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A GRAMMAR OF THE NEVERVER
LANGUAGE OF MALAKULA (VANUATU)

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of the requirements
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For Terry, *bi kafsh*

Abolfazl, *bā kafsh*

and Samira, *kafsh-et ku?*

Abstract

A grammar of the Neverver language of Malakula (Vanuatu) is a synchronic account of the endangered Neverver language spoken by the Mindu and Sakhān peoples. The description is one outcome of a larger project to document the Neverver language, and it is based on a large and varied corpus of communicative events collected from Neverver speakers residing in the villages of Limap and Lingarakh. The description includes an account of the phonological system of the language, where complex segments with prenasalisation, including bilabial and alveolar trills, contrast with plain segments. Heterogeneous and geminate sequences of consonants are permitted in the language, provided syllable onsets and codes are simple. Epenthesis can be employed to ensure that the maximal CVC syllable template is adhered to. The nominal system displays classes of common, personal, and local nouns, along with independent pronouns, and a set of pronominal-nouns. Possessive constructions suggest an earlier system based on the semantic notion of alienability; today constructions are formed by a combination of semantic and phonological properties. The nominal modifying particle is employed in one type of possessive construction, as well as in relative clauses with definite heads. Verbs are either inherently transitive or intransitive; valency increase is achieved with suffixation, while valency decrease can be achieved with reduplication. Reduplication is common in the corpus and typically serves as a marker of low transitivity. In keeping with the basic constraint on syllable structure, the reduplicative prefix has a CV(C) template. In terms of verbal morphology, Neverver is a mood-prominent language, with all verbal predicates being marked for either realis or irrealis mood. Further tense/aspect distinctions can be

indicated with optional verbal morphology. The basic word order of verbal predicates is SVO, and the language is both head-initial and head-marking. A number of complex constructions have been identified in the language. Complex nuclei, including incorporated objects and nuclear serial verb constructions, contrast structurally with core serial verb constructions. Concordant mood marking characterises core serial constructions, while sentential complements display varying patterns of mood dependency. Adverbial subordination and subordinating tail-head linkage contrast with coordinate structures, including syndetic coordination and juxtaposition. A variety of inter-propositional semantic relations are expressed through these complex structures.

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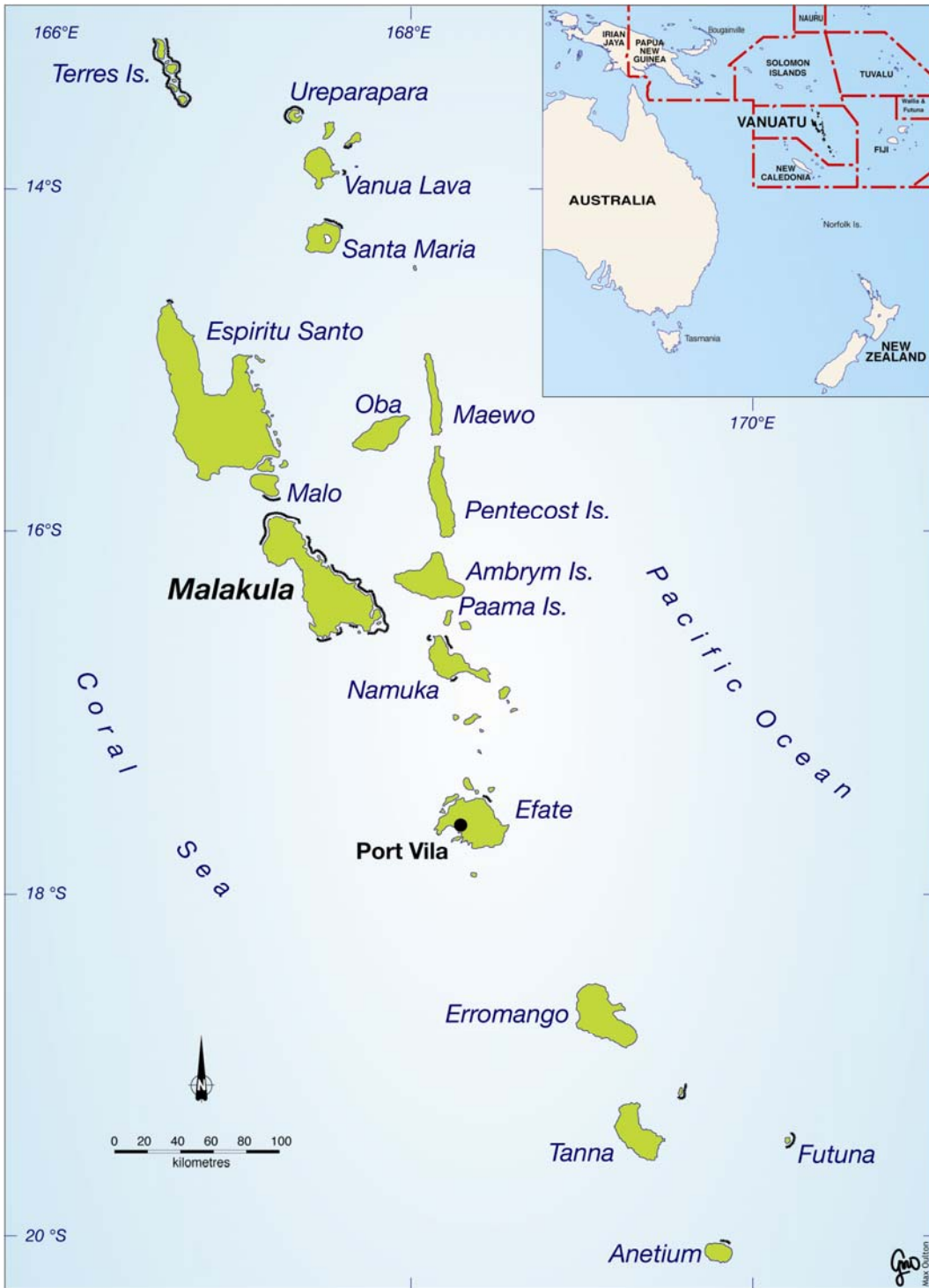
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Abbreviations

,	pause		
[NV...]	data reference	LOC	general locative preposition
↗	rising intonation	LOC.on	locative preposition ‘on’
→	level/falling intonation	LOC.PN	locative pronominal-noun
↘	falling terminal intonation	LOC.PSN	locative personal preposition
1	first person	n.	noun
2	second person	NEG	negative particle
3	third person	NMOD	nominal modifying particle
ANA	anaphoric demonstrative	NPR	nominalising prefix
ANT	anterior tense/aspect	NSF	nominalising suffix
APPL	applicative suffix	NSG	non-singular
AUGCO	augmentative coordination	PART	partitive aspect
CAUSE	subordinator of cause	PERF	discourse perfect aspect
COMP	complementiser	PL	plural
COMPL	completive aspect	PROG	progressive aspect
CONT	continuative aspect	PS	possessive
COP	copula	PSDT	possessive determiner
DEF	definite	PSNPR	personal prefix
DEMSPN	demonstrative pronominal-noun	PSPN	possessive pronominaliser
DL	dual	PTLY	partly complete aspect
DUP	reduplication	PURPOSE	subordinator of purpose
EMPH	emphatic marker	REAL	realis mood
EX	exclusive	RMT	remote tense/aspect
EXCL	exclamatory marker	RSPN	resumptive pronoun
FREQ	frequentative aspect	s.o.	someone
IMM	immediate tense/aspect	s.t.	something
IMPS	impersonal subject	SG	singular
IN	inclusive	ST	stative prefix
INDEF	indefinite	TEMP	temporary aspect
INDEF.PN	indefinite pronoun	TEMPPROX	marker of temporal proximity
IRR	irrealis mood	TMPPN	temporal pronominal-noun
k.o.	a kind of	v.	verb



Map 1. Malakula Island in Vanuatu

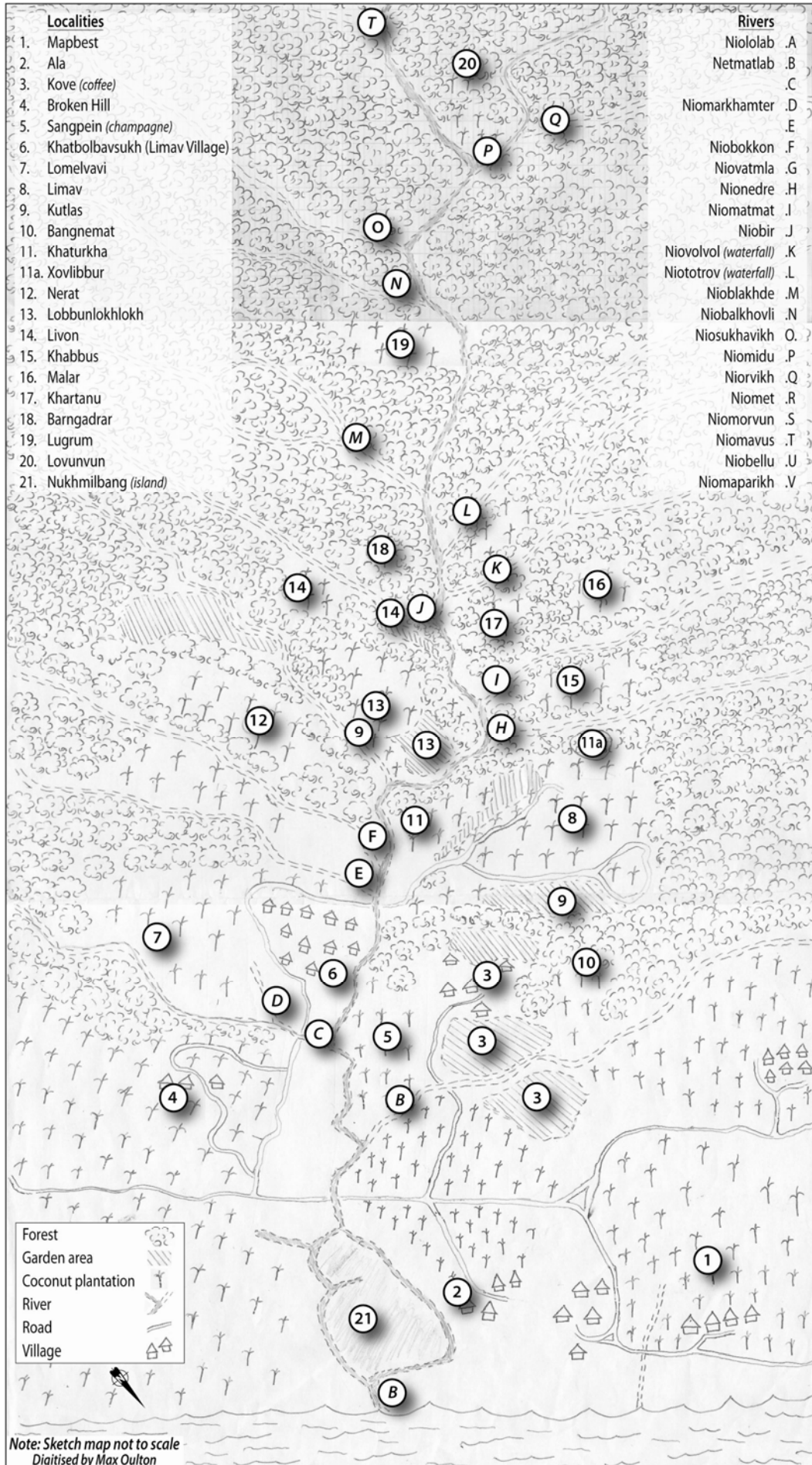


Map 2. Location of Malakula languages that have been the subject of recent linguistic study. Moribund languages in parentheses.



