45) na ɣœvrü-n ruru inɛ, si ruru m̄=nd̄od̄om tütün
 ART house-POSS 3du this if 3du PRF=think hot
 aɪ, timiāk inɛ ni mi=k̄p̄^wit rɛn ti.
 OBL:ADV like this 3SG PRF=finish long.ago CTFC
 ‘That house of theirs, if only they had been serious [lit. *thought hot*] about it,
 at this stage it would have been finished long ago.’

The parallel phrase in Mota is *nom tutun* (‘think hot’), which Codrington’s dictionary glosses as ‘to be earnest’ (Codrington & Palmer 1896:221). Yet these examples are isolated: I have not found any other similar use of ‘hot’ elsewhere in northern Vanuatu.

Finally, ‘hot’ is sometimes associated with *anger* – as though one’s inner self were being burnt by the feeling of anger. While the metaphor is common in languages like English (Lakoff & Kövecses 1987), in Vanuatu it is relatively rare. As far as the

6. The sentence is from Hyslop-Malau (n.d.); the transcription, glosses and translation are mine.

Banks-Torres languages are concerned, the only case I am aware of is found in the dictionary of Mota (Codrington & Palmer 1896:160):

(MTA.46) na lolo-na we sak^ɸo.
 ART inside-3SG PRST scorch
 'He is hot with anger.' [lit. 'his mind is scorching']

It is common for northern Vanuatu languages to express strong feelings like anger with idioms or compounds derived from the root **lolo* 'inside, inner mind' (François 2013:205 sqq.). Depending on the language, *anger* will translate as '[mind] bad', '[mind] biting', '[mind] itchy' or '[mind] blowing strongly (like a hurricane)'. However, the Mota sentence in (46) is the only example in which anger is specifically linked to the semantic domain of heat.

This being said, the same semantic link is found in some related languages outside the focus area of this study. In Araki, a moribund language spoken further south in Vanuatu, the verb *lolokoru* 'be angry' is a compound of *lolo* 'inside, inner mind' and *koru* 'dry, desiccated, burnt by fire' (François 2002:265; 2008a).

Beyond their differences, the three psychological meanings have in common the association of HOT with energy and resolve in performing an action. The polysemies do not form a symmetrical system: that is, the opposite meanings – calm, weakness or laziness – are never explicitly associated with the domain of 'cold'.

5.5 A relative poverty in semantic extensions

No other significant semantic extension of HOT and COLD has been found in these Vanuatu languages, beyond the few and isolated cases just described. This is not just an artefact of limited data, as can be judged by the size of the text corpus, as well as the author's in-depth exposure to spoken conversation for long periods since 1997. Besides, a survey of various dictionaries from other Oceanic languages (whether from elsewhere in Vanuatu, or from New Caledonia, Polynesia, etc.) usually yields terse definitions for 'hot' and 'cold', with little polysemy reported anywhere.

This virtual absence of semantic extension for temperature terms deserves to be noted, as it stands in contrast with various other languages of the world for which such terms commonly integrate psychological or evaluative meanings, as described in other chapters of this volume. Besides, the contrast can be drawn also language-internally, by highlighting how these languages of Vanuatu have developed rich polysemies in various domains other than temperature. For example, whereas the contrast *hot-cold* remains mostly tied to its literal meaning, a pair of adjectives such as *heavy* vs *light* commonly takes over a wide array of metaphorical senses. The following is an excerpt from my Mwotlap dictionary (François, in prep.) for the adjective *dēw* 'heavy':

dēw [ndɪw] ADJ. heavy. *Ant.* **momya** 'light'.

- (1) heavy, weighty. • **Ne-vet gōh nē-dēw meh.** *This rock is too heavy.*
- (2) causing a feeling of fatigue or numbness, similar to the effects of carrying a heavy weight. • **Nēk yoŋteg na-taybē ni-dēw aē, tō nēk mitiy galsi aŋqōñ.** (narcotic effects of kava beverage) *You feel your body become heavy, which allows you to sleep well at night.*
- (3) (*metph*) inspiring awe and respect, *espec.* in the context of traditional society; *hence* imposing, grave, serious, solemn. • **Ige mōlmōl van la-halgoy a kem et lēs tamat qete: nē-dēw mi kemem, kem nē-dēmap so kem so hayveg van.** *When men used to gather together in their secret societies, we the non-initiated, were quite impressed [lit. it was heavy for us]: we felt too much awe to join in.* *Syn.* **map.**
- (4) (*topic, story+*) important, major, serious; of outstanding social or psychological significance. • **Nē-dēmdēm nan nē-dēw a nē-dēw.** *This is a very important topic.* • **Na-kaka t-aŋag gōh nē-dēw lē-vēnangēn.** *This myth*

is a major one in our culture. *Syn.* **liwo** 'big'.

