Hannah S. Sarvasy

Non-spatial setting in Nungon

Abstract: The Finisterre-Huon Papuan language Nungon, like related languages, shows fusion of tense marking with number marking. Nungon is remarkable among Finisterre-Huon languages for an aspectual distinction conflated with evidentiality, and for the development of a formally marked realis Remote Future tense inflection with a formally unmarked irrealis counterpart. This paper presents the entire Nungon verbal inflectional system, including tense, aspect, status, subject and object indexing, referent tracking, and evidentiality.

Keywords: Nungon language, Finisterre-Huon, tense, aspect, modality

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1 Background on Nungon

Nungon is a Papuan language belonging to the Finisterre-Huon (FH) language group and spoken by about 1000 people in the highest inhabited part of the Uruwa River valley on the northern slopes of the Saruwaged Mountains, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea.¹

The upper Uruwa River valley forms an oval-shaped dialect continuum (Sarvasy 2013c). While each of 11 villages has a unique dialect, the form of the question word ‘what’ is seen as diagnostic of broader dialect boundaries within the valley. This form ranges from *nungon* to *nuon* to *yanu* to *yau*. Four village communities – Kotet, Yawan, Towet, and Worin – are said to speak Nungon; two – Mitmit and Mup – speak Nuon, and the five lower Uruwa village communities are divided between speakers of Yanu and Yau. This paper draws on nine months of linguistic fieldwork based in Towet village.

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Hannah S. Sarvasy: Department of Linguistics, 3125 Campbell Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1543, USA. E-mail: sarvasy@post.harvard.edu

Towet and Yawan are the only village-lects within the Uruwa language area that do not have glottal stops as realizations of the phoneme /k/ word-finally. Towet Nungon has 15 contrasting consonant phonemes: /p t k b d g β m n ŋ f h s r j/ and six contrasting vowels: /i u e o a ɔ/. Stops are unreleased syllable-finally. Vowel length is contrastive, and long vowels in Nungon often correspond to vowel-consonant-vowel sequences in other related languages, such as Nukna *rahán* ‘eye’ and Nungon *daan* eye’ (Sarvasy 2013b). In the practical orthography developed by an SIL team in the lower Uruwa River valley in the late 1980s, the velar nasal is represented with the bigram /ng/ and the mid rounded back vowel [o] is represented as /ö/, as opposed to the lower [ɔ], represented as /o/. The bilabial fricative [β] is written as /w/.

As in other FH languages (McElhanon 1973: 6), Nungon phonological words may only end in a vowel, a nasal, or an unreleased voiceless stop. Intervocalic spirantization of stops is common (Sarvasy 2014).

Like other FH languages (McElhanon 1973, inter al.), Nungon is a primarily-suffixing, verb-final language with clause-chaining. A clause chain comprises one or more medial clauses with minimally-inflected medial verb predicates, followed by a single final clause with fully-inflected final verb predicate. A medial clause can also constitute a full utterance in its own right. Final clauses may be coordinated (Sarvasy 2014).

Nungon final verbs comprise the verb root followed by a tense or reality status suffix, which is followed by an S/A person/number suffix that indexes the person and number of the verb’s subject argument. A closed class of 13 transitive verbs also bear a prefix before the verb root that references the person and number of the verb’s object argument. The tense suffixes differ in form based on the morpho-phonological class of the verb root; the forms that occur with the most common morpho-phonological class, the H-class, are in Table 1.

Table 1: Tense suffixes, H-class verbs

	Singular	Dual	Plural
Remote Past	-go		
Near Past	-wa	-∅	
Present	-ha	-wa	
Near Future	-wangka	-rangka	-nangka
Remote Future	-i	-ri	-ni

As in Awara, Ma Manda, and Nek, most of the Nungon tense and reality status suffixes index number of the verb’s subject argument (see Sarvasy forthcoming).

Because number is marked in both the tense suffix and the final S/A person/number suffix, number marking in the tense suffix is almost always redundant. The exception is in the Remote Future first person dual and plural, because those subject agreement suffixes have the same form. Table 2 shows the S/A person/number suffixes that follow the tense suffixes in final verbs.

Table 2: Subject agreement suffixes

	Singular	Dual	Plural
1	-t	-mok, -n (RF)	-mong, -n (RF)
2	-rok	-morok	-ng
3	-k		

2 Verb classes

Nungon verbs may be divided into classes based on verb root morphology and inflectional behavior, and based on transitivity. The transitivity-related classes do not coincide with the morpho-phonological classes.

2.1 Morpho-phonological verb classes

In Nungon, the phonological structure of verb roots is more constrained than that of nouns. Verb roots are rarely longer than two syllables (in fact, the only example of a simple predicate verbal root with more than two syllables is *indongo*- ‘stand up,’ which most likely historically comprised a separate word *in* and the verb ‘go,’ *ongo*-). Verb roots must end in either a vowel, the consonant /n/, or the consonant /t/. There seems to be no semantic or transitivity-related basis for the different endings.

Nungon verbs with roots that end in vowels and those with roots that end in consonants constitute two overarching morpho-phonological classes. The two groups receive different forms of many inflectional suffixes. Verbs with vowel-final roots add a final velar nasal /ng/ to the root to allow it to function in dependent forms, while the bare root of consonant-final verbs stands alone in these contexts. Consonant-final roots lack the ability to form ‘participles,’ a type of deverbal nominalization that reduplicates the final vowel of a vowel-final root.

Within the vowel-final verb class, several sub-classes can be analyzed. These sub-classes vary in whether a ‘ghost’ consonant occurs in some forms of the verb root, as well as in the forms of the tense suffixes that follow the verb root.

Within the vowel-final verb class, there are five main subdivisions, called here H-class, P-class, T-class, NG-class, and Ø-class.

The consonant-final class includes one verb, *it-* ‘be,’ which features irregular root vowel alternations under inflection. Otherwise, all consonant-final verb roots – both those ending in /n/ and those ending in /t/ – take the same forms of the succeeding tense suffixes.

2.1.1 The H-class

This class, named for the /h/ that occurs in the Present singular and Immediate Imperative inflections, contains by far the most members of all morpho-phonological verb classes, covering many semantic domains. About half of all verbs in the lexicon – 77 of 148 – belong to the H-class.

Sample members:

<i>oo-</i>	‘descend’ (intransitive)
<i>öö-</i>	‘ascend’ (intransitive)
<i>di-</i>	‘burn’ (S=O ambitransitive)
<i>y-andi-</i>	‘show to s.o.’ (ditransitive)

Table 3 shows the H-class verb *na-* ‘eat’ inflected for all tenses.

A single H-class verb, *omo-* ‘die,’ has /e/ in the Near Past paradigm, like consonant-final verbs. Two H-class verbs, *i-no-* ‘tell’ and *i-mo-* ‘give to,’ behave like Ø-class verbs in the Near Past.

When nominalized, all H-class verbs take a suffix *-k*. This form is usually reduplicated, so that ‘eating’ is *na-k~na-k*. A second nominalized ‘participle’ form occurs for many H-class verbs: this involves the verb root with *-ng* (making the Dependent form), followed by *-gVng*, where *V* is the same vowel as the final vowel of the verb root. This form is not used for *na-* ‘eat,’ but occurs with *oo-* ‘descend’ and *öö-* ‘ascend,’ among others: *oo-ng-gong* ‘descending,’ *öö-ng-göng* ‘ascending.’

2.1.2 The P-class

This class has only six full members in the variety of Nungon spoken in Towet village. P-class vowel-final verb roots behave like H-class verb roots in the Near Past, Present non-singular, and Near and Remote Future singular. These are the inflections in which the tense suffix is either null or begins with the voiced bilabial fricative or a vowel.

Table 3: H-class verb inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Remote Past	<i>na-go-t</i>	<i>na-go-rok</i>	<i>na-go-k</i>	<i>na-go-mok</i>	<i>na-go-morok</i>	<i>na-go-mong</i>	<i>na-gu-ng</i>
Near Past	<i>na-wa-t</i>	<i>na-wa-rok</i>	<i>na-wa-k</i>	<i>na-Ø-mok</i>	<i>na-Ø-morok</i>	<i>na-Ø-mong</i>	<i>na-i-ng</i>
Present	<i>na-ha-t</i>	<i>na-ha-rok</i>	<i>na-ha-k</i>	<i>na-wa-mok</i>	<i>na-wa-morok</i>	<i>na-wa-mong</i>	<i>na-wa-ng</i>
Near Future	<i>na-wangka-t</i>	<i>na-wangka-rok</i>	<i>na-wangka-k</i>	<i>na-rangka-mok</i>	<i>na-rangka-morok</i>	<i>na-nangka-mong</i>	<i>na-nangka-ng</i>
Remote Future	<i>na-i-t-ma</i>	<i>na-i-rok-ma</i>	<i>na-i-k-ma</i>	<i>na-ri-n-ma</i>	<i>na-ri-morok-ma</i>	<i>na-ni-n-ma</i>	<i>na-ni-ng-ma</i>

Everywhere else in the final verb inflection paradigms – i.e. before stop-initial tense suffixes – these verbs gain a consonant /p/ after the verb root, which induces additional changes in the forms of the following tense suffixes. Table 4 shows the P-class verb *e-* ‘come’ inflected for all tenses.