Map 3. Location of Neverver speakers in North-Central Malakula.
Non-dominant languages in parentheses.

Map 4. Hand-drawn map of the Netmatlab River Valley (next page)
Prepared by Song-Be Peniyas, with Limap village elders, for
the Neverver Documentation Project.



Chapter One

Introduction

Neverver, the language of the Mindu and Sakhan people, is spoken on Malakula Island in Vanuatu by some 560 people. The speech community is located primarily in the villages of Lingarakh and Limap on the eastern side of north-central Malakula. Neverver survives in a context of extraordinary linguistic diversity, being surrounded by indigenous Malakula languages as well as the introduced languages English, Bislama, and to a lesser extent French. Prior to the current study, this Southern Oceanic language (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:113-115) was virtually unknown to the academic world.

Despite the very small speech community and a range of pressures on the language, intergenerational transmission has continued and the language is not yet moribund. A language documentation project, initiated in August 2004, aims to provide a lasting record of Neverver as it is used by members of the speech community. Conducted in collaboration with a team of Neverver speakers, the language documentation project has already produced multiple outputs.¹ This descriptive grammar is one further output, targetted at a linguistic audience.

¹ Major outputs of the documentation project comprise the development of a community orthography and literacy materials prepared in the orthography, including multiple copies of: an illustrated alphabet booklet; a numeral booklet; illustrated primers; flash cards; hymn booklets; and a collection of traditional and contemporary stories told by Neverver speakers. Most of the literacy materials have been prepared by community members. A draft wordlist has been compiled and is currently being developed into a dictionary. Visual images of community members collected during field work have been printed. Visual images of flora are being collated in a database with ethnobotanical documentation. A draft of this last output will be prepared in hard copy for community members to develop further.

1.1. Geographic and linguistic context

Malakula Island, home to the speakers of the Neverver language, is the second largest of more than eighty islands that make up the Vanuatu archipelago. More than one hundred indigenous languages are thought to be spoken on the islands of Vanuatu, and at least eighty of these are still actively used (Lynch & Crowley 2001:4). Malakula Island alone boasts some twenty-four actively-spoken indigenous languages, along with a further fifteen languages that have been identified as either extinct or moribund (Lynch & Crowley 2001:68, 85). This extraordinary number of indigenous languages is spoken by a population estimated to be around 27,000 (Lynch & Crowley 2001:67). Over 12,000 of these people speak either a dialect of North East Malakula/Uripiv or Big Nambas/V'ënen Taut. The remaining twenty-two actively spoken languages boast very small populations.

According to local history, the Neverver speech community was traditionally located in the interior of Malakula, where it was spoken by the Mindu and Sakhan people. An account of traditional death ceremonies and beliefs features the central Lovarmas Peak as the point of departure of souls to *Labbu*, the spirit world (Lerakhsil Moti & James Bangsukh, pers. comm.). On a locally drawn map, the Mindu river is identified as an inland stream that feeds into the Netmatlamb river. The Netmatlamb river runs from inland Malakula past one of the present-day village sites, down to the eastern coast. Linguistic evidence supports local history, with a survey of the Neverver lexicon revealing none of the rich coral reef vocabulary typically used by coastal dwellers in the tropics.

Population movements towards the eastern coast are still recalled by older community members. Following the arrival of Christian missionaries to Malakula in the 1880s, the villagers report a gradual migration from the interior

of Malakula towards Bushman's Bay and Crab Bay. The Mindu and Sakan peoples settled together in Limap village in the Netmatlamb River Valley and in Lingarakh village in the Nurumbat River Valley. A few community members have moved further towards the eastern coast since that migration.

Malakula underwent severe depopulation in the early 1900s, primarily caused by the introduction of European diseases (cf. Crowley 1990:98-100; Deacon 1934:18-22). Traditional ways of life were interrupted by this depopulation and in the 1930s visiting anthropologist A. Bernard Deacon believed that the Malakulan people as a whole were unlikely to survive, commenting that 'the natives are the last survivors of a dying people' (Gardiner 1984:33).

Undoubtedly, the Neverver speech community was affected by depopulation also. The variety of Neverver spoken today is said to be based on the Mindu dialect. While some community members are still identified as being of Sakan descent, any historical dialectal differences have been lost as the speakers have migrated and regrouped.

In early 2005, the total population of the Neverver speech community was calculated to be fewer than 600. This figure was based on a house-to-house head count that was carried out with language consultants in the community. When defined by Neverver speakers, the speech community consists of the members of all households where at least one parent speaks Neverver as their dominant language. Almost all such households are located in the villages of Limap or Lingarakh, or in family hamlets surrounding these two villages. Lingarakh village is home to nearly 350 community members; Limap village is home to around 160 Neverver speakers. Around fifty more live in coastal plantation settlements located up to three kilometres away from the main villages. Near the

Limap access road is the locally-owned TFC² plantation and further north near the Lingarakh access road is the plantation settlement of Losarsar. Both plantation settlements are home to a small number of Neverver-speaking families. There are some non-community members in neighbouring villages who speak a little Neverver, but these people do not have direct family ties to the community and are not included by the community in their count of speakers. Even if such non-dominant speakers were to be included, it is unlikely that an estimated population would be significantly over 700 speakers.³

1.1.1. Limap village

Limap is the smaller of the two Neverver villages. It is geographically rather isolated. Foot roads into the deep interior that traditionally traversed the island have been abandoned and Limap can only be reached by a single access road from the eastern coast. A consequence of the isolation of Limap village is that villagers tend to be occupied with matters close to home. The cultivation of giant yams is the primary occupation of men, while women cultivate a wide range of tropical fruit and vegetables. Villagers also participate in the cultivation of coconuts and cacao trees, as harvesting copra and cacao is the main means of

² The meaning of this acronym could not be identified.

³ In *Languages of Vanuatu: A new survey and bibliography* (Lynch & Crowley 2001:79), it was estimated that Nevwervwer (correctly Neverver) was spoken by approximately 1250 people. These speakers were thought to be distributed through the villages of Limap and Lingarakh, as well as Sarmet. Lynch and Crowley (2001:4-6) stress that their figures are approximations and note that the actual figures could be considerably different (2001:4-6). The estimated population was extrapolated from census data collected in 1989 and the assumption was made that a sizable number of people in surrounding villages are also competent Neverver speakers. Sarmet (or Sarmette) is in fact a plantation settlement rather than a local village, and is not the permanent home of any Neverver speakers.

raising cash. Travel to other villages, including Lingarakh, is only undertaken for business or on special occasions.

Linguistically, Neverver is the dominant language of communication in Limap, with 88% of households reporting themselves to be Neverver-dominant. For families in which Neverver is not dominant, Bislama (a dialect of Melanesian Pidgin which is the national language of Vanuatu and regional *lingua franca* (Crowley 1990)) is the dominant language of communication between children and their parents. Outside of the home, Neverver is the most commonly heard language, although Bislama also occurs. Its use is triggered by the presence of non-community members, or by communication in domains where Bislama is employed rather than Neverver (see §1.3.2).

Many Limap residents, particularly members of the older generations, are multilingual. They speak up to three indigenous languages alongside Neverver and Bislama. There are two or three first-language speakers of the moribund Vivti language, and several Neverver speakers in the older generations can also speak some Vivti. In the village context, however, any individual multilingualism is rather inactive, as knowledge of other local languages is seldom required for day-to-day communication.

1.1.2. Lingarakh village

Lingarakh village, home to more than half of the Neverver speech community, is far less isolated than Limap. Lingarakh is located across the Nurumbat river from the Avava-speaking village of Khatbol. As Lingarakh and Khatbol have grown, the physical and social boundaries between the two villages have become indistinct. Additionally, community members regularly traverse the island to Vinmavis and Tisvel villages on the western coast. Daily

transportation is available from Lingarakh into Lakatoro, the provincial centre of the Malampa (Malakula-Ambrym-Paama) province. 'Going to town' is undertaken for entertainment as well as business. There are employment opportunities in the government offices and businesses in Lakatoro for those with appropriate skills, and young men can find casual employment on coastal plantations between Lingarakh and Lakatoro. The traditional activity of gardening is now balanced with income-earning employment in Lingarakh.

While Neverver is still the dominant language of most people in Lingarakh, it is found in only 75% of households. Around 17% of households are Bislama-dominant and just over 8% of households make use of another local language as the dominant language of communication. In contrast to the reported, though largely inactive multilingualism in Limap village, the residents of Lingarakh village are more actively multilingual. Bislama is used regularly for a variety of daily interactions, alongside other vernacular languages and occasionally English. A consequence of the active multilingualism in Lingarakh is that some younger speakers of Neverver lack the wealth of lexical knowledge displayed by their peers in Limap.

1.1.3. Multilingual interactions

Malakula, with its large number of indigenous languages, has long been multilingual; however, recently, the migration of people towards coastal settlements has brought Neverver speakers into daily contact with speakers of numerous other languages. Today, Neverver speakers interact with speakers of the related Avava language located in Khatbol, Taremp, Tembimbi, and Tisvel villages. There is regular contact with speakers of the Neve'ei language, in Vinmavis village. Neverver speakers also have contact with speakers of the

Northeast Malakula/Uripiv language who live on the north-east coast of Malakula, as well as the remaining speakers of the moribund Naman, Vivti and Tape languages who are dispersed through north-central Malakula.

In addition to increasing contact with speakers of other indigenous languages, the movement of the Neverver speech community towards the eastern coast of Malakula has brought Neverver speakers into regular contact with Bislama and English, two dominant written languages. Bislama, Vanuatu's constitutionally recognised National Language (Vanuatu 1980), has been the *lingua franca* in the wider Malakula context for many generations now. All Neverver community members can speak this language and most have some literacy skills in Bislama. English and French were asserted as the languages of education and government in Vanuatu during the joint French-English colonial rule. Following Independence in 1980, English and French were named the languages of formal education in the Vanuatu constitution (Vanuatu 1980). English and French were also named the Official Languages of Vanuatu along with Bislama (Vanuatu 1980). Of these three languages, Bislama is the most widely spoken on Malakula. English and French remain prestigious because of their ties to education, administration and increasingly, financial success. Although there are Francophone areas in Malakula, the Neverver region is Anglophone and members of the Neverver speech community have not been observed to speak French.

