NII VERBS

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PREFACE

The Nii people number approximately 8,500 and live in the Wahgi Valley of the Western Highlands District. The language area is bound by Kudjip on the East and the Tuman River on the West.

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KEY

First Person Singular – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – 1s

Second Person Singular – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – 2s

Third Person Singular – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – 3s

First Person Dual – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – 1d

Second and Third Person Dual – – – – – – – – – – – – – 2/3d

First Person Plural – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – 1pl

Second and Third Person Plural – – – – – – – – – – – 2/3pl

Assertive Mode –As

Completive –Comp

Continuative –Cont

Contrary to Fact – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –CtoF

Future –Fut

Immediate Future – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –IFut

Imperative –Imp

Jussive Mode –Jus

Medial Different Subject – – – – – – – – – – – – – –MeDS

Medial Same Subject – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – MeSS

Near Completive – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – NComp

Negative – Neg

Greeting –Greet

NII VERBS

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III. Verb Stem and Allomorphic Variation

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ŊII VERBS

I. Definition of Verbs

Verbs are words that are the minimal exponents of the predicate slot and as such are the only obligatory items in a clause. All verbs except those marked by Medial Different Subject, Medial Same Subject, and Contrary to Fact affixation may occur as exponents of simple sentences. These three occur as clause exponents in sentences where they are dependent on the presence of another clause.

II. Classification of Verbs

Verbs are classified according to the affixation of the first person singular Completive and the singular and plural Continuative tense-subject-aspects.

III. Verb Stems and Allomorphic Variations

The basic verb stem is defined as the stem that occurs with ∅ zero affixation which is the Imperative singular in Class I, II, and III, and the first person singular of the Continuative aspect of Class IV verbs. These verb stems stand alone as meaningful words.

The following sets out the morphonemic rules for determining Ŋii verb allostems.

CLASS I VERB STEMS

The basic stem vowel <u>o</u> ⟶ <u>u</u> in the Near Completive, Completive and Future aspects.

<u>no-nd</u>

eat‾1s Cont

'I am eating'

<u>nu-r</u>

eat‾1s NComp

'I ate' (a week ago)

<u>ago-nd</u>

give‾1s Cont

'I am giving'

<u>ngu-nj</u>

give‾1s Comp

'I gave' (just completed)

The basic stem vowel <u>o</u> where this constitutes the complete stem, it is replaced by <u>w</u> when followed by stem initial <u>a</u> in the Immediate Future and Medial Different Subject.

<u>o</u> + <u>amb</u>   ⟶   <u>wamb</u>

come‾1sIFut   'I'm ready to come'

The basic stem final vowel <u>o</u> is lost preceding suffix initial <u>a</u> in the Immediate Future and Medial Different Subject aspects.

<u>no+amb</u>   ⟶   <u>namb</u>

eat-1s IFut   'I'm ready to eat'

<u>to+amb</u>   ⟶   <u>tamb</u>

hit-1s IFut   'I'm ready to hit/beat'

The stem vowel a —→ e in the Near Completive, Future, and Completive aspects.

kan-nd   kenj

see-1s Cont   see 1s Comp

'I am seeing'   'I saw'

ak-nim   ek-rim

dig-3s Cont   dig-3s NComp

'He is digging'   'He dug' (a week ago)

Class I verb stems with Negative suffixes

The stem vowel e —→ i with first order Negative suffixes.

pend-nd   pind-na-nd

put-1s Cont   put-neg-1s Cont

'I am putting'   'I am not putting'

meng-nd   ming-na-nd

carry-1s Cont   carry-neg-Cont.

'I am carrying'   'I am not carrying'

The stem vowel a —→ i with Negative suffixes except when a is word initial, then a —→ e.

ka-nd

see-1s Cont

'I am seeing'

ki-na-nd

see-neg-1s Cont.

'I am not seeing'

tang-ind

pick-1s Cont

'I am picking'

ting-ne-nj

pick-neg-1s Comp

'I didn't pick'

ak-nd

dig-1s Cont

'I am digging'

ek-na-nd

dig-neg-1s Cont

'I am not digging'

The Class I verb stem pu- 'to go', has a zero allostem occurring with first and third person singular subject and first dual and first plural Future affixes.

pu-nd

go-1s Cont

'I am going'

∅-bii

go-1s Fut

'I will go'

∅-ba

go-3s Fut

'He will go'

∅-bil

go-1d Fut

'We (2) will go'

∅-bin

go-1pl Fut

'We will go'

Class I Verb stem er 'to do, make, effect' loses stem final consonant -r with negatives and Continuative, Distant Completive,

Completive, Contrary to Fact and second person singular of Future
aspects.