Beyond the six core P-class verbs, there is some spillage between this class and other morpho-phonological classes. Certain H-class verbs can be inflected as either a P-class verb or an H-class verb, with no apparent difference in meaning. Some people describe this as dialect mixing. Indeed, village-lects differ in whether a given cognate verb is P-class or H-class.

	‘bathe’	‘happen, emerge’
Towet village dialect	<i>guo-</i> (H-class)	<i>öngkot-</i> (consonant-final)
Worin village dialect	<i>guo-</i> (P-class)	<i>hönggo-</i> (P-class)

One verb, *wet-* ‘beat,’ which has root forms that are suppletive for object person/number (section 2.2.1), behaves as a consonant-final verb when its O argument is singular, but as a P-class verb when its O argument is non-singular. Compare *net-ta-k* ‘s/he/it beats me’ with *nisop-pa-k* ‘s/he/it beats us’ and *get-ta-t* ‘I beat you (SG)’ with *kaap-pa-t* ‘I beat you (NSG).’ This is similar to Ma Manda ‘hit’ (Pennington, this volume).

Similarly, the verb *to-/yoo-* ‘pick up, take’ has root forms that are suppletive for object number. The form used with singular objects, *to-*, is homophonous with the verb *to-* ‘do’ and inflects as an Ø-class verb (section 2.1.4). But the stem used with non-singular objects, *yoo-*, inflects like a P-class verb.

All P-class verbs take a suffix *-p* when nominalized. Thus, ‘coming’ is *e-p~e-p*. ‘Beating you (NSG)’ is *kaa-p~kaa-p*. These verbs have not been observed in participle (with *-gVng*) form.

2.1.3 The T-class

This class has only two members in the existing Nungon lexicon: *hi-* ‘put’ and *ku-/hu-* ‘take away’ (the two forms index object number: see section 2.2.1). These verbs behave like H-class verbs everywhere except in the Present singular and the 2nd person Immediate Imperative (3.2.1), in which a /t/ occurs after the verb root. Table 5 shows the T-class verb *hi-* ‘put’ Present tense paradigm.

When nominalized, T-class verbs behave like H-class verbs. Thus, ‘putting’ is *hi-k~hi-k*. The participle form is also possible: *hi-ng-ging* ‘putting.’

Table 4: P-class verb inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Remote Past	ep-bo-t	ep-bo-rok	ep-bo-k	ep-bo-mok	ep-bo-morok	ep-bo-mong	ep-bu-ng
Near Past	e-wa-t	e-wa-rok	e-wa-k	e-∅-mok	e-∅-morok	e-∅-mong	e-i-ng
Present	ep-pa-t	ep-pa-rok	ep-pa-k	e-wa-mok	e-wa-morok	e-wa-mong	e-wa-ng
Near Future	e-wangka-t	e-wangka-rok	e-wangka-k	ep-dangka-mok	ep-dangka-morok	ep-nangka-mong	ep-nangka-ng
Remote Future	e-i-t-ma	e-i-rok-ma	e-i-k-ma	ep-di-n-ma	ep-di-morok-ma	ep-ni-n-ma	ep-ni-ng-ma

Table 5: T-class verb Present tense inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	
Present	<i>hit-ta-t</i>	<i>hit-ta-rok</i>	<i>hit-ta-k</i>	
	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Present	<i>hi-wa-mok</i>	<i>hi-wa-morok</i>	<i>hi-wa-mong</i>	<i>hi-wa-ng</i>

2.1.4 The Ø-class

All six members of this sub-class have verbal roots that end in /o/, although not all verbs with roots ending in /o/ belong to this class. The six members are: *yo-* ‘speak,’ *to-* ‘do,’ *ho-* ‘cook,’ *ongo-* ‘go,’ and *indongo-* ‘stand up.’

These verb roots differ from the H-class in the Near Past, Present, and Remote Future inflections. Deletion of the final /o/ of the verb root before the tense suffix -i in the Remote Future singular and Near Past 2/3PL is due to phonological processes (Sarvasy 2014). Table 6 shows the inflection of Ø-class verb *yo-* ‘say’ in those tenses in which the Ø-class paradigm diverges from the H-class paradigm:

The verb *ongo-* ‘go’ and its derivative *indongo-* ‘stand up’ form a sub-class within the Ø-class because the final /o/ of the verb root does not delete in the Present tense singular, and the Present non-singular tense suffix has the form -u.

Ø-class verbs behave like H-class verbs when nominalized, adding -k to the verb root. ‘Speaking’ is *yo-k~yo-k*, and ‘going’ is *ongo-k~ongo-k*. The participle form of *yo-* ‘say’ is rare, but is very common for *ongo-* ‘go’: *ongo-ng-gong* ‘going.’

2.1.5 The NG-class

The two verbs that comprise this class, *mö-* ‘fall, plant’ and *yö-* ‘place s.o. down,’ are semantically related; they may be derivationally related as well.

Like P-class verbs, these verbs behave like H-class verbs in the Near Past, but a velar nasal /ng/ occurs between the verb root and the initial consonant of the tense suffix when that consonant is a stop. Table 8 shows the inflectional paradigm for *yö-* ‘place s.o. down’.

Like H-class verbs, the nominalized form of NG-class verbs adds the suffix -k to the verb root; ‘placing him/her down’ is *yö-k~yö-k*. The participle form is not common for NG-class verbs.

Table 6: Ø-class verb Near Past, Present, and Remote Future tense inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Near Past	yo-Ø-t	yo-Ø-rok	yo-Ø-k	yo-Ø-mok	yo-Ø-morok	yo-Ø-mong	y-i-ng
Present	ya-a-t	ya-a-rok	ya-a-k	ya-a-mok	ya-a-morok	ya-a-mong	ya-a-ng
Remote Future	y-i-t-ma	y-i-rok-ma	y-i-k-ma	yo-r-i-n-ma	yo-r-i-morok-ma	yo-ni-n-ma	yo-ni-ng-ma

Table 7: Ø-class verbs, ongo- sub-class: Present tense inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Present	ongo-ya-t	ongo-ya-rok	ongo-ya-k	ong-u-mok	ong-u-morok	ong-u-mong	ong-u-ng

Table 8: NG-class verb inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Remote Past	yöng-go-t	yöng-go-rok	yöng-go-k	yöng-go-mok	yöng-go-morok	yöng-go-mong	yöng-gu-ng
Near Past	yö-wa-t	yö-wa-rok	yo-wa-k	yö-Ø-mok	yö-Ø-morok	yö-Ø-mong	yö-i-ng
Present	yöng-ka-t	yöng-ka-rok	yöng-ka-k	yö-wa-mok	yö-wa-morok	yö-wa-mong	yö-wa-ng
Near Future	yö-wangka-t	yö-wangka-rok	yö-wangka-k	yöng-dangka-mok	yöng-dangka-morok	yöng-nangka-mong	yöng-nangka-ng
Remote Future	yö-i-t-ma	yö-i-rok-ma	yö-i-k-ma	yöng-di-n-ma	yöng-di-morok-ma	yöng-ni-n-ma	yöng-ni-ng-ma

2.1.6 The consonant-final class

Of consonant-final verb roots, /t/-final roots are about twice as common as /n/-final roots, at 37 vs. 17. Members of this class comprise over a third of all verbs in the lexicon. The Near Future singular tense suffixes and Near Past tense suffixes (for all numbers) have initial vowel /e/ after consonant-final verb roots, not /a/ as with vowel-final roots. When followed by a vowel-initial tense suffix, the final /n/ or /t/ of the verb root becomes the rhotic /ɾ/, due to regular phonological rules. Table 9 shows the inflectional paradigm for *mon*- ‘throw’.

The consonant-final verb *it*- ‘be’ is irregular in that the final consonant elides in the Remote Future, Near Future and Near Past inflections, with the root vowel /i/ assimilating to the vowel of the tense suffix. Thus, Remote Future inflections have /ii/ while Near Future and Near Past inflections have /ee/.

Consonant-final verbs receive no nominalizing suffix, with the bare root serving as the basis for the nominalized form; thus, ‘throwing’ is *mon~mon*. Consonant-final verbs cannot form participles.

2.2 Transitivity-related verb classes

Verbs may also be divided into sub-classes based on syntactic behaviour and argument structure. Transitivity classes do not correlate with the morpho-phonological verb classes. Nungon verbs may be intransitive, ambitransitive, transitive, or ditransitive. Transitivity-related verb classes are listed in Table 10.