1.2. Historical origins

Speakers of Neverver are hypothesised to be one of many groups of people who are descendants of the sea-faring travellers who made a style of ceramics known as ‘Lapita’. The Lapita people are thought to be the single source of all early Oceanic settlement (cf. Kirch 2000). While archeological investigation in Vanuatu has been limited, it has supported the claim that the Lapita people were the initial settlers in the region, arriving around 3000 years ago (Kirch 2000:135-138). Evidence from excavations on Malakula does not indicate any pre-Lapita settlement (cf. Bedford 2006:259; Bedford et al. 1998:185).

The current inhabitants of Malakula speak languages belonging to the Oceanic branch of the Austronesian language family (cf. Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002). It has been speculated that all the languages of Malakula may eventually be classified as part of the Oceanic subgroup named the ‘Central Vanuatu Linkage’, along with languages spoken on the islands of southern Pentecost, Ambrym, Epi, the Shepherd Islands, Nguna, and the northern parts of Efate (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:112-113).

Tryon’s (1976) classification of the languages of Vanuatu (then the New Hebrides) is the earliest comprehensive attempt to explore the relationships between the vernacular languages of this region. This work was based largely on lexicostatistical principles, and are of rather limited reliability (see Lynch and Crowley (2001:2-3) for a critique). Tryon includes the language of ‘Lingarak’ (after the village Lingarakh where Neverver is spoken today) in his survey. Using word lists to establish percentages of cognate forms, Tryon classifies Lingarak/Neverver as belonging to the Malakula Central Sub-group, along with Katbol/Avava, Vinmavis/Neve‘ei, Litzlitz/Naman, Big Nambas/V’ënen Taut and

a small number of other languages (Tryon 1976:87-88). In 1976, when Tryon published his findings, none of these languages had been fully described.

Lynch (n.d.), working with data collected during new descriptive and documentary projects on Malakula⁴, proposes that Neverver's closest known genetic relative is the moribund Naman language. Lynch (n.d.) places Neverver and Naman in a sub-group of Malakula languages spoken on the western coast of the island. This placement appears at odds with the current location of the Neverver speech community on the eastern coast of Malakula but it aligns well with the oral history described in §1.1. that locates the speech community in the interior of the island. Although Lynch (n.d.) has begun to propose relationships between the languages spoken on Malakula, the detailed description of individual languages in this region needs to be completed before firmer sub-grouping hypotheses can be established.

1.2.1. Early work on Neverver

Before the current project began in August 2004, there had been very little research carried out on Neverver. The first published material on the language took the form of a short list of kinship terms under the name of Nesan in A. Bernard Deacon's anthropological volume titled *Malekula: a vanishing people in the New Hebrides* (Deacon 1934:125). Bernard Deacon, a novice British anthropologist, spent around fourteen months on Malakula and its neighbouring

⁴ A number of linguistic projects have been undertaken on Malakula Island in the last decade. The linguists working on these projects are mostly based in New Zealand, and include: Terry Crowley, who had described Avava (Crowley 2006a) and Naman (2006b), and had begun work on Nese (2006c), and Tape (2006d) before his death in 2005; Martin Paviour-Smith, who has been working with the Aulua community for nearly a decade; Elizabeth Pearce who has studied of Unua-Pangkumu; and Laura Dimock who is currently studying Nahavaq. Ross McKerras, formerly of SIL, has compiled a grammar sketch of Northeast Malakula/Uripiv, and Amanda Brotchie, of Melbourne University (Australia), has carried out some work on Tirax.

islands in 1926 and early 1927, before his death from Blackwater fever on 12 March 1927 (Deacon 1934:xxvii). During this time, Deacon stayed with Ewan Corlette, a British planter who had a residence in Bushman's Bay. Bushman's Bay is no more than a day's walk from the Neverver villages, and it is possible that Deacon had contact with speakers of Neverver. The language name *Nesan* probably derives from the Neverver word *nessan* 'gut', which suggests the interior location of the speech community. On Deacon's hand-drawn maps, he identifies a group of people called the Mindu (Deacon 1934:2). He locates these people in the south-west of Malakula rather than in north-central Malakula, but given that Deacon never spent time in inland central Malakula, the Mindu people on his map may well be the Neverver-speaking Mindu. He does not make the connection between Mindu and Nesan however.

Today, Deacon's field notes are stored in the Royal Anthropological Institute's manuscript collection in London, and in the Haddon Files at the Cambridge University Library archive. Among the field notes held in the Haddon Files, a word list of some one hundred and thirty lexical items from Nesan has been identified (Deacon 1926-1927)⁵. This vocabulary list is clearly related to the Neverver language spoken today and even includes items with geminate consonants, which are a distinctive feature of Neverver (see §2.3.10). A number of interesting observations emerge from a comparison of Deacon's Nesan data and Neverver data collected in recent field trips. These are summarised in Table 1.1. below.

⁵ I came across Deacon's unpublished Nesan vocabulary list during a research trip to London in 2006. The aim of the research trip was to examine Deacon's field notes for data related to languages being investigated as part of a larger project titled 'Threatened languages on Malakula: Lessons for linguistic theory'. The complete vocabulary list is reproduced in Appendix I, with equivalents from the more recently collected Neverver material.

Observation	Deacon (1926-1927)	Barbour (2004-2008)
Evidence of geminate consonants	mmap ‘heavy’ -llag ‘seek’	[m:aϕ] [l:an]
Evidence that the shift from [ʰdʒ] to [ʰs] was underway in the 1920s	nituḡans ‘mosquito’	[nituyaʰs]
Evidence of labio-velar consonants [ʰbʷ] and [ʰpʷ] that are no longer present	naḡambwir (probably [naʰaᵐbʷir]) ‘dog’ pwis ‘smart’ nambwer ‘mushroom’	[naʰaᵐbir] [p:is] ‘hurt’ [neᵐber ~ neᵐbeᵐd]
No evidence of [d] in the alveolar trill [ʰdʰ]	nenre ‘blood’	[neᵐdʰe]
Evidence of front rounded vowels that are now very rare	nivüs (probably [niβys]) ‘bow’ tölas (probably [tølas]) ‘undo’	[niβis] [tlas] ‘untangle’

Table 1.1. Features of Neverver from data recorded by Deacon (1926-1927)

There can be no definitive explanation for the differences in the data collected by Deacon in the 1920s, and the data produced by native speakers of Neverver today. It is entirely likely that the language has undergone some phonemic change over the last century. Equally, the data could have been provided by a speaker of some no-longer-spoken dialect (such as the Sakan dialect) of Neverver, or by a fluent non-native speaker. Unfortunately, Deacon did not record any metadata with his word lists and we can do no more but speculate on his sources.

Much later, and without reference to Deacon’s linguistic records of Malakula languages, Darrell Tryon orchestrated a survey of the languages of Vanuatu. He identified Neverver as Bushman’s Bay (Tryon 1972), and then later as Lingarak (Tryon 1976). A Lingarak word list of around 180 items was published in Tryon's (1976) comparative study of the languages of the New Hebrides

(described in §1.2 above). A list of tree names for the Bushman's Bay language was later collected by one S. Gowers, and these are scattered through a volume on common trees of Vanuatu (Wheatley 1992). The paucity of information about Neverver led to it being described as both undocumented and unwritten in Lynch and Crowley's (2001:18) bibliographic survey of the languages of Vanuatu.

1.3. An evaluation of language vitality

In 2004, when the current project began, very few specific details were known about the Neverver language or its speakers. The current project has shed light on both topics. In this chapter, sociolinguistic matters are considered; linguistic matters are dealt with in chapters two to thirteen.

Prior to the current investigation, the vitality of Neverver had not been considered. It became a matter of interest when interacting with the speech community. In evaluating the vitality of the Neverver language, I employ the Language Vitality Assessment framework proposed by the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003). In their article 'Language Vitality and Endangerment' (UNESCO 2003), the Expert Group propose a set of nine factors for evaluating the vitality of an individual language. These factors are intended to be used as a tool for identifying the most urgent needs of a language community. The nine factors of the language vitality assessment include factors relating to the basic vitality of the language, the domains in which it is used, the current levels of linguistic documentation and literacy, and attitudes towards the language (UNESCO 2003:7). A summary of the language

vitality assessment for the Neverver speech community is presented here. The complete evaluation can be found in Appendix II.⁶

1.3.1. Language statistics and transmission patterns

In the language vitality assessment (UNESCO 2003), factors one to three deal with the numbers of people who speak the language and its transmission patterns. As noted in §1.1 above, the total population of the Neverver speech community is less than six hundred. This figure includes the members of all households where at least one parent speaks Neverver as their dominant language. The language is being transmitted to children in almost all households, although there are a small number of households with young children where Bislama, or another local language, is the dominant tongue. Thus, while the absolute number of speakers is extremely small, transmission is still taking place in most households.

1.3.2. Domains of use

Factors four and five of the UNESCO (2003) language vitality assessment concern domains of language use. The vitality of a language can be evaluated not only in terms of the number of domains in which it is used, but also in its capacity to make the transition into new domains. In the Neverver speech community, the domains in which Neverver is spoken have decreased. Traditional cultural practices have gradually succumbed to Western cultural practices. New communicative domains have emerged in both Limap and Lingarakh, but there have been few attempts to expand Neverver into these

⁶ Statements made about the vitality of the Neverver language are based almost entirely on my own ‘outsider’s’ observations of the speech community, although comments made to me by community members have shaped my interpretation of the context.

domains. Speech events concerning the church and public ceremonies, as well as regional politics and education, take place in Bislama or English rather than Neverver. Neverver is thus excluded from a number of domains that have become central to contemporary life.

1.3.2.1. Religion

In the domain of religion, Presbyterian beliefs and practices are now the centre of community life. Superficially, church events and the church hierarchy appear to have replaced many traditional events and social structures; however, the reality is that traditional beliefs and practices correspond well with Presbyterianism. There is evidence of local interpretations in the practice of Presbyterianism and at the same time, traditional practices have been incorporated into the contemporary religious system. For example, many traditional rituals associated with gardening have been absorbed into church rituals. Linguistically, however, religion is a domain dominated by Bislama. There are no religious materials in Neverver as yet. Hymn books are printed in Bislama, and personal Bibles are available either in Bislama or English. Services are conducted in Bislama, with occasional Bible readings in English. Neverver is used for a small number of hymns that community members have learnt, but it is not used for prayer or teachings. Rather, people use Neverver for more secular matters such as community notices at the end of the church service, for the children's story told during the service, for gossip, and for disciplining children.

1.3.2.2. Education

In the domain of education, community members report a traditional process whereby boys and girls were initiated separately into the roles and responsibilities of society. This has been replaced by English-medium formal education. There is no formal instruction either in the medium of Neverver or with Neverver as a subject. Neverver is used for basic organisational purposes in the local kindergartens, but even at the pre-school age, there is an emphasis on teaching English to prepare children for primary school. This is carried out mostly through the medium of Bislama rather than Neverver. In Lingarakh, Bislama is used by necessity in the kindergarten as there are a number of children in the village who do not speak Neverver. Formal education is offered in English at the area primary school in Lingarakh and also at Rensari primary school to the south of Limap. French-medium education is also available at Rensari, but very few Neverver-speaking children are admitted to the French-medium programme. This appears to be because of the Angophone orientation of the region where Neverver is spoken. Both Rensari and Lingarakh primary schools are staffed by teachers from different parts of Vanuatu and the teachers interact in English and Bislama. The schools cater for children from the linguistically diverse villages of central Malakula. The children board with local families during the week, and they generally interact in Bislama with their host-families and with each other. The communication pattern of using Bislama in any multilingual context is well-established at this age in the linguistically heterogeneous primary schools.