<div style="text-align:center">

er-nd   ⟶   end

do-1s Cont   'I am doing'

er-nji   ⟶   enjii

do-2s Fut   'You will do'

er-lamb   ⟶   elamb

do-1s CtoF   'I would do...'

</div>

CLASS II VERB STEMS

The stem vowel o → u in the Near Completive, Future, Completive,
Immediate Future, Contrary to Fact and Medial Different Subject
aspects.

pol-t   pul-t

write-1s Cont   write-1s Comp

'I am writing'   'I wrote'(a week ago)

tol-t   tul-s

tear down-1s Cont.   tear down-1s Comp

'I am tearing down'   'I tore down'

The stem vowel a⟶e in the Future and Completive aspects.

kal-t
cook-1s Cont
'I am cooking'

kel-s
cook-1s Comp
'I cooked'

tal-t
plant-1s Cont
'I am planting'

tel-mbil
plant-1s Fut
'I will plant'

The stem vowel a⟶i in the Contrary to Fact, Immediate Future, Medial Different Subject, and Medial Same Subject aspects.

kal-t
cook-1s Cont
'I am cooking'

kil-il-amb
cook-1s CtoF
'I would have cooked'

tal-t
plant-1s Cont
'I am planting'

til-amb
plant-1s IFut
'I am ready to plant'

The consonant stem final ḷ⟶l when preceded by dentals and velar stops in the Completive, Future, Near Completive, Medial Same Subject and the Negatives.

poḷ-ø
write-2s Imp
'You write!'

pul-s
write-1s Comp
'I wrote'

tal-∅

plant-2s Imp

'You plant!'

tel-k

plant-3 Pl NComp

'They planted'(before)

The consonant stem final **l** ⟶ **lt** in the singular Near Completive, and Completive.

kal-∅

cook-2s Imp

'You cook!'

kal-tun

cook-3s NComp

'He cooked'

tul-∅

weave mat-2s Imp

'You weave mat!'

tul-tun

weave mat-2s Cont

'You are weaving mat'

CLASS III VERB STEMS

The stem vowel **o** ⟶ **i** in the Near Completive, Future, Completive, Contrary to Fact, and Imperative Negative.

or.pe-∅

sleep-2s Imp

'You sleep!"

or.pi-r

sleep-1s NComp

'I slept'(before)

or.pe-l

sleep-1s Cont

'I am sleeping'

or.pi-mbii

sleep-1s Fut

'I will sleep'

CLASS IV VERB STEMS

The stem vowel o ⟶ u in the Near Completive, Future, Completive, Immediate Future, Contrary to Fact, and Imperative.

mol-ø
be/stay-1s Cont
'I am staying'

mul-ur
be/stay-1s NComp
'I stayed'(before)

mol-up
be/stay-1s NeSS
'I staying'

mul-mbil
be/stay-1s Fut
'I will stay'

The stem consonant ł ⟶ l when preceded by dentals and velar stops in the Near Completive, Future, Completive, and Negatives.

mul-pul
be/stay-2d NComp
"We two stayed'

mul-kul
be/stay-3d NComp
'They two stayed'

mul-um
be/stay-3s Comp
'He stayed'

mul-njung
be/stay-3Pl Comp
'They stayed'

The stem consonant velar lateral ł ⟶ l alveolar lateral in the singular Near Completive when the allosuffixes

t, tun, tum occur.

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mul-ur

be/stay-1s NComp

'I stayed' (before)
</div>

<div align="center">

mul-t

be/stay-1s NComp

'I stayed' (before)
</div>

<div align="center">

mul-rum

be/stay-3s NComp

'He stayed' (before)
</div>

<div align="center">

mul-tum

be/stay-3s NComp

'He stayed' (before)
</div>

4. Verb Affixation

There are four orders of affixes on the verb stems: negative, tense-subject-aspect, mode and greeting.