Ambitransitive verbs are those that can serve in either intransitive or transitive clauses (Dixon 2010: 77). Nungon ambitransitive verbs fall into two categories: S=A and S=O ambitransitive verbs. With S=A ambitransitives, the single core argument S in intransitive clauses corresponds to the A argument of the same verb in transitive clauses. In contrast, the intransitive S argument of S=O ambitransitives corresponds to the O argument of the same verb in transitive clauses.

Examples of S=O ambitransitives:

<i>Mö-wa-t.</i>	<i>Möit mö-wa-t.</i>	<i>Eep obö-wa-k.</i>
fall-NP.SG-1SG	taro plant-NP.SG-1SG	wood break-NP.SG-3SG
‘I fell.’	‘I planted taro.’	‘The firewood broke.’
<i>Eep obö-wa-t.</i>		
wood break-NP.SG-1SG		
‘I broke the firewood.’		

Table 9: Consonant-final class verb inflection

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
Remote Past	<i>mon-do-t</i>	<i>mon-do-rok</i>	<i>mon-do-k</i>	<i>mon-do-mok</i>	<i>mon-do-morok</i>	<i>mon-do-mong</i>	<i>mon-du-ng</i>
Near Past	<i>mor-e-t</i>	<i>mor-e-rok</i>	<i>mor-e-k</i>	<i>ur-e-mok</i>	<i>mor-e-morok</i>	<i>mor-e-mong</i>	<i>mor-i-ng</i>
Present	<i>mon-ta-t</i>	<i>mon-ta-rok</i>	<i>mon-ta-k</i>	<i>mor-a-mok</i>	<i>mor-a-morok</i>	<i>mor-a-mong</i>	<i>mor-a-ng</i>
Near Future	<i>mor-engka-t</i>	<i>mor-engka-rok</i>	<i>mor-engka-k</i>	<i>mon-dangka-mok</i>	<i>mon-dangka-morok</i>	<i>mon-nangka-mong</i>	<i>mon-nangka-ng</i>
Remote Future	<i>mor-i-t-ma</i>	<i>mor-i-rok-ma</i>	<i>mor-i-k-ma</i>	<i>mon-di-n-ma</i>	<i>mon-di-morok-ma</i>	<i>mon-ni-n-ma</i>	<i>mon-ni-ng-ma</i>

Table 10: Transitivity-related verb classes

Class	Core Argument(s)	Class Size	Notes, Sample Members
intransitive	S	about 30% of all verbs	A sub-class includes the weather verbs <i>iso-</i> ‘dawn’ (H-class) and <i>wari-</i> ‘flash lightning’ (H-class)
ambitransitive	S (when intransitive) A, O (when transitive)	the vast majority of verbs	S=A: <i>boo-</i> ‘sew’ (H-class), <i>woro-</i> ‘pull’ (H-class), and <i>hoo-</i> ‘close’ (P-class). S=O: <i>obö-</i> ‘break/be broken’ (H-class), <i>di-</i> ‘burn/be burned’ (H-class), and <i>mö-</i> ‘plant/ fall’ (NG-class).
transitive	A, O	15 verbs bearing O-indexing prefixes	Two types of prefixes: those that reference only O number, and those that reference O person and number. Verbs listed in Tables 12 and 15.
ditransitive	A, O ₁ and O ₂ O ₁ = Recipient O ₂ = Gift	3 verbs	<i>imo-</i> ‘give s.o. (s.t.),’ <i>ino-</i> ‘tell s.o. (s.t.),’ and <i>yandi-</i> ‘show s.o. (s.t.)’ O ₁ obligatorily referenced in prefix; O ₂ optionally explicit in clause

Because all core arguments may be omitted, it may be hard to distinguish between a truly intransitive clause (with S either explicit or only indexed on the verb) and a transitive clause with a null O argument. With S=O ambitransitives, this question is not an issue: the statement ‘I fell down’ need not involve an underlying A argument. But with S=A ambitransitives, an intransitive interpretation of a clause lacking an explicit O argument is only possible if an oblique argument such as instrument or location is explicit:

- (1) *Na-ha-k.*
eat-PRES.SG-3SG
‘S/he eats it.’ [Not *‘s/he eats.’]
- (2) *Gowik=dek na-ha-k.*
knife=INSTR eat-PRES.SG-3SG
‘S/he eats (it) with a knife.’

In (1) above, an O argument is always understood, albeit optionally explicit. In (2), however, the presence of the oblique instrument argument enables the verb *na-* to be understood as either intransitive, referring to the action of ‘eating’ with-

out reference to an O argument, or as transitive, with a non-explicit O argument. Sentence (2) could be analyzed as a token of Dixon’s ‘extended intransitive’ clause type (Dixon 2010: 99).

2.2.1 Verbs with obligatory object-referencing prefixes

The transitive and ditransitive verb classes in Table 11 take obligatory prefixes indexing the verb’s object argument (see Suter 2012 for discussion of these verbs across Finisterre-Huon languages). These prefixes fall into two categories: those that reference only the number (singular versus non-singular) of the verb’s object argument, and those that reference the person and number of the object argument. Even when a verb that obligatorily takes these prefixes is nominalized, the prefixes still index the O argument of the nominalized verb.

Verbs that take person/number-referencing object prefixes may be described as having prototypically-human O arguments, while verbs that take the number-referencing prefixes may be described as having prototypically-non-human O arguments.

The object prefixes that reference only number are *k-* ‘singular object’ and *h-* ‘non-singular object.’ One additional verb, *to-* ‘pick up, take’ has a different alternation: the forms *to-* ‘pick it up’ and *yoo-* ‘pick them up’ may be considered as suppletive stems, varying according to number of the object argument.

Table 11: Verbs that take number-indexing object prefixes

	Singular	Non-Singular	Source Verb
‘bring’ (P-class)	<i>ke-</i>	<i>he-</i>	<i>e-</i> ‘come’ (P-class)
‘raise’ (H-class)	<i>köö-</i>	<i>höö-</i>	<i>öö-</i> ‘ascend’ (H-class)
‘lower’ (H-class)	<i>koo-</i>	<i>hoo-</i>	<i>oo-</i> ‘descend’ (H-class)
‘take away’ (T-class)	<i>ku-</i>	<i>hu-</i>	–
‘pick up’	<i>to-</i> (Ø-class)	<i>yoo-</i> (P-class)	–

In Table 11, the first three verbs – ‘bring,’ ‘raise,’ and ‘lower’ – are transparently derived from intransitive motion verbs ‘come,’ ‘ascend,’ and ‘descend,’ through prefixing of the elements *k-* and *h-*. The morpho-phonological class of the intransitive verb is maintained in the transitive derived form. In contrast, the fourth verb *ku-/hu-* ‘take away’ is not transparently derived from an intransitive verb. There is no verb **u-* ‘go away’ in contemporary Nungon. Thus, the verb *ku-/hu-* may be considered to have suppletive stems based on number of its object argument, like the verb *to-/yoo-* ‘pick up.’

The object prefixes that reference person and number vary slightly in form from verb to verb. Some of this variation is predictable based on phonological rules for vowel combination (see Sarvasy 2014), while some is not. These prefixes are formally related to the personal pronouns.

Table 12: Person/number-indexing object prefixes

	Singular	Non-Singular
1	<i>n(a)-</i>	<i>n(i)-</i>
2	<i>g(a)-</i>	<i>k(a)-</i>
3	<i>y-/i-</i>	<i>y(o)-</i>

Table 13: Free personal pronouns

	Singular	Non-Singular
1	<i>nok</i>	<i>non</i>
2	<i>gok</i>	<i>hon</i>
3	<i>yu</i>	

Table 14 is an exhaustive list of verbs that take obligatory prefixes referencing person and number of the object, and can serve clause-finally. Throughout this paper, these verbs are cited in the form bearing the 3SG object prefix. Morpheme boundaries between the prefix and root are written in the table, but with many of these verbs this boundary could be placed in an alternative way – or omitted altogether, with the root plus prefix considered as a fused form. This is because almost none of the verb roots in Table 14 may occur without the prefixes. Only one of these transitive verbs, *yemo-* ‘shoot,’ is possibly related to an intransitive verb without the object prefixes, *emo-* ‘make war.’ Verbs are given in Present tense and with a 3rd person singular subject.