1.3.2.3. Media

In the domain of media, with respect to radio, newspapers and television, there is no Neverver-based new media available at present. English, French and Bislama are the languages of these new media in Vanuatu, but these are accessed rather rarely in the villages of Malakula with lack of electricity and poor transmission being significant barriers. Newspapers can be purchased in Lakatoro, but few families read newspapers regularly. Television has not reached the villages as yet, though DVDs and videos are played during special events and workshops. Bislama-medium educational films are extremely popular, as are English-language movies. In the future, it is likely that access to media technology will continue to increase, even in the more remote villages of Malakula. Given the cost of producing television, radio, and newspaper materials, the domain of new media is more likely to be dominated by English, French or even Bislama than in any of the indigenous languages of Vanuatu. At present, new media are less important in the Neverver-speaking region than the traditional oral networks used for distributing information. These oral networks function effectively in Neverver, in other local languages, and in Bislama, depending on who is passing on information to whom. Education and religion are another matter, as Neverver is marginalised in these domains.

1.3.3. Language support

Factors seven and eight of the language vitality assessment (UNESCO 2003) consider support for the language at both local and national levels. Positive attitudes towards endangered languages can signal an interest in and support for language maintenance activities. While local support is weakly articulated but

clearly present, national support is enshrined in the constitution, but more difficult to see in practice.

1.3.3.1. Local support

Concerning local support for Neverver, it was my observation that a conscious awareness of language endangerment was present among older community members and community leaders. The awareness of potential language loss was more strongly articulated in Limap village than in Lingarakh. The following statements were made on numerous occasions in Bislama during the fieldwork periods:

- *Young people say this (...) wrongly; they should say it like this (...).*
- *People in Lingarakh don't speak as well as we do here in Limap.*
- *People today don't understand the deeper meanings of words; their understanding is like the leaves on trees rather than the tree trunk itself.*

These comments show an awareness that Neverver is undergoing change and is perhaps weakening. In terms of language attitudes, the comments indicate that people consider contemporary changes to be undesirable. A further comment was made to me on many occasions in the context of discussions about my role as a language documenter and collector of rarely used vocabulary items:

- *It is good that you've come to write down our language, Julie. Now you can teach it back to us.*

While over-estimating my role in language revival, this comment signals that community members believe their linguistic knowledge has gaps and that it would be good to do something about these gaps.

Although community members did express concern about language change and erosion, many did not express the belief that Neverver is in any danger. In

general, when language was discussed, attitudes were expressed with respect to the role of various languages in the formal education system. Strong local support was expressed for the continued use of English in the education system. Bislama was regarded as an essential means of communication within the wider Malakula region and Vanuatu in general, although many people expressed the view that it was not a suitable language for education. The use of Neverver in kindergartens was generally thought to be a good idea, although not at the expense of preparing children for their English-medium primary education. Because intergeneration transmission is continuing, it is difficult for Neverver speakers to see that there is any immediate threat to the language.

1.3.3.2. Official support

In terms of official support for vernacular languages, the constitution of Vanuatu offers protection for local languages, but it is English, French and Bislama that are declared the official languages of the country and English and French that are declared the languages of education (Vanuatu 1980:3(1)-(2)). Official protection for indigenous languages has meant that the Vanuatu National Cultural Council and the Vanuatu Immigration Service support foreign researchers, particularly those invited by local communities, in the provision of research permits and visas. Attempts are currently underway at a national level to provide more comprehensive support for indigenous languages. In November 2005, the draft *Vanuatu National Language Policy* was presented for public comment (Vanuatu National Language Council 2005). This policy is explicit in its support for the indigenous languages of Vanuatu, as Article 5.4 reveals:

5.4 The Local or Indigenous Languages

With over 100 different indigenous languages, Vanuatu is linguistically very diverse. These languages are vital expressions of Vanuatu's social and cultural identity, expressing the intimate relationship of ni-Vanuatu to their land and traditions. There is an urgent need to preserve, and where appropriate revitalise, some of these languages that are on the verge of extinction. Viable indigenous languages – those languages which a significant number of children continue to acquire as their first language – should be promoted for the use of future generations. Vanuatu has an obligation to use, document, promote and protect our indigenous languages. (Vanuatu National Language Council 2005:4)

Since Vanuatu gained independence in 1980, there has been discussion of the introduction of indigenous languages into the lower levels of schooling in Vanuatu (cf. Crowley & Lynch 1986, Regenvanu 2004). This matter is explicitly addressed in the National Language Policy in Article 5.4.1, where it is stated that 'as much as possible, indigenous languages are to be used as the language of instruction in early childhood learning up to primary level'. There is a more generally expressed desire to see vernacular literacy develop, with Article 5.4.3 stating that 'indigenous language are to be promoted for use in adult and childhood literacy acquisition programs' (Vanuatu National Language Council 2005:4).

1.3.4. Literacy development and language documentation

Factors six and nine of the language vitality assessment (UNESCO 2003) measure the availability of resources for literacy projects, and the type and quality of documentation that exists. Neverver scores rather poorly in relation to these factors. Neverver was thought by the linguistic world to be an unwritten language. In fact, a large number of hymns have been translated into Neverver by a community member. At the beginning of the current project, however, this material had not been distributed through the community and literacy skills were limited to just one elderly community member.

Prior to 2004, only brief word lists in Neverver had been published. Now that the documentation project is drawing to a close, the type and quality of documentation for Neverver is improving rapidly; however, much of the data collected so far has not been distributed among community members. The body of the materials that form the documentation corpus is held in digital form at the University of Waikato in New Zealand and community members have no access to this as yet.

The language vitality assessment presents a picture of Neverver as a language with a small and rather vulnerable speech community that is beginning to show signs of language shift. This is particularly the case in Lingarakh village, where languages other than Neverver are making inroads into the home domain.

Intergenerational transmission is likely to be interrupted in affected households, as the next generation of children grow up more confident in languages other than Neverver. Neverver has not yet transitioned into any new domains.

Education, religion, and financial success are all seen as prestigious and are all associated with literacy skills in English and/or Bislama. These domains, and

the skills associated with them, are likely to continue to grow in importance. As this happens, the traditional domains in which Neverver still plays a central role may become less relevant. The larger Neverver community does not appear to be terribly concerned about the vitality of the language. While there is a general awareness that the language is in some way being eroded, this awareness has not yet translated into an articulated desire for ‘language maintenance’.

1.4. Emerging vernacular literacy practices

Literacy has a rather marginal role in daily life of many villagers living on Malakula. Paviour-Smith (2008:11) observes of the Aulua community in central Malakula, that ‘proficiency in writing and knowledge of various genres is distributed unevenly across the population, [and] writing to get things done requires the pooling of literacy (and the associated material) resources’. The same comment is true of Neverver. The literacy skills that are present in the Neverver speech community are practised in Bislama and English, and are confined to religious and commercial matters among adults and to educational matters among children. Added to the uneven distribution of literacy skills in the community is an uneven distribution of knowledge of the vernacular, with some older community members in particular displaying a much broader, and at the same time more detailed lexical knowledge compared to the language knowledge of younger speakers. As noted above, younger speakers in Limap tend to display a greater depth of Neverver knowledge than those in the more linguistically diverse Lingarakh village.

Despite the limited role of literacy in village life, vernacular literacy is seen as desirable. Locally motivated vernacular literacy practices are beginning to emerge in the domains of religion and early childhood education in the Neverver speech community.

1.4.1. Literacy in religion

In the domain of religion, one community member has worked extensively on developing an orthographic system for Neverver, for the purpose of translating hymns from English and Bislama into Neverver. Over a period of 25 years, Chief Jacob Naus has developed an orthographic system for Neverver and translated more than 300 hymns from English and Bislama. His goal was to introduce vernacular literacy to the wider community so that community members could sing hymns in Neverver. Chief Jacob's work eventually stalled as his writing system did not gain currency with the community. Only those hymns that were taught orally were successfully learned by community members.

Chief Jacob faced many linguistic and personal problems while working alone; he has been able to address these problems through me, in my role as visiting linguist. In consultation with community members, I have developed a draft orthography for use in the larger language documentation project. This orthography has been used to produce a standardised version of Chief Jacob's hymns. Hymn booklets have now been distributed among community members.

Because of the significance of religion to contemporary community life, and the enthusiasm for singing as entertainment, the hymn booklets have proven very

popular⁷. Both the Limap and Lingarakh communities have instituted weekly singing sessions to learn new songs. These weekly sessions have followed a community-led literacy workshop for youth, where the written form of the language was introduced. Community members report positive feedback both from speakers of Neverver, and from speakers of other local languages whenever Neverver songs are sung at multilingual events.

There is also a growing interest in the activity of Bible translation. The launch of the *Uripiv New Testament* on Uripiv Island in late 2005 attracted attention throughout Malakula. In Lingarakh and Limap, interest in Bible translation is most commonly expressed by community leaders who hold positions within the church hierarchy. Despite their interest, they have not initiated Bible translation yet. One reason for this is that the current community leaders are aware that their knowledge of Neverver is not as extensive as the knowledge of their parents' generation. Older community members, now in their 60s and 70s, can display considerable differences in their lexical knowledge with gaps in some areas and a wealth of knowledge in others. On one occasion, during my second field trip, a church elder in Limap brought me a carefully preserved copy of Pastor Bill Camden's (1977) Bislama-English dictionary. He leafed through the text with me, saying that a Neverver dictionary would be highly valued by the community. The idea of a single source of lexical information, represented in a dictionary, is immediately appealing to those considering translation work. Such a document has the obvious advantage of outliving its contributors. Not only that, it can offer a standardised set of spellings, and a record of the attested usages of words.

⁷ Paviour-Smith (2008:5-7; 16-17) provides a comparable description of the role of the Church in the Aulua community of central Malakula, and a justification for the introduction and support of vernacular literacy in this domain.

1.4.2. Literacy in entertainment

As a language with a very short history of writing, narratives in Neverver belong to an oral tradition. Few people read for entertainment, and what reading does take place is most often for religious purposes. In the oral tradition, however, stories that describe the origins of Neverver cultural practices and that capture historical events stand alongside contemporary ‘made up’ stories as well as translations of Bible stories and secular material. Stories play an important role in the speech community. They are used for the dual purposes of entertainment and education and are told during Sunday school, in the story segment of the formal church service, and during kindergarten classes, as well as in private family gatherings.

Given the lack of vernacular literacy skills in the community, it is not surprising that community members had not attempted to make permanent records of their stories. Today however, story-tellers are keen to be recorded ‘performing’ their stories and are interested in seeing their stories printed in booklets. Language consultants working with me on the documentation project took on the task of editing a number of stories that I had recorded and they are now working on translations into Bislama. The language consultants lack resources to reproduce the stories on paper within their speech community; with external support however, they are developing reading materials targetted at older and younger audiences for entertainment and pedagogic purposes.

