Organised Phonology Data

**Ninggirum (Ningerum, Ningerom, Kasiwa, Tedi) Language [[NXR]]**

**Ningerum – Western Province**

Trans New Guinea Phylum; Central and South New Guinea Stock; Ok Family

Population census: 3226 (1980)

Major villages: Wombon, Tengkim, Bikim, Minipon, Hukim, Tarkabits, Yongtau, Tundenghiatkwi, Derongo, Bankim

Linguistic work done by: SIL

Data checked by:

**Phonemic and Orthographic Inventory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Bilab</th>
<th>LabDen</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveo</th>
<th>Postalv</th>
<th>Retro</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Pharyn</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>p</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

/w/ voiced labial-velar approximant

/l/ alveolar lateral flap

<table>
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<th>Uvular</th>
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<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pen (or ben)</td>
<td>pen'</td>
<td>m men</td>
<td>'string bag'</td>
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<td>bim</td>
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<td>kema</td>
<td>'with'</td>
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<td>diibula</td>
<td>'jail'</td>
<td>om</td>
<td>'sago'</td>
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<tr>
<td>bap</td>
<td>'brother'</td>
<td>engmem</td>
<td>'let's do it'</td>
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<td>bya</td>
<td>'meat'</td>
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<td>hopkone</td>
<td>'think'</td>
<td>β vip</td>
<td>'cloud'</td>
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<td>ava</td>
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<td>'just now'</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>vye</td>
<td>'you (sg) hit her'</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ni nggirim (Ni ngerum, Ningeroem, Kasiwa, Tedi) OPD

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w  wem  'road'
    awii  'sky'
    -
    kwang  'pig'

t  ten  'there'
    itam  'knife'
    tat  'hand'
    tatmupten  'we washed it'

d  dam  'blood'
    nekaalodo  'I don't know'
    -
    tatmubden  'we washed (long ago)'

n  nong  'string'
    tani  'arm'
    bwemneip  'they will get them'
    on  'flying creature'

s  sani (or tani, tsani)  'arm'
    kasang  'diving goggles'
    Tarakbits  'village name'

l  lam  'blood'
    elang  'father'
    sikul  'school'
    blii  'styling'

Vowels

u
i

ɛ
ɔ

ı  im  'pandanus'
    kwandin  'four'
    ini  'food, yam'
    kwandyin  'I gave it to them'

ɛ  engmem  'let's do it'
    tek tek  'grass'
    ke  'this'
    kwiepqyega  'he shows you first'

ø  am  'house, place'
    bap  'brother'
    ka  'along'
    kwapyanan  'I will give you it'

ø  om  'sago'
    don  'leg'
    mo  'only'
    myon  'afternoon'

ɔ  up  'pitpit'
    bwun  'she gets them'
    du  'her'
    nup  'we (incl)'
    kuwun  'she puts it'

u  ii  'egg'
    hiip  'scent'
    awii  'sky'
Suprasegmentals (tone, stress, length)

Stress is non phonemic - it generally falls on the last, or second and fourth syllables of a word, except that it preferentially goes to syllables with long vowels or diphthongs. Vowel length is important, as the above examples show. Some vowels are nasalized, mostly next to /h/, but this is not consistent. Nasalization is not written because it occurs infrequently, even though it is not predictable.

Tone steps may distinguish meaning in some homonyms, but tone does not appear to be important.