4.1. The Negative:

The first order negative affix ⟨-ner⟩ is morphologically determined according to the Tense-Subject-Aspect affix which marks the verb and is phonologically determined according to the syllable structure of the stem and with certain tense-subject-aspect suffixes according to the initial consonant of the suffix.

1ST ORDER NEGATIVE SUFFIXES

	CONT	D.COMP	COMP	C.TOF.	N.COMP	FUT	MeDS	IFUT	MeSS	IMP
Class I	-na	-na	-ne	-ne	-ner	-ner	-ner	-ner	-nar	-nar
Class II	- a	- a	- e	- e	- er	- er	- er	- er	- ar	- ar
Class III	-na	-na	-ne	-ne	-ner	-ner	-ner	-ner	-nar	-nar
Class IV	- a	- a	- e	- e	- er	- er	- er	- er	- ar	- ar

MORPHOLOGICALLY DETERMINED ALLOMORPHS

The Class I and III suffixes are morphologically determined allomorphs.

The negative suffix -nene freely alternates with -ne in the Contrary to Fact condition aspect of Class I and III verb stems.

nu-ne-lang　　　～　　　nu-nene-lang

eat-neg-3s CtoF　　　　　eat-neg-3s CtoF

'He would eat'　　　　　　'He would eat'

PHONOLOGICALLY DETERMINED ALLOMORPHS

The Class II and IV suffixes are allomorphs appearing without initial -n following a stem final consonant.

pul-er-amb

write-neg-1s IFut

mul-a-b

be/stay-neg- 1s NCom?

'I didn't stay' (before)

4.2. Tense-Subject-Aspect

The tense-subject-aspect is the second order affix. This includes the person and number of the subject as well as tense or aspect concepts. These are grouped together as one suffix for the reason that they seem to be inseperable. This suffix is optionally affixed to the verb stem.

no-na-nd

eat-neg-1s Cont

'I am not eating'

A sub-class of Class I verbs have a alternating Future First Person Singular Tense-Subject-Aspect suffix.

nu-mbui

eat-1s Fut

'I will eat'

nu-mbi

eat-1s Fut

'I will eat'

tuk-mbui

chop-1s Fut

'I will chop'

tuk-mbi

chop-1s Fut

'I will chop'

TENSE-SUBJECT-ASPECT AFFIXATION

	SINGULAR			DUAL		PLURAL	
	1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd & 3rd	1st	2nd & 3rd
IMP.		I —∅ II,IV —i III —∅			I —i II,IV —ei III —i		I —i II,IV —ei III —i
COMP.	—nj	—n	—n	—njpV‡	—njVngV‡	—njpVn	—njVng
NCOMP.	—r	—rVn	—rVm	—pV‡	—kV‡	—pVn	—k
DCOMP.	—‡	—‡Vn	—‡Vn	—‡VmbV‡	—‡VmbV‡	—‡VmVn	—‡VmVn
CONT.	I —nd II,IV —∅ III —‡	I —n II,IV—n III —‡Vn	I —nVn II,IV—Vn III —‡Vn	I—nVmbV‡ II,III,IV —VmbV‡	I —nVmbV‡ II,III,IV —VmbV‡	I —nVmVn II,IV—VmVn III—VmVn	I —nVmVn II,IV—VmVn III—VmVn
IFUT.	—amb	—an	—ang‡‡	—ambl‡	—angl‡	—amin	—angin
FUT.	I —mbui II,III,IV —mbi	—nji	—mba	—mbV‡	—ngV‡	—mVn	—ngi
NeSS	—p	—kVn	—pV	—pV‡	—kV‡	—pVn	—k
NeDS	—amb	—an	—ang	—ambi‡	—angi‡	—amin	—angin
CtoP	—V‡amb	—V‡an	—V‡ang	—V‡ambi‡	—V‡angi‡	—V‡amin	—V‡angin

The following ordered rules apply to the Tense-Subject-Aspect suffixes on the suffix chart.

RULE 1

When a velar lateral ł final stem is followed by the suffix -nj, the suffix becomes -s and no vowel is added between stem and suffix.

muł-nj   ———————————→   muls

stem-1s Comp

'I stayed'

puł-nj   ———————————→   puls

stem-1s Comp

'I wrote'

RULE 2

When a velar lateral final stem is followed by the variant suffix -t there is no addition of vowel between stem and suffix.

poł-t   ———————————→   pol-t

stem-1s Cont.