1.4.3. Literacy in education

Vernacular literacy is beginning to emerge in pre-school education. Both Limap and Lingarakh villages have locally-run kindergartens. These are ostensibly vernacular kindergartens, established in order to introduce children to

formal education through the medium of their indigenous language. The establishment of the kindergartens is in line with the Vanuatu government's ten-year Education Master Plan (Republic of Vanuatu 1999), whereby the kindergartens are to be established and maintained by the local community with little or no government support. Until recently, the kindergartens have focussed on introducing the children to basic English, through the medium of Bislama. As part of the language documentation project, two community members made the journey from Limap village in Malakula to Hamilton in New Zealand to work with me at the University of Waikato. The two young women who came have both been involved with the Limap kindergarten and they also participated as language consultants on the documentation project during my field trips. Over a five week period, we completed the editing and translation of a set of stories and further developed the Neverver-English word list, which will eventually be a Neverver-Bislama-English dictionary. In addition, the women spent time developing a range of literacy resources for use in the Limap and Lingarakh kindergartens including a Neverver alphabet booklet, a counting booklet, large-print stories with pictures, and laminated flash cards to familiarise children with the written form of the language. The women have taken multiple copies of these resources back to the villages.

1.5. Documenting Neverver

The current work is one output of a larger documentation project⁸ on the Neverver language. This particular output is aimed at a linguistic readership rather than a community readership, and it stands alongside other outputs that have a community focus including images, sound recordings, Chief Jacob's hymn collection (§1.4.1), and literacy materials for children and adults (§1.4.2 - §1.4.3).

Linguistic fieldwork has traditionally been conducted with the aim of investigating an unknown language, preferably in some remote locale, and producing a description of the structural systems of that language. Himmelmann (n.d.:9) summarises the aims of describing a language as follows: 'a language description aims at the record of a language, with 'language' being understood as a system of abstract elements, constructions and rules which constitute the invariant underlying structure of the utterances observable in a speech community'. The methodology associated with language description often involves researcher-led interviews, where a speaker of the language provides information about his/her language as the researcher requests. Publications on field methodology contain lists of items and structures that might be used as a guide for the researcher (cf. Bouquiaux and Thomas 1992; Vaux & Cooper 1999). Descriptive work may also involve the analysis of existing text materials such as religious works. Equally, it can involve the analysis of newly collected text materials from members of the speech community. Such a methodology is assumed rather than made explicit in descriptive grammars and any community-

⁸ In his seminal article 'Documentary and descriptive linguistics', Nikolaus Himmelmann (1988) proposes that field linguists engage in 'language documentation' rather than simply data collection for descriptive ends. Quotations and figures from an expanded version of 'Documentary and descriptive linguistics' (Himmelmann n.d.) are presented in this work.

oriented activities that a descriptive linguist might engage in tend to be unacknowledged. The aims of language documentation are rather different from those of traditional language description, although for many linguists, the activities overlap considerably in practice.

In a language documentation, there is an explicit acknowledgement of collaboration with a given speech community. Community-oriented outputs that result from collaboration are considered just as important as the obligatory descriptive grammar. Himmelmann (n.d.) defines the aims of language documentation as follows:

The aim of a language documentation then, is to provide a comprehensive record of the linguistic practices characteristic of a given speech community. Linguistic practices and traditions are manifest in two ways: 1) the observable *linguistic behavior*, manifest in everyday interaction between members of the speech community, and 2) the native speakers' *metalinguistic knowledge*, manifest in their ability to provide interpretations and systematics for linguistic units and events.

(Himmelmann n.d.:9)

In documenting a language, a linguist makes linguistic behaviour the heart of the project and the collection of this linguistic behaviour is the central focus of the field experience. Descriptive generalisations will likely arise from the data collected in a language documentation, but it is conceivable that any number of other outputs might also eventuate, including pedagogic materials, ethnographic statements, image collections, documentary-type films, sociolinguistic commentary and enhanced typological understandings.

The overt acknowledgement of the centrality of the speech community in linguistic field research has been motivated in part by the increasing awareness of the need to conduct research in an ethical manner. The idea that fieldwork should be more than simply ‘on’ a language (Cameron et al. 1992:22-24) has increasingly gained strength. Grinevald (2003) advocates fieldwork that is carried out on a language, for the language community, with speakers of the language community, and where and whenever possible, by community members themselves. In this view, a field linguist would ‘combine doing fieldwork with teaching, training, and mentoring native speakers for sustainable documentation projects’ (Grinevald 2003:60).

Dwyer (2006) proposes five core ethical principles to guide language documentation. Although the Neverver documentation project predates the publication of these principles, they accurately reflect the ethical spirit of the current project.

Principle 1: Do no harm (including unintentional harm)

Principle 2: Reciprocity and equity

Principle 3: Do some good (for the community as well as for science)

Principle 4: Obtain informed consent before initiating research

Principle 5: Archive and disseminate your data and results

(Dwyer 2006:38-40)

The shift of linguistic field work from research ‘on’ to research ‘for’, ‘by’ and ‘with’, requires new approaches to data collection, manipulation and analysis. In collaboration with the speech community, the field linguist now needs to develop a large corpus of linguistic behaviour. Woodbury (2003)

encourages linguists to develop a documentation corpus that is diverse, large, ongoing, transparent, preservable, and portable, as well as being ethical. The characteristics of diversity, size and duration are of immediate concern to the field linguist as the definition of these terms will impact on the field research goals of the linguist.

Himmelman (n.d.) offers some very general suggestions about the composition of a documentation corpus, identifying communicative events, lists, and analytic matters as being basic linguistic elements of a language documentation.

General Information	Documents of Linguistic Behavior and Knowledge		
Speech Community	Communicative Events (with translation and commentary)	Lists	Analytic Matters
Language		(paradigms,	
Fieldwork		folk	
Methods		taxonomies)	

Figure 1.1. Basic format of a language documentation (reproduced from Himmelman (n.d.:13))

Himmelman’s analytic matters in Figure 1.1. above align closely with the traditional activity of carrying out field research with the aim of describing a language. Lists relate to the development of phonological descriptions. They also relate to dictionary development, although this task has traditionally been seen as distinct from grammatical description. The collection of communicative events is at the core of language documentation but a rather unacknowledged aspect of traditional grammatical description.

In documenting Neverver, a wide range of materials have contributed to the documentation corpus. The full digital corpus is tabulated in Appendix III; below are the main categories of materials.

Communicative Events (sound recordings with transcribed and annotated text files)	Traditional stories Contemporary stories Descriptions of traditional cultural practices Descriptions of activities in modern daily life Conversations Traditional and contemporary songs
Lists	Lexical items Inflected verbs with example sentences
Analytic matters	Sets of elicited constructions arranged by structure or function
General Information	Survey of language practices Digital images including indigenous flora, cultural events, members of the speech community

Table 1.2. Summary of the Neverver documentation corpus

1.5.1. Working with the Neverver speech community

The current project was initiated by the Neverver community members. After years of working on an orthography that failed to gain currency with the speech community, Chief Jacob Naus sent out a request for a linguist to visit the community and provide support. The request reached the late Professor Terry Crowley, who regularly visited Malakula Island to visit friends and conduct his own research. Crowley, knowing of my interest in linguistic field research, proposed that I work with the Neverver speech community. In preparation for the project, Crowley found me a Bislama tutor and in the months prior to beginning the project, I acquired a working level of Bislama which would subsequently prove indispensable in the field.

In early August 2004, having secured a graduate studentship from the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Documentation Project, ethical approval from the University of Waikato (my host institution), and approval from the Vanuatu National Cultural Council, I departed for Malakula Island for the first of two periods of field work. Altogether, I spent nearly nine months in Lingarakh and Limap villages. In addition to this, I arranged a five-week workshop in the

summer of 2008 at my university. Two language consultants made the journey to New Zealand, to work on the documentation project, and experience life here.

Time frame	Activity	Primary Location
August 04 – January 05	Field trip	Lingarakh village, Malakula
September 05 – November 05	Field trip	Limap village, Malakula
January 08 – February 08	Collaborative workshop	Hamilton, New Zealand

Table 1.3. Field research with the Neverver speech community

In the field, I worked with a large group of people. This was partly because of the different strengths that individuals were able to bring to the project. Equally important however, was the fact that any contributions that people made to the project took them away from their other duties and responsibilities in the community. The key language consultants and their most significant contributions to the language documentation are recorded below. Many other people contributed to the corpus of recorded texts, to the lexical database, and to the task of hosting a foreign researcher.

Chief Jacob Naus, pictured with his second wife Sisi outside their home in Lingarakh, developed the Neverver hymn collection and contributed to story telling, lexicography, ethno-botanical, and cultural documentation. Chief Jacob made the initial request for a linguist to come and work with the Neverver community.



Photograph 1.1. Chief Jacob Naus with his wife and collaborator Sisi.

Chief James Bangsukh, pictured in Limap village with his wife Lydia (one of the last surviving speakers of the Vivti language), shared traditional stories and information on traditional cultural practices. He also contributed to lexicography, and ethno-botanical



Photograph 1.2. Chief James Bangsukh with his wife Lydia.

documentation, and was a key consultant on analytic matters. Chief James is photographed during the mourning period for a community member, a time when men are not permitted to shave.

Lerakhsil Moti, resident of TFC plantation, and regular visitor to Lingarakh and Limap, is the oldest speaker of Neverver at over eighty years. Lerakhsil shared many traditional stories and also contributed to lexicography and cultural documentation. She was a key contributor to ethno-botanical documentation. She and



Photograph 1.3. Lerakhsil Moti.

her ailing husband Moti have an extraordinary knowledge of indigenous plants and their traditional uses.

Emma, Nellie, and Peter Vatdal of Lingarakh village assisted with the rather arduous task of transcribing and translating recorded texts while I was a novice in the field.

Helen-Rose Peniyas, Emlina Simo, Limei Simo, and John-Jilik and formed a team who worked in rotation with me in Limap village in the 2005 field trip,



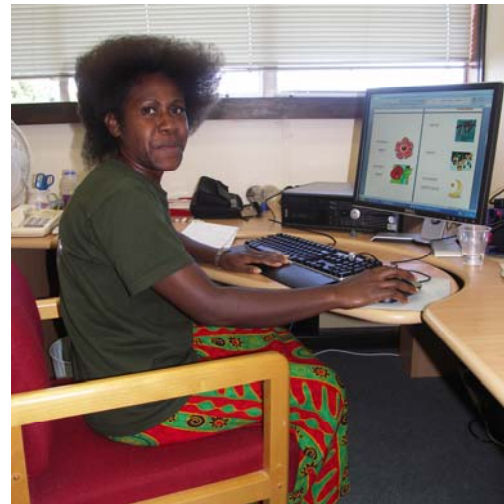
Photograph 1.4. John-Jilik, grandson of Neverver matriarch Lerakhsil Moti, and son of one of the last surviving Vivti speakers.

assisting with the transcription and interpretation of recorded texts and contributing to the corpus of contemporary stories and conversations. They also assisted with the expansion of the Neverver lexicon. We spent many hours working through the Neverver word list, and they provided positive and negative evidence for

all manner of syntactic constructions.