Some verbs have an initial segment referencing a 3SG object argument that differs from the *y-* or *i-* anticipated by Table 12. The cells containing these forms are shaded in Table 14. These forms may be understood to prototypically refer to a non-human object argument; in a society of hunters, ‘following’ and ‘shooting’ are most often used to describe tracking and hunting game, while ‘seeing,’ ‘treading on’ and ‘beating’ are more likely to have non-human object arguments than human ones. It is conceivable that these forms do not derive from the 3rd person pronoun *yu* in Table 13: *yu* is usually used with human reference. Non-humans, especially inanimates, are referred to with the distal demonstrative *wo* ‘that.’ This may be the source for the initial *w-* of *w-et-* ‘beat (3SG.O)’ and *w-e-p mo-* ‘touch

Table 14: Transitive verbs with person/number object prefixes

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1NSG	2NSG	3NSG
<i>aa</i> - ‘see’	<i>n-aa-ha-k</i>	<i>g-aa-ha-k</i>	<i>aa-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-i-ha-k</i>	<i>k-aa-ha-k</i>	<i>y-aa-ha-k</i>
<i>imo</i> - ‘give’	<i>na-mo-ha-k</i>	<i>ga-mo-ha-k</i>	<i>i-mo-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-mo-ha-k</i>	<i>ka-mo-ha-k</i>	<i>yo-mo-ha-k</i>
<i>ino</i> - ‘tell’	<i>na-no-ha-k</i>	<i>ga-no-ha-k</i>	<i>i-no-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-no-ha-k</i>	<i>ka-no-ha-k</i>	<i>yo-no-ha-k</i>
<i>taambit</i> - ‘tread on’	<i>na-ambit-ta-k</i>	<i>ga-ambit-ta-k</i>	<i>ta-ambit-ta-k</i>	<i>na-ambit-ta-k</i>	<i>ka-ambit-ta-k</i>	<i>ya-ambit-ta-k</i>
<i>tan</i> - ‘follow’	<i>na-n-ta-k</i>	<i>ga-n-ta-k</i>	<i>ta-n-ta-k</i>	<i>handan-ta-k</i>	<i>handan-ta-k</i>	<i>handan-ta-k</i>
<i>temo</i> - ‘shoot’	<i>n-emo-ha-k</i>	<i>g-emo-ha-k</i>	<i>t-emo-ha-k</i>	<i>n-emo-ha-k</i>	<i>k-emo-ha-k</i>	<i>y-emo-ha-k</i>
<i>wet</i> - ‘beat’	<i>n-et-ta-k</i>	<i>g-et-ta-k</i>	<i>w-et-ta-k</i>	<i>nisop-pa-k</i>	<i>kaap-pa-k</i>	<i>doop-pa-k</i>
<i>yama</i> - ‘watch over’	<i>na-ma-ha-k</i>	<i>ga-ma-ha-k</i>	<i>ya-ma-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-ma-ha-k</i>	<i>ka-ma-ha-k</i>	<i>ya-ma-ha-k</i>
<i>yandi</i> - ‘show’	<i>na-ndi-ha-k</i>	<i>ga-ndi-ha-k</i>	<i>ya-ndi-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-ndi-ha-k</i>	<i>ka-ndi-ha-k</i>	<i>ya-ndi-ha-k</i>
<i>yangat</i> - ‘escort’	<i>na-ngat-ta-k</i>	<i>ga-ngat-ta-k</i>	<i>ya-ngat-ta-k</i>	<i>ni-ngat-ta-k</i>	<i>ka-ngat-ta-k</i>	<i>ya-ngat-ta-k</i>
<i>yii</i> - ‘bite’	<i>ne-i-ha-k</i>	<i>ge-i-ha-k</i>	<i>yi-i-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-i-ha-k</i>	<i>ke-i-ha-k</i>	<i>yi-i-ha-k</i>
<i>yö</i> - ‘place down’	<i>n-öng-ka-k</i>	<i>g-öng-ka-k</i>	<i>y-öng-ka-k</i>	<i>n-öng-ka-k</i>	<i>k-öng-ka-k</i>	<i>y-öng-ka-k</i>
<i>yuu</i> - ‘roll, lead on’	<i>n-uu-ha-k</i>	<i>g-uu-ha-k</i>	<i>y-uu-ha-k</i>	<i>n-uu-ha-k</i>	<i>k-uu-ha-k</i>	<i>y-uu-ha-k</i>

(3SG.O)’ in Table 15 below. The source of the initial *t*- in *taambit*-, *tan*-, and *temo*- is unknown.

In the appropriate contexts, all but two of the verbs in Table 14 may take non-human 3rd person object arguments. The verbs that can truly only take human object arguments are *yangat*- ‘escort’ and *yö*- ‘place down.’

Additional verbs that take these prefixes are never inflected independently as clause-final verbs. They only occur synchronically either nominalized or in Dependent form (section 4.1) and followed by an auxiliary verb. These are listed in Table 15. As mentioned earlier in this section, the object prefixes on nominalized or Dependent forms always inflect to index the object argument.

Table 15: Additional expressions with person/number object prefixes

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1NSG	2NSG	3NSG
<i>wep mo</i> - ‘touch’	<i>n-e-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>	<i>g-e-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>	<i>w-e-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-i-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>	<i>k-e-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>	<i>y-e-p</i> <i>mo-ha-k</i>
<i>yeng hot</i> - ‘pass’	<i>n-e-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>	<i>g-e-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>	<i>y-e-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>	<i>ni-i-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>	<i>k-e-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>	<i>y-e-ng</i> <i>hot-ta-k</i>
<i>aa-m² poto</i> - ‘leave behind’	<i>n-aa-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>	<i>g-aa-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>	<i>aa-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>	<i>ni-i-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>	<i>k-aa-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>	<i>y-aa-m</i> <i>poto-ha-k</i>

The expression *wep mo*- ‘touch’ probably comprises the nominalized form of an (unattested elsewhere) person/number object prefix-taking P-class verb *wep*- and the auxiliary verb *mo*- ‘transfer.’ The expression ‘touch’ could be argued to not prototypically take a human object argument. The second expression in Table 15 is *ye-ng hot*- ‘pass’; this combines the Dependent form, *ye-ng*, of a verb unattested outside this expression, *?ye*-, in a tight multi-verb construction with the verb *hot*- ‘run.’ The third expression, *aa-m poto*- ‘leave behind,’ derives from the Dependent form, *aa-ng*, of the verb *aa*- ‘see,’ followed by the H-class verb *poto*- ‘refuse, demur.’

Other idiomatic multi-verb constructions combining the Dependent form of *aa*- ‘see’ with other verbs are in Sarvasy (2014). In these expressions, *aa*- ‘see’ is always the first element.

² The final velar nasal of *aa-ng*, which is the Dependent form of *aa*- ‘see,’ has assimilated to the place of articulation of the initial consonant of *poto*- ‘demur,’ becoming /m/. *N-aa-m poto-ha-k* ‘s/he leaves me behind,’ literally means: ‘seeing me, s/he demurs.’

Finally, different verbs with object prefixes may co-occur in multi-verb constructions when the object argument is shared. This occurs in the expression *i-no-ng y-uu-* ‘lead along, lie to,’ which combines the object prefix-taking verbs *ino-* ‘tell’ and *yuu-* ‘roll from side to side.’ In example (3), object prefixes on four verbs, *yangat-* ‘escort,’ *höö-* ‘raise,’ *ino-* ‘tell,’ and *yandi-* ‘show,’ all index the number, or person and number, of *gungak opm~opmou* ‘small children’:

- (3) *Gungak opm~opmou y-angat h-öö-ng-a, aap*
 child small **3.O-escort** NSG.O-ascend-DEP-MV song
yo-no-ng y-andi-ng=it-do-t.
3NSG.O-tell-DEP 3.O-show-DEP=be-RP-1SG
 ‘Taking the small children up (into the building), I used to tell and show them songs.’

Of all these verbs, the verb *aa-* ‘see’ may also take reduced forms of the demonstratives *ngo* ‘here’ and *wo* ‘there’ in the prefix slot. This only occurs in the 2SG Immediate Imperative form: *ng-aa-hi!* ‘look at this!’ and *w-aa-hi!* ‘look at that!’

3 Tense, reality status, and mood

The Nungon grammatical category of tense primarily functions to demarcate the relative time of the action indicated by the verb. Speakers clearly understand the five grammatical tense distinctions in Nungon to relate to time, and there is no inconsistency in how different individuals apply the grammatical tenses to actual time. But, as is common cross-linguistically (Dixon 2010: 153–154; 2012: 6–8), the Nungon future tenses also have other functions in the sphere of irrealis.

Like the Finisterre-Huon Papuan language Nukna (Taylor 2013, Sarvasy 2013b), but unlike Awara (Quigley, this volume) and Nek (Linnasalo, this volume), two tense distinctions in Nungon are neutralized under negation. Thus, while any of the five tense inflections may occur in a positive clause, only three of the tense inflections may occur in negative clauses.

3.1 Grammatical tenses as they relate to time

Table 16 illustrates the grammatical tense typically used by Nungon speakers to describe times relative to *unga* ‘today/now.’

Table 16: Grammatical tense use as it relates to relative time.

before yesterday	yesterday	earlier today	right now	later today	tomorrow & beyond
REMOTE PAST		PRESENT (some verbs)	PRESENT	NEAR FUTURE	REMOTE FUTURE
		NEAR PAST			

These times are not, of course, based on a 24-hour clock system in which a day is reckoned from 00:00 hours. When the reference time is late at night, for instance, events anticipated for after dawn may be couched in the Near Future.