Syllable Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>a.ve</td>
<td>'okari nut'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>'flying creature'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VV</td>
<td>aa</td>
<td>'arrow'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVC</td>
<td>ein</td>
<td>'I hit him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV</td>
<td>ne.laom</td>
<td>'with me'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVV</td>
<td>kaa.mi</td>
<td>'body hair'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVC</td>
<td>bya</td>
<td>'meat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>blii</td>
<td>'staying'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVC</td>
<td>dong</td>
<td>'garden'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVVC</td>
<td>beip ten</td>
<td>'they stayed'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CCVC  kwip:ten 'they hit you (sg)'
CCVVC  hwoep 'you fell(trees)'

Conventions: Phonological

Plosives are always voiceless unreleased word final. Intervocically, word final /k/ becomes [ɣ]/ [g], /p/ /b/ becomes [β]/ /β/ <v> and /t/ becomes [ʃ]/ <l> (or [ʃ]/ <r>). When a suffix beginning with a vowel is added. However, /b/ /t/ and /g/ also occur intervocically in other places: ok 'water', ogep 'with water'; epkat 'clothes', epkalep 'with clothes'. Phonetically, free fluctuation between phonemes has been often observed (even for individual speakers), especially between /t/ /l/ and /v/ /w/, and /β/ /w/, as long as context makes the meaning clear.

Voiceless plosives word medial or initial are aspirated, except for the [ts] sequence which is considered an allophone of /t/ in the dialects in which it occurs.

It appears that the <ngg> sequence is sometimes an allophone of /g/. I consider this to be the case for /qwe:lo/ /qwelɔ/ nggwelo 'down there'. It would otherwise contain an CCVC syllable. However, the /ŋ/ and /g/ also occur in sequence as separate phonemes, but not within one syllable.

/β/ and /v/ appear to be as different phoneme in some dialects, but the same in most. However they are contrasted in some loan words: laem 'lamp', Roy 'man's name'.
Some dialects have a form of vowel harmony, though only with certain words where the meanings cannot be confused.

Conventions: Orthographic

The two allophones of /b/ are written consistently: <b> word initially, between vowels, or before a voiced plosive, <p> word or syllable finally.

The velar nasal /ŋ/ is written with the digraph <ŋ>. Testing is needed to see if this causes reading difficulties at the beginning of words or with combinations that have the /ŋ/ phonemes together, in contrast to the /ng/ phonemes: /əlimninggu/  'week', /nŋol/  'dog'.

The [ŋ] allophone of /g/ is written as <ngg> because people prefer to write words as sounded; /qwelɔ/ <ngwelɔ> 'down there'.

<w> and <y> are sometimes written where they may not be the actual phonemes. This is done to show stress and syllabification, which are not always predictable. Within words, they are written consistently at the beginning of a stressed syllable, or in vowel sequences to show syllable breaks.

The /l/ phoneme is consistently represented as <l> rather than <r>, because that is the preference of the majority, and some dialects only pronounce it as [l].

Transcription of a recorded passage

/ meneb kemenejeb ma biheje nuten dug be || one: kazkoŋ m̪o beten || m̪i k̪e m̪o bwe: him m̪i m̪ejet || him m̪i m̪i b̪i: ken kwen kemenej b̪iunuten || b̪iunoten kob kwen m̪i k̪e m̪o b̪i: b̪i: kwen n̪i ten kwen || kwen do m̪oweten || m̪oweten kob kemenej kwen do n̪uten || n̪ute kwen do m̪oweten || do m̪ene: kwit m̪a b̪u: ke || kwen do m̪owen t̪e menen || t̪e be m̪ene ken̪i m̪enon m̪an̪on m̪ulemule m̪o || bon̪e n̪uten || ban̪e b̪u: m̪o genelone m̪enon m̪o be m̪oweten || t̪e ben m̪enon kwen || m̪o m̪a enen de̪uwob kwen || do de̪u̦ubten || k̪o m̪o /
'Just holding my string bag and bush knife, I went to the garden. I went to find taro and yams I had planted there. They were growing there and my bush knife fell down. It fell so it was hidden among the yams, and I bumped the sharp edge. I bumped the knife, so it cut me. It cut me now so I came back, just cutting some sugar cane and coming back to the house. I came back to the house and then got some medicine. I got it and they fastened a bandage on me and I came back to the house. When I came to the house we were eating and then we slept. That is all.'

**Bibliography**