Photograph 1.5. Helen-Rose Peniyas, documenting flora in Limap village.



Photograph 1.6. Emlina Simo, preparing literacy materials in New Zealand.

Cousins Helen-Rose and Emlina made the journey to New Zealand in 2008 to work on the documentation project. Helen-Rose is the current kindergarten teacher in Limap village; Emlina assisted her older sister Limei in the kindergarten prior to Helen-Rose's appointment.



Photograph 1.7. Peniyas Bong and his wife Lina, dressed for their Sunday duties at the Presbyterian Church.

and community obligations, Peniyas and Lina actively facilitated the documentation project by arranging language consultants and guiding the contributions that I made to the community. Lina was very supportive of my language-learning efforts and is a natural lexicographer.

1.5.2. Describing Neverver

The current work is a descriptive grammar of the Neverver language based on data collected in the field, including approximately twenty hours of recorded communicative events. As far as possible, I have based the analysis on material extracted from the corpus of communicative events, using elicited material only

My host family in Lingarakh were Douglas Vatdal and his wife Lewia from the Avava-speaking Khatbol village. They provided a safe and comfortable environment in their beautiful home near Khatbol village during my first extended field trip.

My host family in Limap were Peniyas Bong and his wife Lina. They were keen participants in the second shorter field trip.

Despite their many personal

sparingly to fill in gaps. In the analysis, I employ linguistic terminology that is in general use by Oceanic linguists. In places I make reference to the developing literature of linguistic typology where this is useful to frame and support my analysis of Neverver. New work on mood-prominent languages (Bhat 1999) and verb serialisation (cf. Aikhenvald & Dixon 2006; Alsina, Bresnan & Sells 1997; Crowley 2002a) has permitted a rather more thorough treatment of these topics than would have been possible a decade ago.

The following analysis represents the understanding that I have reached of the way that Neverver is typically used by its speakers, in the range of spoken contexts to which I had access. Reflecting both my interests and my limitations as a researcher, it purports to be neither a definitive nor a complete account of the language. It is however, a beginning, and in the words of a seasoned Neverver story teller:

- (1.1) *Ni-tbbukh* *no-ssor-ian* *lele* *i-skham*
 1REAL:SG- have NPR- speak -NSF small 3REAL:SG- one
 il *nim-sisir.*
 PURPOSE 1IRR:SG- discuss
 No-ssor-ian *lele* *ang* *i-gang.*
 NPR- speak -NSF small ANA 3REAL:SG- like.so
 ‘I have a short story to tell. The short story goes like so...’
 [NVCT06.02-03: 9.797-13.437]

Chapter Two

Phonology

Neverver has nineteen consonant segments and a basic five-vowel inventory, with another two vowels attested in a small number of lexical items. Allophonic variation primarily involves the de-voicing of word-final consonants.

Descriptions of the consonants and vowels are presented in §2.1. to §2.4. The language permits sequences of consonants, both geminate and heterogeneous. Vowels can also form heterogeneous sequences. Constraints on syllable structure, described in §2.5., play a central role in the form of attested lexical items as well as in prefixation processes discussed in subsequent chapters. A small number of phonological processes, outlined in §2.6., apply in the language. The most important processes are neutralisation and epenthesis. Stress (§2.7.) is not contrastive and has a rather minor role in the articulation of words, while intonation patterns (§2.8.) are far more important, and enable speakers to distinguish between certain types of constructions.

The phonemic contrasts identified in Neverver are represented in a draft community orthography, presented in §2.9.

2.1. The consonant inventory

		BILABIAL	ALVEOLAR	PALATAL	VELAR	LABIO- VELAR
Nasals		m	n		ŋ	
Plosives	Plain	p	t		k	
	Prenasalised	b	d		g	
Fricatives	Plain	β	s		ɣ	
Affricates	Prenasalised			ɕ		
Trills	Plain		r			
	Prenasalised	B	D			
Approximants			l	j		w

Table 2.1. The Neverver consonant inventory

Neverver has nineteen consonant segments. Prenasalisation is a prominent feature of the inventory. In the central Malakula region, Neverver is known for its trills, particularly the prenasalised bilabial trill which appears with considerable frequency in the corpus. The bilabial trill segment is also found in related Malakula languages including Avava (Crowley 2006a:25), Unua (Elizabeth Pearce, pers. comm.) and Northeast Malakula (Ross McKerras, pers. comm.).

Noticeably absent from the consonant inventory is a series of labio-velars. These sounds are found in some of Neverver's neighbours including Neve'ei (Musgrave 2007) and Avava (Crowley 2006a). The lack of labio-velars is shared with the moribund Naman language (Crowley 2006b), as well as V'ënen Taut (Fox 1979). Pearce (pers. comm.) identifies just one or two lexical items in Unua with a labio-velar consonant. Neverver is the only Malakula language with a prenasalised affricate segment documented to date.

2.2. Distinctive features for Neverver consonants

When describing consonants in Neverver using distinctive features, we must distinguish between plain segments and prenasalised segments. Plain segments are characterised by single values associated with each distinctive feature. A simple matrix can be produced for each segment. Six features are employed to distinguish between the thirteen plain segments, displayed in Table 2.2. The features employed in this analysis follow Katamba (1989, based on Chomsky and Halle 1968).

	m	n	ŋ	p	t	k	β	s	ɣ	r	l	j	w
± continuant	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
± nasal	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
± voice	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
± labial	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+
± anterior	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
± lateral										-	+		

Table 2.2. Distinctive features for plain segments

The description of a complex segment using distinctive features requires a complex matrix displaying the feature values for the different elements in each segment, displayed in Table 2.3. following. Again, six features are employed. The feature [± lateral], used to distinguish between /l/ and /r/, is replaced by the feature [± strident], which is used to distinguish between the three complex alveolar segments.

The multi-tiered autosegmental analysis employed to describe Neverver syllable structure (§2.5.) handles the separation of these complex segments into their component parts on the segmental tier. The component parts are united on the CV tier, where each complex segment counts as one consonant or C slot in the application of phonotactic processes.

	^m b		^m B		ⁿ d		ⁿ ɟʒ			ⁿ dʀ			ⁿ g	
	m	b	m	B	n	d	n	d	ʒ	n	d	r	ŋ	g
± continuant	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
± nasal	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
± voice	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
± labial	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
± anterior	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
± strident					-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-		

Table 2.3. Distinctive features for complex segments

Although the feature [+ voice] is generally associated with prenasalised plosives, there is a regular process of devoicing which applies. In particular, this affects word-final segments. The prenasalised plosives are more consistently distinguished from the plain plosives on the basis of their prenasalisation rather than their voicing. For example, the segment /p/ always has the feature [-nasal] and is also [-voice]; the segment /b/ always has the feature [+nasal], although it may be realised as the [+voice] allophone [^mb] or the [-voice] allophone [^mp].

2.3. Consonants

2.3.1. Nasals /m, n, ŋ/

There are three nasal phonemes, contrasting at the bilabial, alveolar and velar places of articulation. Contrastive sets are displayed below for these segments in morpheme-initial and final positions:

- (2.1) [mam] 'be ripe'
[nan] 'seep pus'
[ŋas] 'go for circumcision'

- (2.2) [mis:um] ‘hail s.o.’
 [nisi^mb] ‘knife’
 [ŋis] ‘smile’
- (2.3) [mol] ‘rest’
 [noloⁿk] ‘laplap’
 [ŋot] ‘be broken’
- (2.4) [ⁿdram] ‘bleed’
 [ⁿdan] ‘set (of the sun)’
 [ⁿdaŋ] ‘breach (a dam)’
- (2.5) [ⁿdloŋ] ‘swallow’
 [lon] ‘LOC’
 [^mbroŋ] ‘be common’
- (2.6) [ⁿɕem] ‘chew’
 [men] ‘sweat’
 [ⁿdeŋ] ‘step’

2.3.2. Plain plosives /p, t, k/

The three plain plosives, contrasting at bilabial, alveolar and velar places of articulation, are voiceless and have minimal aspiration. Word-finally, these segments are generally unreleased. A set of three well-established plosives is shared by Avava (Crowley 2006a), although other central Malakula languages do not exhibit such contrasts. For example, neither Naman (Crowley 2006b) or

Neve'ei (Musgrave 2007) has a /p/ segment, and the /k/ segment has a limited distribution in these two languages.

Contrastive sets are displayed below for the plain plosive segments in morpheme-initial position. The second set of items displays morpheme-initial geminate consonants. These are articulated with audibly delayed release.

Geminate consonants are described in detail in §2.3.10.

- (2.7) [papak] 'piggy'
[tata] 'promise'
[kaka] 'hang (decorations)'

- (2.8) [p:is] 'be sore'
[t:is] 'be sacred'
[k:is] 'peel (by hand)'

2.3.2.1. The /p/ segment

The phoneme /p/ is well-established as a segment in morpheme-initial position. It appears most commonly as the first member of a heterogeneous consonant cluster or as a geminate consonant with noticeably delayed release. Elsewhere, it occurs with rather low frequency.

- (2.9) [panyo] 'steal'
[papak] 'piggy'
[pres] 'neat, great'
[prok] 'listen'

[p:ar]	‘fall.out (of teeth)’
[p:is]	‘sore’
[p:ek]	‘wind (of yam vines)’
[p:on]	‘cover over’

The /p/ segment is found after the /nV/ common noun prefix (discussed in §3.3.1.).

(2.10)	[nepaŋalam]	‘k.o.banyan’
	[nipejan]	‘weaving’
	[nepra]	place name
	[nep:ar]	‘cross-beams’ (in a house)
	[nip:er]	‘fern’

Two words are attested with medial geminate /p/ segments. Both of these are from closed word classes.

(2.11)	[lap:an]	‘under’
	[sup:ax ~ sup:ak]	‘nearly, almost’

Word-final /p/ is restricted to loan words. In this environment, the final /p/ alternates with the voiceless allophone [ϕ] of the bilabial fricative /β/.

- (2.12) [kap ~ kaɸ] ‘metal, iron’ (Bis. *kapa*)⁹
 [sop ~ soɸ] ‘soap’ (Bis. *sop*)
 [stop ~ stoɸ] ‘stop’ (Bis. *stop*)

The segment /p/ has a trilled allophone [ᵑ] before the high back vowel. The distribution rule can be stated as follows:

<p>/p/ : [ᵑ] / __ u [p] / elsewhere</p>
--

The voiceless bilabial trill allophone is attested in the following morphemes:

- (2.13) [ᵑu] ‘allergic swelling’
 [ᵑus] ‘squeeze (sap from a leaf, to make custom medicine)’
 [ᵑut] ‘dry’ of coconuts in [naniᵑut] ‘dry coconut’
 [ᵑun] ‘grow bushy’
 [neᵑun] ‘thicket of vines trained over tall stakes’
 [siᵑusel] ‘drop accidentally’
 [laɸᵑux] ‘commit sibling incest’

[ᵑu] ‘allergic swelling’ and [naniᵑut] ‘dry coconut’ are lexical items that are still regularly used by speakers. Elsewhere, the allophone [ᵑ] is mostly attested in low frequency lexical items, many of which have fallen out of use. Overall, the phonemic sequence /pu/, realised phonetically as [ᵑu], is rare.