3.1.1 Neutralization of tense distinctions under negation

The distinction between the Near Past and Present tenses, and the distinction between the Near Future and Remote Future tenses, are neutralized under negation. That is, the Present tense and the Near Future tense inflections cannot coexist with the negating proclitic *ma=*. To negate the Present tense, the negated Near Past form must be used. To negate the Near Future tense, the negated Remote Future form must be used. Example (4) below illustrates use of the Near Past form in negating present-time actions in an overheard exchange between a child and her mother:

- (4) Child:

Mak,

ongo-ra!
- Mother

go-IMM.IMP.1DU

‘Mother, let’s go!’
- Mother:

Nok

usandu

ma=ngo-Ø-t.

1SG.PRO somewhere NEG=go-NP.SG-1SG

‘I’m not going anywhere.’

The mother’s response in (4) encompasses the period from ‘yesterday’ through ‘right now’ in Table 16; it could also be translated as ‘I haven’t gone anywhere.’ Context determines whether Near Past or Present tense meaning is understood.

3.1.2 Special functions of some tenses

The Remote Past inflection demarcates time from very long ago, including the mythical past, to yesterday, where it overlaps with the Near Past. Verbs inflected for Remote Past can refer to non-actualized events, serving as the apodosis of a contrafactual sentence situated in that time period.

- (5) *Amna au huttai, ma=i-no-ng yo-go-k.*
 man other truly NEG=3SG.O-tell-DEP say-RP-3SG
 ‘If it had been another man, he would not have spoken to her.’

This statement could be more canonically formed using the Contrafactual inflection (see section 3.2.2) in the apodosis.

Verbs inflected for Near Past tense refer to the time period from ‘yesterday’ through ‘earlier today.’ As such, they may serve in the protasis of a contrafactual sentence situated in that period.

The Present tense inflection is used for events occurring at the moment of the utterance, and for events in a few categories that concluded in the last hour or so but are still relevant at the time of the utterance. For instance, I have noted instances of *di-* ‘burn,’ *na-* ‘eat’ and *wet-* ‘beat’ inflected for the Present to refer to events that took place in the previous hour or so. If more time elapsed between the event and the speech act, the Near Past would be greatly preferred over the Present.

As in many other languages (Bybee et al. 1994: 141), the Nungon Present tense is also used to describe habitual action and gnomic truths. Other ways of marking habitual aspect are in section 4.1.1 below.

The Near Future inflection both strictly demarcates the time period from the reference time to ‘tonight,’ and serves another function: marking events that are likely to happen at any time. These are often the apodosis of a conditional clause, as ‘If you walk in the rain, you will get wet.’ But this use of the Near Future inflection also occurs in manufacturing and hunting processes, and recipes.

When not negated, the Remote Future inflection formally comprises the ‘wishful thinking’ Irrealis (section 3.2.6) plus a special suffix *-ma*, which may be related to the Nungon specifier and relativizer *=ma* (Sarvasy 2013a). Taking these two inflections as a pair, the realis Remote Future is the formally marked member of the pair, while the Irrealis inflection is its formally unmarked counterpart. Since the Remote Future suffix *-ma* is omitted under negation, there is no formal distinction between the negated Remote Future and negated Irrealis. Recall from section 3.1.1 that the distinction between Near Future and Remote Future is neutralized under negation; thus, negated Near Future, Remote Future, and Irrealis share a form.

3.2 Tense-less verbal inflectional paradigms

In addition to the five tense inflections, Nungon final verbs may inflect for mood or reality status. Mood and reality status suffixes occur in the same suffix slot after the verb root as the tense suffixes. This means that in Nungon, unlike in Nek (Linnaalo, this volume), tense, mood, and reality status cannot co-occur. Mood inflections are: Immediate and Delayed Imperatives, and the Prohibitive. Reality status inflections are: Irrealis, Probable, and Contrafactual.

Mood and reality status are formally interrelated – and these are further formally related to the two future tenses. The Contrafactual inflectional paradigm is formed from the Immediate Imperative paradigm. The Delayed Imperative forms are Irrealis forms with the vowel of the final syllable raised; the Prohibitive form is the Irrealis form with a suffix *-a*. The Near Future tense form seems to have derived diachronically from an auxiliary construction using the Probable inflection, while the Remote Future tense form is based on the Irrealis.

These formal correspondences are summarized in Table 17. Inflections formally based on the Probable inflection are associated with a Probable group, and the same for inflections formally based on the Immediate Imperative and Irrealis.

Table 17: Morphological correspondences between paradigms

	Inflection	Morphological Group
Tenses	Remote Past	–
	Near Past	–
	Present	–
	Near Future	Probable
	Remote Future	Irrealis
Moods	Immediate Imperative	Immediate Imperative
	Delayed Imperative	Irrealis
	Prohibitive	Irrealis
Reality Status Markers	Irrealis	Irrealis
	Probable	Probable
	Contrafactual	Immediate Imperative

In Nungon, then, as in Awara (Quigley, this volume), verbal inflectional paradigms may be divided into several morphological groups. As in Awara and Nek, Nungon medial verb different-subject suffixes fit into the ‘Immediate Imperative’ group.

3.2.1 The Immediate Imperative

The Immediate Imperative in Nungon may be expressed for all person-number distinctions, with the usual collapse of 2nd and 3rd persons in the non-singular. Table 18 shows the Immediate Imperative paradigm for the H-class verb *na*-‘eat’:

Table 18: Immediate Imperative

	SG	DU	PL
1	<i>na-wa</i>	<i>na-ra</i>	<i>na-na</i>
2	<i>na-hi</i>	<i>na-warun</i>	<i>na-warut</i>
3	<i>na-hun</i>		

As noted above, the canonical (2nd person) and non-canonical (1st and 3rd person) immediate imperative inflections (Aikhenvald 2010: 17) cohere in a single paradigm. 2nd and 3rd persons even share a form in the non-singular. But the 2nd person singular Immediate Imperative has slightly different meaning and use than, for instance, that of the 1st person singular, as shown in examples (6) and (7):

- (6) *To-wa* *ha ma=to-wa?*
do-IMM.IMP.1SG or NEG=do-IMM.IMP.1SG
‘Shall I do it or shall I not do it?’

If this were expressed using the 2nd person singular immediate imperative inflection, the resulting sentence would be (7), which is a meta-question about an original command:

- (7) *To-i* *ha ma=to-i?*
do-IMM.IMP.2SG or NEG=do-IMM.IMP.2SG
‘(Did you say:) “Do it!” or “Don’t do it!”?’

The commanding force of the immediate imperative inflection is so much stronger with the 2nd person than with the 1st person that (7) cannot be interpreted as a question in the same way as (6).

3.2.2 The Contrafactual

The Contrafactual inflection encodes non-actualities that could have been but are definitely not. This inflection is formed by adding a suffix *-m* to the vowel-final Immediate Imperative inflections. Consonant-final Immediate Imperative forms – 3SG, 2/3DU, and 2/3PL – receive no suffix and are identical to the Contrafactual forms.

Table 19: Contrafactual

	SG	DU	PL
1	<i>na-wa-m³</i>	<i>na-ra-m</i>	<i>na-na-m</i>
2	<i>na-hi-m</i>	<i>na-warun</i>	<i>na-warut</i>
3	<i>na-hun</i>		

The example below illustrates the Contrafactual combined with Continuous aspect (see section 4.1). I had asked whether a certain plant was edible, and the speaker joked that if only it were eaten, she was sure it would taste wonderful and they would enjoy eating it:

- (8) *Na-ng=ir-a-ng huttai, imbange na-ng-a it-na-m.*
eat-DEP=be-PRES-2/3PL truly wonderful eat-DEP-MV be-1PL-CONTR
‘If (people) did indeed eat it, we’d be eating it wonderfully.’

3.2.3 The Delayed Imperative

The Delayed Imperative is used to issue positive commands that will be carried out later or in a faraway location (or both). It probably derives from the Irrealis through alteration of the final vowel of Irrealis forms. Delayed Imperative forms exist only for the 2nd person. Table 20 compares the forms of the verb *ongo*- ‘go’ in the 2nd person Immediate Imperative, Delayed Imperative, and Irrealis.

3 *Nawam* is the Worin dialect form; the Towet form of the 1sg contrafactual is *nahem*.

Table 20: Comparison of 2nd person forms: Irrealis, and Immediate and Delayed Imperatives

	2SG	2DU	2PL
Immediate Imperative	<i>ongo-i</i>	<i>ongo-run</i>	<i>ongo-rut</i>
Delayed Imperative	<i>ong-irök</i>	<i>ongo-rimorök</i>	<i>ongo-nung</i>
Irrealis	<i>ong-i-rok</i>	<i>ongo-ri-morok</i>	<i>ongo-ni-ng</i>

The command in (9) is framed with the Delayed Imperative because it instructs the hearers to perform actions over far distance and time:

- (9) *Hon ongo-ng-a Mungku duo-ng-a, Sapmangga*
2NSG.PRO go-DEP-MV Mungku sleep-DEP-MV Sapmanga
ongo-ng-a, Sugan öö-rimorök.
go-DEP-MV Sugan ascend-2DU.DEL.IMP
'You going on, sleeping at Mungku, going on to Sapmanga, ascend to Sugan.'