'I am writing'

kał-ł   ———————————→   kal-t

stem-1s Cont.

'I am cooking'

RULE 3

Then the consonant final stem is followed by a consonant
or consonant cluster suffix (other then those in Rules 1 and
2) a vowel is prefixed to the affix according to the following
phonological rules.

a. Following front and central stem vowels prefix -i-
   to the affix.

   meng + nd ——————→ mengind
   carry-1s Cont
   'I am carrying'

   ang + p ——————→ angip
   stand-1s MeSS
   'I standing....'

b. Following back stem vowels, prefix -u- to the affix

   tuk + nd ——————→ tukund
   chop-1s Cont
   'I am chopping'

   mob + p ——————→ mobup
   stay-1s MeSS
   'I staying....'

RULE 4

When the stem is followed by a consonant initial affix, the affix vowels are determined according to the following phonological rules.

a. Following the front and central stem vowels, suffix high vowel $\rightarrow$ -i.

        meng – pVn $\longrightarrow$ mengpin

        carry-1pl MeSS

        'We carrying....'

        or.pe – iVₐnVn $\longrightarrow$ or.pebiᵢmin

        sleep-1pl DComp

        'We always slept'(before)

b. Following back stem vowels suffix high vowels -u.

        tuk – njVng $\longrightarrow$ tuknjung

        chop-3pl Comp

        'We chopped'

        mob – pVn $\longrightarrow$ mobpun

        stay-1pl MeSS

        'We staying....'

RULE 5

When the first vowel of a suffix is a central vowel the final vowel becomes -i.

or.pe-langVn   ⟶   or.pilangin

sleep-3pl CtoF

'They would be sleeping...'

pol-amVn   ⟶   pulamin

write-1pl MeDs

'We being ready to write...'

po-amin-wa   ⟶   paminwa

go-1pl IFut-Hort

'We can go'

4.3. MODE

Mode is the third order of suffix.

4.3.1. Jussive

Jussive is similar to the Imperative but less emphatic and is rather a polite form of Imperative. The suffix -i co-occurs with the zero Imperative. If the Imperative affix is -i , the Jussive mode will be zero.

mul-er-∅-i   ⟶   muleri

stay-neg-2sImp-Jus

'You must not stay!'

o-ner-∅-i   ⟶   oneri

come-neg-2sImp-Jus

'You must not come!'

mul-∅-i   ⟶   muli

stay-2s Imp-Jus

'You must stay'

4.3.2. Hortative

The Hortative Mode expresses a wish to be obeyed. The Hortative suffix -wa follows the Tense-Subject-Aspect suffix and is subdivided into two modes: Request and Confirmatory.

a. Hortative Request

The Hortative Request mode requests an action to be undertaken or be confirmed occuring only with the Immediate Future aspect.

no-amb-wa   ⟶   nambwa

eat-1sIFut-Hort

'May I eat/Let me eat'

po-amin-wa   ⟶   paminwa

go-1pl IFut-Hort

'May we go/Let us go!'

b.   Hortative Confirmatory – The Hortative Confirmatory mode expresses a polite reply to the request made and occurs with the Imperative aspect.

no-∅-wa   ⟶   nowa

eat- 2sImp-Hort

'Alright you eat!'

p-ei-wa   ⟶   peiwa

go-3pl Imp-Hort

'Alright, you all go!'

4.3.3. Assertive Mode

This mode expresses a fact and that there is a considerable amount of emotion involved by the speaker. This mode -iba suffix is used in conversation, usually an answer to a question.

no-na-nd-iba   nonandiba

eat-neg-1s Cont-As

'Of course, I am not eating'

pii-nd-ila   piindila

know-1s Cont-As

'Of course I know!'

4.4. Greeting

The fourth order suffix expresses greeting when a person traveling meets some one or when a person is coming towards you. It expresses a polite Greeting and is used in the second person singular and dual, and the second and third person plural of the Imperative aspect.

o-∅-i-yo   ciyo

come-2s Imp-Jus-Greet

'Oh, you are coming/Good day!'

mui-∅-ei-yo   muieiyo

stay-3pl Imp-Jus-Greet

'Oh! You all are staying/ Goodbye'

or.p-∅-i-yo   or.piyo

sleep-2s Imp-Jus-Greet

'Oh, You sleep/Goodnight'