⁹ A useful reference for Bislama terms is Crowley’s (2003) *A new Bislama dictionary* (2nd edn.).

A prenasalised voiced trill [ᵐB] also occurs in the corpus. Rather than being in allophonic distribution with the prenasalised voiced plosive [ᵐb], the prenasalised trill is contrastive (see §2.3.4.).

2.3.2.2. The /t/ and /k/ segments

The plain voiceless plosives in alveolar and velar position both occur in initial as well as final positions. Initially, these segments may also occur in geminate and heterogeneous sequences.

(2.14)	[kut]	‘the place, LOCPN’	[tur]	‘stand up; wake up’
	[koko]	‘hunt (with spear, club)’	[tox]	‘exist’
	[k:or]	‘make funeral house’	[t:or]	‘rotten (of tubers)’
	[krax]	‘hunt (birds)’	[traᵑk]	‘cluck (of hens)’
	[krut]	‘together’	[trus]	‘leak’
	[p:ek]	‘wind’	[βet]	‘weave’
	[prok]	‘listen’	[slot]	‘give gift’

Like the neutralisation between the /p/ segment and the bilabial fricative /β/, the contrast between /k/ and the velar fricative /ɣ/ is neutralised in some morphemes in the word-final position. The corresponding neutralisation between /t/ and /s/ does not occur.

(2.15)	[mrek ~ mrex]	‘raw’
	[sup:ak ~ sup:ax]	‘nearly, almost’

2.3.3. Prenasalised plosives /b, d, g/

The plain plosives presented above contrast with a prenasalised plosive series. The prenasalisation is homorganic at the labial, alveolar and velar points of articulation. As noted in §2.2. above, although plain and prenasalised plosives generally contrast in terms of voicing, the presence of prenasalisation (the feature [+nasal]) is the more salient distinctive feature that separates the two series of plosives. This is particularly noticeable in word-final position where prenasalised plosives undergo a regular process of devoicing. As well as devoicing, in word-final position these plosives are typically unreleased in the speech of younger community members.

The three prenasalised plosives /b/, /d/ and /g/ contrast in the initial position in the following morphemes:

- (2.16) [ᵐbor] ‘tasteless’
 [ⁿdor] ‘burp’
 [ᵑgor] ‘block’

- (2.17) [ᵐba] ‘when’
 [ⁿda] ‘PART’
 [ᵑga] ‘after’

- (2.18) [ᵐbiᵐbi] ‘maternal uncle’
 [ⁿdiⁿdi] ‘dip (laplap)’
 [ᵑgis] ‘squeeze’

- (2.19) [ᵐberᵐber] ‘be long’
 [ᵐder] ‘pull apart’
 [ᵐgel] ‘slice’

The prenasalised plosives contrast with the plain plosives:

- (2.20) [ᵐbroŋ] ‘common’ [proŋ] ‘think’
 [ᵐbar] ‘be.blind’ [papak] ‘piggy’
 [ᵐda] ‘PART’ [ta] ‘show, exemplify’
 [ᵐgun] ‘sit (with knees up)’ [kut] ‘LOCPN’

When a prenasalised plosive follows a plain nasal, the prenasalisation is dropped.

- (2.21) [nimdan] ‘eye’
 [ᵐgungun] ‘crouch’
 [ᵐdiŋdiŋba] ‘kneel’

In word-final position, there is considerable social variation in the articulation of the prenasalised segments. In the speech of older community members, word-final plosives are generally voiceless. Among younger speakers, word-final prenasalised plosives are generally both voiceless and unreleased. In the speech of some younger community members, the contrast between the prenasalised

plosive and the word-final nasal is being neutralised¹⁰. This variation can be heard in the articulation of bilabial and velar plosives.

- (2.22) [la^mbla^mp ~ la^mbla^mp̣ ~ la^mblam] ‘be big’
[nuwa^hk ~ nuwa^hḳ ~ nuwaŋ] ‘canoe, boat’

In contrast to the segments /b/ and /g/, the segment /d/ does not appear word-finally, although the sequence [n] followed by [d] does occur in the lexical item *man*, which is a post-verbal emphatic marker. This item varies in articulation:

- (2.23) [mand ~ manḍ ~ man] ‘EMPH’

In discussions with younger speakers on the articulation of this item, the ‘correct’ pronunciation was asserted as [man]. This is echoed by the preferences for the orthographic representation of this item as *man* rather than *mad*, suggesting that at least for younger speakers, this item ends with a nasal. Older speakers, articulating the word in connected speech, produce a final plosive quite consistently when the following morpheme is vowel-initial. We can hypothesise then, that the final plosive in this item is an epenthetic consonant which appears before vowel-initial morphemes. Epenthetic consonants are discussed in §2.6.3. below.

¹⁰ Pearce (pers. comm.) reports a similar process with respect to word-final prenasalised voiced plosives in Unua. The prenasalised alveolar plosive has been reanalysed as a nasal word-finally, and the prenasalised velar plosive is beginning to reduce to a nasal in the same environment.

2.3.4. The prenasalised bilabial trill /ᵐB/

The status of [ᵐB] as a distinct phoneme /B/ deserves some consideration. In the case of the plain bilabial plosive /p/ (discussed in 2.3.2.1 above), there is a trilled allophone that occurs before the high back rounded vowel /u/. Supposing that such a distribution pattern was also relevant to the prenasalised bilabial plosive, we might hypothesise that both bilabial plosives are subject to a regular allophonic change of the following kind:

Hypothesis: bilabial plosive : bilabial trill / __ u
--

This analysis is suggested by a number of verb stems in the corpus. The verb stems listed in (2.24) all have a morpheme-initial [ᵐb] segment; however, because these stems must carry a subject/mood marker in actual usage, [ᵐb] is never word-initial when these items are articulated.

(2.24)	[ᵐbar]	‘blind’
	[ᵐberᵐber]	‘long’
	[ᵐbirᵐbir]	‘argue’
	[ᵐbor]	‘maybe’
	[ᵐBu]	‘be swollen’
	[ᵐBun]	‘full, high (of tide)’
	[ᵐBut]	‘1. step, 2. stop crying’

The personal noun [ᵐBuᵐBu] ‘grandfather’ provides an unambiguous instance of the bilabial trill in a word-initial position before [u].

The hypothesis of an allophonic relation between plosive and trill is not sustainable in all cases. There are also morphemes in the corpus with a prenasalised plosive preceding [u]. All attempts to articulate these morphemes with a trill were corrected to the plosive articulation on a number of separate occasions, by a number of different language consultants.

(2.25)	[^m buskat]	‘cat’ (Bis. <i>buskat</i> , <i>puskat</i>)
	[^m buluk]	‘cow’ (Bis. <i>buluk</i>)
	[^m buk]	‘book’ (Bis. <i>buk</i>)
	[^m burum]	‘broom’ (Bis. <i>brum</i>)
	[ni ^m butuan]	‘hill’
	[ni ^m butriri]	‘hilltop’
	[^m butuanya]	place name
	[^m burum]	‘sweep’ (Bis. <i>brum</i>)

The first four items listed are common nouns that have been borrowed into Neverver from Bislama. In each case, there is a word-initial plosive rather than a trill. The next two items are indigenous common nouns that carry the common noun prefix *n(V)-*. Finally, there is an indigenous place name beginning with the prenasalised bilabial plosive, and a borrowed verb beginning with the bilabial plosive. In each case, the prenasalised bilabial plosive is followed by [u]. This is precisely the environment where we have hypothesised that a bilabial trill should occur.

There is further evidence that the prenasalised bilabial trill segment is distinct. The prenasalised bilabial trill contrasts with the prenasalised bilabial plosive in word-final position. Both the trill and the plosive are generally voiced

in slower speech, but voiceless in rapid speech at the end of words. These examples provide further evidence of a segmental contrast between the prenasalised bilabial trill and the plosive.

(2.26)	[naɣa ^m ɓ]	‘fire, firewood’	[ɣa ^m p]	‘crack, explode’
	[t:a ^m ɓ]	‘defecate’	[la ^m bla ^m p]	‘be big, fat’
	[re ^m bre ^m ɓ]	‘spread (coconut cream on laplap)’	[le ^m p]	‘give birth’

In spite of its somewhat limited distribution, the bilabial trill is a salient sound for speakers of Neverver. Evidence of contrastive pairs for /b/ and /ɓ/ word-finally and before /u/, and the absorption of borrowings that maintain a contrast between these sounds, rather than aligning the articulation of words to fit a pattern of complementary distribution, suggest that the prenasalised bilabial trill is best treated as a distinct segment in this analysis, rather than simply an allophone of /b/.¹¹

2.3.5. Plain fricatives /β, s, ɣ/

Three plain fricatives contrast in Neverver. The bilabial and velar fricatives are devoiced word-finally and before voiceless segments. The alveolar fricative is always voiceless. The following contrastive sets illustrate the fricatives in

¹¹ The bilabial trill appears consistently in one further environment. Verb stems that begin with the bilabial fricative [β] all have allomorphs that begin with the bilabial trill when the stem is inflected with an irrealis mood marker of the shape [m-]. A number of high-frequency lexical items begin with the bilabial fricative, including the movement verbs [βu] ‘go’, [βlem] ‘come’, [βlat] ‘go (to a person)’, [βeϕ] ‘go to (a location)’, [βaβu] ‘walk’, and [βaβaβuk] ‘walk towards’. Verbal allomorphy is discussed in §6.2.

morpheme-initial position. Contrasts are also presented between the plain fricatives and the plain and prenasalised plosive series at the same points of articulation.

- (2.27)
- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| [βor] | ‘sit’ |
| [^m bor] | ‘maybe’ |
| [poŋ] | ‘be guilty’ |
| [sorsor] | ‘lie’ |
| [ⁿ dor] | ‘burp’ |
| [toriet] | ‘crow’ |
| [yo] | ‘scrape out’ |
| [^ŋ gor] | ‘bang together’ |
| [kor] | ‘block’ |
- (2.28)
- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| [βan] | ‘bear fruit’ |
| [^m banban] | ‘strongly’ |
| [panyo] | ‘steal’ |
| [saβsaϕ] | ‘be loose’ |
| [ⁿ das] | ‘go down’ |
| [tas] | ‘remove’ |
| [yalyal] | ‘strike (target)’ |
| [^ŋ gal] | ‘be stuck’ |
| [kaka] | ‘hang (decorations)’ |

The fricatives also contrast in final position:

In morpheme-final position, the plain velar fricative [ɣ] and prenasalised velar plosive [ᵑg] contrast clearly, as do the prenasalised velar plosive and plain plosive [k]. The contrast between the plain velar fricative and the plain velar plosive is sustained in some cases, but not in all, with the velar plosive/fricative contrast being neutralised in some items.