As with many other communities in Papua New Guinea, leave-taking occasions the remaining party to bid the leave-taker(s) adieu with the command 'you go!' In return, the leave-taker(s) call back to the remaining person(s) a rejoinder command: 'you stay!' When either party is a single person, the singular Delayed Imperative forms *ong-irök* 'go!' and *i-irök* 'stay!' are greatly preferred over the Immediate Imperative forms *ongo-i* 'go!' and *it-ti* 'stay!' This is the case regardless of the distance the leave-taker is expected to travel: the 2SG Immediate Imperative forms are deemed too brusque and peremptory for ritual leave-taking.

But in the dual and plural, the distance the leave-takers are about to travel makes the difference in determining which inflection is used. The dual and plural Immediate Imperative are not felt to be as brusque as the singular, so these are often heard in leave-taking by more than one person. When the party is larger than one person, the Delayed Imperative is chosen for leave-taking when the departing group may be expected to travel a relatively long distance: this could be from one village to another, roughly 1.5 hours away, for instance.

Although the Delayed Imperative may be negated, negative distal commands are most often expressed using the Prohibitive (see section 3.2.7).

3.2.4 The Probable

The Probable inflection is rare in the eleven hours of transcribed speech in the Nungon texts corpus. It describes events that are reasonably likely to occur at

some time. It is anomalous in that it can conclude sentences, but does not index the person of its subject argument, only its number. Table 21 gives the Probable inflection for the H-class verb *na-* ‘eat’ and the consonant-final verb *ut-* ‘cry’:

Table 21: Probable

	SG	DU	PL
<i>na-</i> ‘eat’	<i>na-wang</i>	<i>na-rang</i>	<i>na-nang</i>
<i>ut-</i> ‘cry’	<i>ur-eng</i>	<i>ut-dang</i>	<i>ut-nang</i>

- (10) *Mee, ga-mo-wang.*
later 2SG.O-give-PROB.SG
‘Later I will give it to you.’

In (10), the person of the verb’s subject must be understood from context. The time of the giving is unspecified, but is most likely the next day or beyond.

The Probable inflection serves as the morphological basis for the Imminent aspect (section 4.1.4) and the Near Future tense (section 3.2.5).

3.2.5 Hybrid status of the Near Future

Morphologically, the Near Future tense inflection appears to combine the Probable inflection with a suffix *-ka*, followed by the usual subject agreement suffixes. Thus, the Near Future has the form *-wang-ka-*, *-rang-ka-*, *-nang-ka-* for singular, dual, and plural S/A arguments.

In the verb paradigm tables of section 2, the morpheme boundary between the Probable inflection and suffix *-ka* in the Near Future inflections was omitted. Table 22 shows the Near Future inflection of the verb *na-* ‘eat’ (cf. Table 3) with the morpheme boundary inserted between the Probable stem and the suffix *-ka*:

Table 22: Near Future as composite of Probable and *-ka*

1SG	2SG	3SG	
<i>na-wang-ka-t</i>	<i>na-wang-ka-rok</i>	<i>na-wang-ka-k</i>	
1DU	2/3DU	1PL	2/3PL
<i>na-rang-ka-mok</i>	<i>na-rang-ka-morok</i>	<i>na-nang-ka-mong</i>	<i>na-nang-ka-ng</i>

In the Yawan village dialect, the suffix after the Probable stem in the Near Future tense inflection is *-ta*, not *-ka*. It is conceivable that this particular inflection originated in an multi-verb construction using the auxiliary verb *to-* ‘do,’ which has the form *ta-* in the Present tense. That is, a possible derivational path is:

Original Expression		Yawan Dialect		Towet Dialect
*[<i>na-wang ta-a-t</i>]	→	[<i>na-wang-ta-t</i>]	→	[<i>na-wang-ka-t</i>]
eat-PROB.SG do-PRES-1SG		eat-PROB.SG-NF-1SG		eat-PROB.SG-NF-1SG
‘I do likely-eating’		‘I will soon eat’		‘I will soon eat’

An alternative explanation takes the suffix *-ka* or *-ta* as related to the Present tense singular suffix *-ha*. Then the two elements of the Near Future tense inflection could be parsed as ‘likely’ (from the first element, the Probable stem) ‘with current relevance’ (from the second element, the Present tense suffix). Further examination of Nungon dialect differences may help determine the morphological sources for the Near Future tense inflection.

3.2.6 The Irrealis

The Irrealis inflection in Nungon encodes the speaker’s desire that something improbable might happen. The Irrealis is formed in the same way as the Remote Future tense, but without the final suffix *-ma* of the positive Remote Future. Recall from section 3.1.2 that the negated Irrealis form is also used for negated Near Future and Remote Future. Example (11) shows the positive Remote Future, while (12) shows the positive Irrealis, and (13) shows the negated Near Future/Remote Future/Irrealis.

- (11) *Nok e-i-t-ma.*
 1SG.PRO come-IRR.SG-1SG-RF
 ‘I will come (tomorrow or beyond).’
- (12) *Nok e-i-t.*
 1SG.PRO come-IRR.SG-1SG
 ‘Would that I could come!’
- (13) *Nok ma=e-i-t.*
 1SG.PRO NEG=come-IRR.SG-1SG
 ‘I won’t come (today, tomorrow, or beyond),’ or ‘I wouldn’t come.’

The meaning of the positive Irrealis is illustrated in the following excerpt from an oral re-telling of the Biblical Exodus story:

- (14) *'Isip noni it-ni-n,' yo-ng-a,*
 Egypt 1PL.POSS **be-IRR.PL-1PL** say-DEP-MV
'nungon=ta ep-bo-mong? Tanak noni
 what=BEN come-RP-1PL food 1PL.POSS
orogo na-ng=it-do-mong; non w-eyo
 good eat-DEP=be-RP-1PL 1NSG.PRO that-DEICT
it-ni-n,' yo-ng-a.
be-IRR.PL-1NSG say-DEP-MV
 ‘“**Would that we were** in our own Egypt,” saying, “why did we come? We used to eat our own good food (in Egypt), **would that we were** there,” (they were) saying.’

3.2.7 The Prohibitive

Negative commands in Nungon may be issued in a variety of ways. Example (7) above showed a negated Immediate Imperative form, for instance. The Prohibitive inflection is the most common, and most polite, type of negative command. It is formed by adding a suffix *-a*, quite possibly related to the Attention-commanding suffix *-a* (Sarvasy 2012, 2014), to the inflected positive Irrealis form. The Prohibitive is illustrated in example (15) below:

- (15) *Ongo-ng wakwak t-i-rog-a. Gaga nang-a!*
 go-DEP long do-IRR-2SG-PROH 2SG.PRO.EMPH self-ATT
 ‘Don’t go far. By yourself, hear!’

3.3 Tense, mood and reality status in non-final verbs

Medial verbs do not inflect for tense, reality status, or mood. See section 4.2 for aspectual distinctions marked on non-final verbs.

4 Aspect and evidentiality

In contrast with Awara (Quigley, this volume), Ma Manda (Pennington, this volume) and Nek (Linnasalo, this volume), the Nungon Habitual aspect is marked analytically, not inflectionally. Six aspects are formally marked in final verbs, with perfective as the unmarked aspect. One of these aspects combines non-firsthand evidentiality with habitual aspect. In medial verbs and deverbal nominalizations, further aspectual distinctions are marked; these are addressed in section 4.2.

4.1 Aspect in the final verbal system

Aspects marked in the verbal predicate are: Habitual, Continuous, Continuous Habitual, Inferred Imperfective, Completive, and Imminent. These aspects employ non-final forms of the lexical verb with the verbs *it-* ‘be’ or *to-* ‘do.’

Nungon non-final verbs without different-subject endings take two forms, called Dependent and Medial.⁴ Dependent verbs may serve in tight multi-verb constructions and in the Habitual aspect, but cannot stand alone before a pause, while Medial verbs may serve as medial clause predicates. These two forms, shown in Table 23, are the basis for five of the six aspectual constructions below.

Table 23: Same-subject non-final verb forms

	Vowel-Final Verb Roots	Consonant-Final Verb Roots
Dependent (DEP) form	root + <i>-ng</i>	root
Medial (MV) form	Dependent form + <i>-a</i>	

⁴ In the convention used here, the term denoting a specific form in Nungon morphology is called Medial, while the general term ‘medial’ referring to non-final clauses and their predicates is un-capitalized.