- (5) (*artwork, style+*) of great aesthetic value, of impressive beauty (*vs.* **momya** 'lightweight, careless, slapdash'): grand, superb, awesome, magnificent, elegant, noble. • **Nok so mōk na-plakas van l-eh so kē n-ak dēw na-he.** *I wanted to add a few nice turns to the poem in order to make your ode even more majestic [lit. to make it heavier].*
- (6) accomplished, refined, elaborate, tasteful; artfully performed. • **Ige lōmlōmgep nen kēy laklak namuy en, et dēw galsi te.** *These young people have a way of dancing that is not very graceful [lit. not very heavy].*
- (7) (*word, phrase*) well phrased, elegant, refined; of a formal style, imbued with respect (*vs.* **vasaw-yeg** 'informal, casual'); *hence* idiomatic, proper. • **"Heleg" nē-dēw veteg "vēlēs".** *"Heleg" is a more formal word than "vēlēs".* • **Itōk, ba et dēw galsi te.** *(This sentence) is correct, but it's not very idiomatic [lit. not heavy enough].* *Syn.* **mutuw** 'idiomatic'.

The elaborate polysemies found around the notion 'heavy' contrast with the relative poverty of metaphorical extensions surrounding temperature terms. The following two entries illustrate again this point; even though they only exemplify one language, Mwotlap, they can be taken as a final synthesis for this whole case study.

momyiy [mɔmjij] ADJ (1) (*s.th.*) cool, cold in temperature. • **nē-bē momyiy** *cold water* • **Mahē no-momyiy.** (*ambient*) *It's cold.* *Ant.* **sew.**

- (2) (*esp*) (*hot food*) become cold, cool down. • **Nēk ukēg kē ni-momyiy.** *Leave it to cool.*

◇ N (**no-momyiy**) (1) cold, feeling of cold. • **No-momyiy m-ak no, nok so gom.** *I'm cold* [lit. *Cold is doing me*], *I'm going to be ill*. • **Awēē, no-momyiy ee!** *Oh my god, what a cold!* Ant. **mahēsew.**

(2) (*hence*) sensation of cold due to fever; fever. • **No-momyiy ni-wseg no.** [*the cold is shaking me*] *I'm shivering ~ I have fever.*

◆ **no-momyiy gom** N. lit. 'sick coldness': malaria: disease characterised by an intense feeling of cold. • **No-momyiy gom n-ak no a uu!** *Oh, I've got terrible malaria!* Cf. **gom** 'sick'.

[< **mama'riri*; POC **ma-(d)ridriŋ* 'cold']

sew [sɛw] ADJ Redup. **sewsew.** (1) (*s.th.*) warm, hot in temperature. • **Ne-gengen ne-sew leptō.** *The food is still hot.* • **Egoy n-ep, veg ne-sew.** *Beware the fire, it's hot.* • **Ōw ni-tintin hōw nen e, ne-sew a ne-sew evey!** *He took out the wild yams (from the fire), they were burning hot!* • **Na-lo ne-sew, ay!** *The sun's so hot!* • **Mahē ne-sew meh.** (*ambient*) *It's too hot here.* Intsf. **evey.**

◆ **nē-bē sewsew** N. lit. 'hot water': hot drink, a Western tradition now popular in the islands: *gen.* tea, *somet.* coffee, hot chocolate. • **Nē-bē sewsew**

tiple soqo na-ñye! *Don't burn yourself with your tea!* Syn. **ti;** See **bē.**

(2) (*rare*) hot due to fever. • **Taqmē-k sewsew en!** (*fever*) *My body's burning hot!* See **momyiy** 'cold'.

(3) [resultative serialisation; always reduplicated] (do V) so as to render ⟨s.th., s.o.⟩ hot; warm up, heat up. • **Nok so mīhil sewsew no van l-ep.** *I want to warm myself up (by standing) close to the fire.*

◆ **ak sewsew ~ galeg sewsew.** VT. (*metph*) lit. 'make hot': warm up ⟨s.o.⟩ with one's words; cheer up, encourage, comfort. • **No-hohole nōnōm m-ak sewsew no.** *Your words have comforted me.*

(4) (*chilli+*) pungent, spicy. • **Ne-bep gōh ne-sewsew, ay!** *This chilli is terribly hot!*

◇ VT (1) (*s.th.*) bring heat to ⟨s.th., s.o.⟩, overheat, burn. • **N-ep ni-sewsew nō-tōti gēvēg en.** *The fire was starting to catch at the apple tree.* • **Na-lo me-sew no.** *I'm being burnt by the sun.* Cf. **soqo** 'scald', **seqeñ** 'burn'.

(2) (*plant, medicine*) burn, irritate ⟨body part⟩. • **Na-hlat me-sew na-yñē-k.** *My leg is burning due to (contact with) a stinging nettle.* Syn. **gaygay.**

[< **sawu*; PNCV **savu(a)* 'steam, moist heat']

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