The six aspects discussed here are listed in Table 24.

Table 24: Marked aspects in Nungon

	Habitual	Continuous	Continuous Habitual	Inferred Imperfective	Compleitive	Imminent
form	DEP + <i>it-</i> ‘be’	MV + <i>it-</i> ‘be’	MV + <i>it-</i> ‘be’ in Habitual form	MV + <i>to-</i> ‘do’ with suffix - <i>g-</i> in Present	DEP + = <i>dup</i> , optional aux. <i>to-</i> ‘do’	PROB + - <i>na</i> , optional aux. <i>to-</i> ‘do’
# of phon. words	1	2	2	2	2	2
inflection possible for auxiliary	Remote Past, Present, Remote Future	all	same as Habitual	only Present; clause chaining not possible	all	all

4.1.1 The Habitual, Continuous, and Continuous Habitual aspects

The Habitual aspect combines the Dependent form of the verb with the auxiliary verb *it-* ‘be’ in a single phonological word. The Habitual is used to express ongoing actions that span large stretches of time.

- (16) *Yup to-ng-o mu-ya, aap wer=ir-a-ng.*
bird do-DEP-MVii PERF.2/3PL-MV song 3SG.O.beat=be-PRES-2/3PL
‘Having made their feather decorations, **they (always) beat out** their songs.’

The Continuous aspect also employs the verb *it-* ‘be’ as auxiliary, but with the Medial form of the verb. The Continuous is used to describe actions or events in progress in the time of reference, with no requirement that they continue beyond that time. In the following example describing the fate of sinners according to a Biblical source, the speaker uses the Continuous in the Remote Future to highlight the internal composition of the burning they will experience:

- (17) *Idit-no bongon wakwag-o di-ng-a*
existence-DEF time long-ADJ burn-DEP-MV
it-ni-ng-ma ya-a-k.
be-IRR.PL-2/3PL-RF say-PRES-3SG
‘“They **will be burning** for a very long time,” he says.’

The Continuous Habitual morphologically and semantically combines these two aspects. It brings the Habitual into closer focus, emphasizing the unceasing character of the ongoing action. Here, the medial form of the lexical verb is followed by the verb *it-* ‘be’ in the Habitual aspect:

- (18) *Ep-ni-ng-ma* *yo-ng-a*, ***hori-ng-a*** ***ir=ir-a-ng***.
 come-IRR.PL-2/3PL-RF say-DEP-MV **wait-DEP-MV** **be=be-PRES-2/3PL**
 ‘Thinking that they_i will come, **they_j are always waiting.**’

The auxiliary verb *it-* ‘be’ in the Habitual and Continuous Habitual may only inflect for Remote Past, Present, or Remote Future, reflecting the meanings of these aspects ‘used to do/be doing,’ ‘always do/am doing,’ and ‘will always do/be doing.’ These two aspects, which refer to actions over long spans of time, cannot be used with the tenses that refer to short stretches of time – it does not make sense to say ‘This morning, I used to walk/used to be walking,’ for instance.

In contrast, the *it-* ‘be’ auxiliary of the Continuous may inflect for any of the five Nungon tenses, and in example (19) is shown inflected for Near Future:

- (19) *Maa* *opm~opmou* ***yo-ng-a*** ***it-nang-ka-mong***.
 speech small **say-DEP-MV** **be-PROB.PL-NF-1PL**
 ‘We **will (presently) be speaking** small talk (to pass the time on the Sabbath).’

4.1.2 The Inferred Imperfective: aspect and evidentiality

Across languages, if evidentiality is only marked in a certain tense or aspect, this is usually past tense or perfect aspect (Aikhenvald 2004: 264). But the Nungon Inferred Imperfective aspect, which combines habitual or imperfective aspect and non-firsthand evidentiality, occurs only in Present tense.

The Inferred Imperfective aspect is canonically used for an action that is presumably being done regularly, but which the speaker has not directly observed; in the Nungon corpus, this aspect only occurs with animate subject arguments, and only in the Present tense. The lexical verb appears in medial form, followed by the verb *to-* ‘do,’ with an additional suffix *-g* before the Present tense suffix *-a*.

- (20) *Oe-no* ***wet-a*** ***ta-g-a-k***.
 woman-3SG.POSS **3SG.O.beat-MV** **do-INF-PRES-3SG**
 ‘He **must beat** his wife (regularly).’ [Inference by the speaker.]

- (21) *Tanak* *ma=na-ng-a* *ta-g-a-k.*
 food NEG=eat-DEP-MV do-INF-PRES-3SG
 ‘She **must not be eating** food.’ [Because she has a large sore on her lips;
 but the speaker does not know for sure, since the afflicted woman has
 confined herself to her house and cannot speak.]

When the Inferred Imperfective aspect occurs in the first person, however, the evidentiality of examples (20) and (21) does not seem to play a role. A speaker who had been told the English word for ‘knee’ but kept forgetting it when quizzed produced example (22):

- (22) *Nok* *eto-ng-a* *ta-g-a-t.*
 1SG.PRO forget-DEP-MV do-INF-PRES-1SG
 ‘I seem to keep forgetting.’

Such special uses of evidentiality marking with the first person are also found in other languages (Aikhenvald 2004: 219).

4.1.3 The Completive aspect

The Completive denotes that an action has been performed thoroughly or has completely finished. As such, it does not occur with atelic verbs such as *it-* ‘be.’ The Completive is formed by adding the enclitic =*dup* to the Dependent form of the lexical verb. This is usually followed by the auxiliary *to-* ‘do.’ Alternatively, the Dependent verb + =*dup* may stand alone, bearing full Completive meaning without the auxiliary *to-* ‘do.’

Example (23) shows the Completive aspect with the intransitive verb *omo-* ‘die,’ while Example (24) shows the Completive aspect with the transitive verb *henet-* ‘tie up.’ Example (25) shows the Completive aspect construction without the auxiliary verb *to-* ‘do.’

- (23) *Gungak* *yoni* *hottop* *omo-ng=dup* *to-gu-ng.*
 child 3PL.POSS first-born die-DEP=COMPL do-RP-2/3PL
 ‘Their first-born children died out completely.’
- (24) *Amna* *ho* *eet-na* *obu-na* *henet=dup* *to-gu-ng.*
 man FOC leg-1SG.POSS arm-1SG.POSS tie.up=COMPL do-RP-2/3PL
 ‘It was the men who tied up my arms and legs completely.’

- (25) *Ööp=bon ööp=bon amna temo-ng=dup*
 quiet=ADV quiet=ADV man shoot-DEP=COMPL
doo-ng=dup.
 3NSG.O.kill-DEP=COMPL
 ‘Quietly, quietly, (they) shot all the men and killed them all.’

4.1.4 The Imminent aspect

The Imminent aspect combines modal and aspectual meanings, as in colloquial American English ‘be fitting to do s.t.’: *I’m fitting to go* could imply either desire for action, or the imminence of the action, or both. The Imminent is formed by adding a suffix *-na* to the Probable inflection. This is usually followed by the auxiliary *to-* ‘do’; but as with the Completive, the Imminent still bears Imminent meaning if the auxiliary *to-* ‘do’ is omitted. This is the case in example (26) below, in which the lexical verb is itself the verb *to-* ‘do’:

- (26) *Imun gamun to-nang-na, Hamerengan ongo-ng=it-du-ng.*
 trade do-PROB.PL-IMNT Hamerengan go-DEP=be-RP-2/3PL
 ‘Wanting to do trade, they used to go to Hamerengan.’

4.1.5 Aspect with serial constructions

These aspects may be readily applied to expressions that are usually expressed in tight multi-verb constructions, such as *ho-ng i-mo-* ‘feed’ (literally ‘cook and give to s.o.’). To express ‘feed’ in the Continuous Habitual and Remote Past, the last verb of the lexical multi-verb construction must be in the appropriate form for the Continuous Habitual – in this case, Medial form; this is followed by the auxiliary verb – in this case, the verb *it-* ‘be’ itself in the Habitual form.

- (27) *Ho-ng i-mo-ng-a ir=it-do-t.*
 cook-DEP 3SG.O-give-DEP-MV be=be-RP-1SG
 ‘I used to (always) be feeding her.’

4.1.6 Negation of aspect

The Habitual, Continuous, Continuous Habitual, and Inferred Predilection are all negated with the proclitic *ma=* before the first lexical verb. Thus, the past Continuous Habitual example in (27) is negated as follows:

- (28) *Ma=ho-ng i-mo-ng-a ir=it-do-t.*
 NEG=COOK-DEP 3SG.O-give-DEP-MV be=be-RP-1SG
 ‘I did not use to be feeding her.’

As noted in section 3.1.1, the Present tense inflection may not be directly negated. But a predicate ending in a final verb inflected for the Present tense may be negated as long as the negator *ma=* does not directly precede the auxiliary verb that is inflected for Present tense. Example (29) shows negated *it-* ‘be’ in Habitual aspect; the lexical verb *it-* ‘be’ serves as the buffer between the auxiliary verb (also *it-* ‘be’) inflected for Present tense and the negator *ma=*:

- (29) *Nok ng-ondo ma=ir=it-ta-t.*
 1SG.PRO here-LOC.NEAR NEG=be=be-PRES.SG-1SG
 ‘I’m not usually around here.’

4.2 Aspectual marking on non-final verbs and deverbal nominalizations

In non-final verbs, as in final verbs, the unmarked aspect is perfective. All aspects marked in final verbs, except Inferred Imperfective, may also occur in medial clauses, with the auxiliary verb *it-* ‘be’ or *to-* ‘do’ taking Medial form. But non-final verbs also distinguish two additional aspects: Perfect and Temporal Precedence.

4.2.1 Aspectual distinctions in non-final clauses

All aspects discussed in section 4.1 except Inferred Imperfective can occur in non-final clauses if the auxiliary verb is in Medial form. The following example illustrates this with the Continuous aspect:

- (30) *Ya-ma-ng-a e-e-ya, urop yo-gu-ng.*
 3.O-guard-DEP-MV be-DS.1SG-MV enough say-RP-2/3PL
 ‘As I was watching over him, that’s it, they spoke.’

4.2.2 Subject indexing on non-final verbs

Table 23 showed the default endings for Dependent and Medial verbs. These include no indexing of subject person or number; in the 15 verbs discussed in

section 2.2.1, object number or person and number are obligatorily marked through the object prefix.

In the Nungon switch-reference system, if a speaker anticipates that the subject argument of (medial or final) verb B will differ from the subject of medial verb A, and A precedes B in a clause chain, A receives a suffix indexing the person and number of its own subject argument. This marking is obligatory where subjects of A and B differ. Example (30) shows this marking. If the speaker anticipates that the subject arguments of Medial verb A and the following verb B will be the same, the unmarked Medial suffix is used; this is the case in examples (3), (9), (14), and (18).

Table 25: Dependent subject agreement

	SG	DU	PL
1	-wa	-ra	-na
2	-i	-un	-u
3	-un		

Table 26: Medial subject agreement

	SG	DU	PL
1	-wa-ya	-ra-ya	-na-ya
2	-i-ya	-un-ya	-u-ya
3	-un-a		

Subject indexing on non-final verbs occurs in both of the special non-final verb aspectual distinctions.

4.2.3 Perfect aspect with Medial verbs

The optional Perfect aspect marking denotes that an event within a clause chain has finished before the onset of the next event. This marking is helpful for tail-head linkage within long clause chains. In the Perfect aspect, the lexical verb in Medial form is followed by the dummy verb root *mo(t)-* (possibly related to the verb *i-mo-* ‘give to’). The verb *mo(t)-* takes forms that probably originated in the subject agreement paradigm related to switch-reference. The difference here is that the subject of the following clause may be either the same as or different from the subject indexed on *mo(t)-*.

The Perfect is also one area of grammar where language change is evident: older and more conservative speakers employ a suffix *-o* on the Medial verb before the Perfect instead of the usual Medial suffix *-a*.

Table 27: Perfect aspect marking

	SG	DU	PL
1	<i>moraina</i>	<i>motdaina</i>	<i>motnaina</i>
2	<i>mina</i>	<i>munya</i>	<i>muya</i>
3	<i>muna</i>		

Example (31) is from the speech of a man in his mid-twenties. He does not use the archaic suffix *-o* on the medial verb before the Perfect marker.

- (31) *Winduwa towi-ng hoo-ng-a moraina, yama=ha*
window arrange-DEP close-DEP-MV PERF.1SG door=BEN
öö-ng ongo-go-mok.
ascend-DEP go-RP-1DU
‘I having arranged and closed the windows, the two of us went up for
(wood for) the doors.’

4.2.4 Temporal Precedence aspect in Dependent verbs

In the Temporal Precedence construction, a Dependent verb marked with subject-indexing suffix is repeated twice, usually followed by the Focus postposition *=ho* (which marks intransitive and transitive subject, instrument, manner, and sometimes location). The meaning is that the event so described occurs first in time before some other event, or that the verbal S argument goes first in a spatial trajectory, before some other actor.

- (32) *Yup y-un y-un=to, urop ongo-ng-a,*
bird speak-DS.3SG speak-DS.3SG=FOC enough go-DEP-MV
gombo=dek hori-ng-a it-do-morok.
fence=LOC wait-DEP-MV be-RP-2/3DU
‘A bird having spoken first, that’s it, going to the fence, they were waiting.’

The Temporal Precedence construction may serve as a command:

- (33) *Ong-i* *ong-i=ho*
 go-DS.2SG go-DS.2SG=FOC
 ‘You go ahead (of me)!’

The Perfect aspect does not have the same connotation of progression along a single trajectory in time or space, nor can it convey the same commanding power.

4.3 Other ways of indicating aspect

As in Awara, Ma Manda, and Nek, there are additional ways to indicate aspect beyond the core six above. These involve verbs that have been bleached of much of their lexical meaning functioning in tight multi-verb constructions with other, lexical verbs.

4.3.1 Durative with *ku-* ‘take away’

The verb *ku-/hu-* ‘take away’ was listed among transitive verbs that take number-referencing prefixes in Table 11. The form that references a singular object argument, *ku-*, may indicate Durative aspect when it follows a Dependent verb of motion or the verb *it-* ‘be’, as in:

- (34) *Babiya* *bök* *öö-ng* *ku-go-t*.
 paper house ascend-DEP SG.O.take.away-RP-1SG
 ‘I was going to school for a long time.’

Durative aspectual meaning may occur when *ku-* follows a range of verbs, including both intransitive verbs such as *it-* ‘be’ and verbs of motion, and transitive verbs, such as *dawi-* ‘search for,’ *tan-* ‘follow,’ and *to-* ‘do.’ But *ku-* may also combine as the second or final verb in a tight multi-verb construction and maintain lexical meaning ‘take away.’ In texts, context usually shows whether *ku-* bears lexical meaning or indicates Durative aspect.

4.3.2 Finality

The verb *mö-* ‘fall, plant’ in Dependent form, as first verb in a tight multi-verb construction, indicates that an action was completed with finality and purposefulness. Use of this construction is not obligatory to indicate that an action was

completed, and its occurrence is restricted to narrative contexts. It translates well as colloquial English ‘up and X,’ as in *I up and left*.

A boy accused of theft defended himself with an alibi describing where he had been earlier that day. At the end of his narrative, he stated:

- (35) ...*nok* *mö-ng* *e-wa-t*.
 1SG.PRO fall-DEP come-NP.SG-1SG
 ‘... I just/surely/up and came.’

Use of *mö-ng* here adds finality and vehemence to the boy’s statement. He could have substituted an adverb such as *urop* ‘enough, that’s it’ for *mö-ng*, for slightly different meaning.

5 Conclusion

This paper introduced the parameters of tense, aspect, mood, modality, reality status, and evidentiality marking in the Finisterre-Huon (FH) Papuan language Nungon. Nungon shows many commonalities with other FH languages, including: fusion of tense and number marking, verbal morpho-phonological and transitivity-related sub-class divisions, both delayed and immediate imperative paradigms, and division of inflectional paradigms into morphologically-related groups.

Six aspects are marked on final verbs, with marking primarily analytic, not synthetic. Although five of these can also be used with medial verbs, two special aspectual distinctions occur only with non-final verb forms.

Nungon is distinctive among Finisterre-Huon languages described to date in having a formally marked realis Remote Future that contrasts with the formally unmarked Irrealis inflection. It is similar to Awara (Quigley, this volume) in that one aspectual distinction also marks non-firsthand evidentiality. Finally, while all other languages in this volume mark habitual aspect synthetically, Nungon marks habitual aspect through a tight multi-verb construction. Nungon is evidence that the habitual aspect suffixes in other languages may have originated as auxiliary verbs.

Abbreviations

1	first person	3	third person
2	second person	ADJ	adjective

ADV	adverbial	LOC	locative
ATT	attention	MV	medial verb
BEN	benefactive	NEG	negative
COMPL	completive	NF	near future
CONJ	conjunction	NOMZ	nominalizer
CONTR	contrafactual	NP	near past
DEICT	deictic	NSG	non-singular
DEL.IMP	delayed imperative	O	object
DEP	dependent	PERF	perfect
DS	different subject	PL	plural
DU	dual	POSS	possessive
DUB	dubitative	PRES	present
EMPH	emphatic	PRO	personal pronoun
FOC	focus	PROH	prohibitive
GEN	genitive	PROB	probable
IMM.IMP	immediate imperative	REL	relativizer
IMNT	imminent	RF	remote future
INF	inferred imperfective	RP	remote past
INSTR	instrument	SG	singular
IRR	irrealis	SPEC	specifier

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