- (2.33) [krax] 'hunt (birds)'
 [traᵑk] 'dry (of leaves)'
 [ᵑdak] 'fall down'
 [sup:ak~sup:ax] 'close, nearly'
- (2.34) [lox] 'strip (bark off trees)'
 [noloᵑk] 'laplap'
 [lolok] 'mumble'
 [βrok~βrox] 'hold'

2.3.6. The prenasalised affricate /ɟ̥/

There is one prenasalised affricate attested in the corpus. It has a number of different allophones which vary from a clear prenasalised alveo-palatal affricate, to a voiceless alveolar fricative. The allophones are articulated as [ᵑɟ̥, ᵑʒ, ᵑʃ, ᵑs, s]. Individual speakers vary in their articulation of this phoneme, even when producing different instances of the same morpheme. Morpheme initially and inter-vocally, the voiced allophones are more common than the voiceless alternatives although some speakers devoice quite consistently in all environments. The most commonly occurring allophones are [ᵑɟ̥] and [ᵑs].

The prenasalised segment contrasts with the plain alveolar fricative in the initial position. In this position, the prenasalised segment is most commonly realised as an affricate. The segment also contrasts word-finally with the plain fricative:

- (2.35) [ʰŋal] ‘sick’ [sal] ‘float’
 [ʰŋeɸ] ‘separate’ [ses] ‘rub’
 [ʰŋol] ‘heal (of yams)’ [solix] ‘hide’
- (2.36) [iʰs] ‘ANT’ [is] ‘bad’
 [nauʰs] ‘pawpaw’ [naus] ‘rain’

Although the prenasalised affricate is commonly realised as a prenasalised voiceless fricative [ʰs] word-finally, for some younger speakers of Neverver, the contrast between /s/ and /ŋ/ has been neutralised. Thus, older speakers pronounce the word ‘banana’ more often as [naβuʰs], while young speakers more commonly say [naβus]. For younger speakers then, word-final /ŋ/ is merging with word-final /s/. Through this process of neutralisation, the prenasalisation that allows us to distinguish between the pair of sounds in word final position is being lost.

The neutralisation of the contrast between /s/ and /ŋ/ is similar to the neutralisation of the word-final prenasalised plosive /d/ with a nasal /n/ at the same point of articulation. In the case of the prenasalised plosives and nasals, the neutralisation is resulting in a plain alveolar nasal segment word-finally. In the case of fricative and prenasalised affricate, the neutralisation is resulting in a plain alveolar fricative.

2.3.7. Liquids /r, l/

The liquids /r/ and /l/ have a wide distribution in the Neverver lexicon. The /r/ segment is clearly trilled and particularly in story-telling, can be strongly emphasised for dramatic effect. The segments /l/ and /r/ contrast in initial position. They occur in both simple CV stems and geminate CCV stems, as well as forming the second member of morpheme-initial heterogeneous sequences¹².

(2.37)	[lu]	‘shoot’	[ru]	‘two’
	[las]	‘occasion’	[rasras]	‘become dark’
	[l:aφ]	‘go for food’	[r:aφ]	‘laugh’
	[l:iβix]	‘pour out (water)’	[r:iφ]	‘fart’
	[βlax]	‘flower (of taro)’	[βras]	‘climb (to pick fruit)’
	[mler]	‘clear’	[mrex]	‘raw’

The two liquids also contrast in final position.

(2.38)	[nial]	‘sun’	[niar]	‘fence, garden’
	[^m bel]	‘chase’	[^m ber ^m ber]	‘long’
	[βel]	‘shake’	[βer]	‘say’

2.3.8. The prenasalised alveolar trill /D/

The final prenasalised segment that is included in the phoneme inventory is the prenasalised stop with a trilled release. This segment has been identified in a

¹² The term ‘cluster’ is avoided when describing sequences of morpheme-initial consonants due to syllabification rules at the level of the word which prohibit complex onsets (clusters) except in precisely defined contexts.

small number of Oceanic languages including the closely related Avava language (Crowley 2006a), the South Efate language of Vanuatu (Thieberger 2004:52) and the rather more distant Fijian language (Schütz 1985).

Crowley (2006a:30) describes the Avava trill as ‘a prenasalised alveolar trill, which involves a clearly audible excrescent voiced alveolar stop’ but also goes on to note that the same sound might equally be described as ‘a prenasalised voiced alveolar stop with a trilled release, i.e. [ʰndʳ]’. Crowley (2006a:30-32) represents this trill as ‘dr’ in the orthography, and justifies his inclusion of this segment on the basis of phonotactic constraints that disallow morpheme-initial and final consonant clusters.

In Neverver, the prenasalised alveolar trill fits with a general definition of complex segments, where these are defined as segments that ‘have more than one specification either for place of articulation or a manner feature’ (Gussenhoven & Jacobs 2005:176). The complex segment is articulated as [ʰndʳ], with each of the components sharing the alveolar [-labial] [+anterior] place of articulation. However, manner of articulation is specified differently for the three parts, moving from nasal, through plosive, to a trilled release. The resulting phoneme /D/ is in contrast with the prenasalised alveolar plosive /d/ and the plain alveolar trill /r/. Word finally, /D/ is devoiced as is the case with other word-final prenasalised segments. The segments /D/, /d/, and /r/ are contrasted in (2.39) to (2.41).

- (2.39) [ʰndʳiʰndʳi] ‘roll’
[ʰndʳiʰndʳi] ‘dip in coconut cream’
[riʰ] ‘escape’

- (2.40) [nd^rus] ‘shuffle’
 [ndum] ‘run’
 [rus] ‘wear, put on’

- (2.41) [nd^rom] ‘thirsty’
 [ndoϕ] ‘retch’
 [rot] ‘feel’

Given that both the prenasalised plosive /d/ and the trill /r/ are well established segments, we might consider treating sequences of [nd^r] as simply involving a consonant cluster /d/ + /r/. However, there is significant phonotactic evidence that [nd^r] sequences involve a single consonant rather than a CC sequence. This evidence is outlined in the following sub-sections.

2.3.8.1. Consonant sequences and the inflection of verb stems

In the construction of words, verb stems are inflected with a subject/mood prefix that varies in form. One factor that shapes the prefix form is whether the stem begins with a consonant sequence or a single consonant (see §6.1.). Different forms of the realis prefix apply to stems with a single consonant initially (CV stems), and to stems with initial heterogeneous sequences as well as geminates (CCV stems).

- (2.42) CV stem [at-^mbay^mbax] ‘they hid’
 CCV stem [ati-^mbrasal] ‘they were comfortable/confident’

When inflected, verb stems beginning with the [ʰdʰ] sequence take a CV stem prefix rather than a CCV stem prefix.

- (2.43) CV stem [at-ʰdʰom] ‘they were thirsty (for something)’
 CCV stem [*ati-ʰdrom]

2.3.8.2. Consonant sequences and reduplication

A second piece of evidence involves reduplication processes. When CCV stems undergo reduplication, only the first consonant of a sequence is reproduced in the reduplicative affix. When stems begin with the sequence [ʰdʰ], the full segment is reduplicated, following the pattern for CV stems. (The forms and functions of reduplication are presented in detail in chapter eight.)

- (2.44) CV stem [ʰbir-ʰbir] ‘argue’ from [ʰbir] ‘break’
 CCV stem [po-prok] ‘listen carefully’ from [prok] ‘listen’
 CV stem [ʰdri-ʰdri] ‘roll’ from [ʰdri] ‘turn around’
 CCV stem [*ʰdi-ʰdri]
 CV stem [ʰdrom-drom] ‘thirsty’ from [ʰdrom] ‘thirsty for s.t.’
 CCV stem [*ʰdo-ʰdrom]

2.3.8.3. Syllable-final consonant clusters

Syllable-final consonant clusters are disallowed in Neverver; however, there are a number of morphemes that end with [ʰdʰ]. Rather than treating [ʰdʰr] as a permissible complex coda, and an exception to the basic constraint on syllable structure, a simpler phonotactic statement can be achieved by treating [ʰdʰ] as a

single, though complex, segment. Two examples of final [ʰdʱ] are presented in (2.45).

- (2.45) [ŋoʰdʱ] ‘snore’
[koʰdʱ] ‘gurgle’ (of stomachs, esp. after eating island cabbage)

In some cases, final [ʰdʱ] alternates with the plain alveolar trill. This alternate articulation is particularly common among younger speakers, suggesting that the prenasalised alveolar trill is beginning to merge with the plain alveolar trill in this position.

- (2.46) [a ʰdʱ ~ ar] ‘they’
[ʰtʃaʰdʱ ~ ʰtʃar] ‘to pass’
[neᵐbeʰdʱ ~ neᵐber] ‘mushroom’

To summarise, evidence for treating the sequence [ʰdʱ] as a distinct complex phoneme lies in the phonotactic constraints on Neverver and the realisation of these constraints in the formation of subject/mood prefixes and reduplicative prefixes as well as simple codas. Morpheme-finally, the complex segment /D/ is better established in the phonologies of older speakers though it is well established for all speakers in the morpheme-initial position.

2.3.9. Non-lateral approximants /j, w/

There is evidence of two further approximants /j/ and /w/ in addition to the lateral approximant /l/. The distribution of these segments is rather limited with no evidence of morpheme final /j/ or /w/. The palatal approximant /j/ occurs in stem-initial position in verbs, preceding the non-high vowels /a/, /e/ and /o/. In

some cases, it appears internally in words displaying inherent/fossilized reduplication. It also appears internally in the local noun [aijem] and initially in two grammatical morphemes. Examples of verbs are displayed in (2.47), along with the local noun and two grammatical morphemes.

(2.47)	[jal]	‘fly’
	[ja ^h s]	‘be ripe (of tubers)’
	[jer]	‘sing’
	[jel]	‘scoop out (coconut flesh)’
	[joŋ]	‘throw out (food)’
	[joβjoΦ]	‘white’
	[aijem]	‘home, dwelling’
	[je~e]	‘RSPN’
	[jes]	‘yes’ (Bis. <i>yes</i>)

The labio-velar approximant occurs stem-initially in both indigenous and borrowed verb stems. It appears morpheme-internally in instances of inherent/fossilized reduplication, and in what appears to be a fossilized nuclear serial construction¹³.

(2.48)	[wakor]	‘cheer’
	[wakwak]	‘scream’
	[warwarat]	‘screech’
	[wel]	‘lever’

¹³ The verb [ʰduwel] ‘nod off’ is thought to be a fossilized nuclear serial construction, containing the morpheme [wel] ‘lever’. A separate morpheme [ʰdu] is no longer found in the lexicon.

[ⁿ duwel]	‘nod off’
[was]	‘wash’ (Bis. <i>was</i>)
[wet]	‘wait’ (Bis. <i>wet</i>)
[waet]	‘be white’ (Bis. <i>waet</i>)

The segment /w/ occurs stem-initially in a small number of items belonging to other word classes, particularly in borrowings.

(2.49)	[wi]	‘wow!’
	[was]	‘day after tomorrow’
	[wallas]	‘thank-you’
	[noyowit]	‘octopus’
	[wailu]	‘k.o.yam’
	[wik]	‘week’ (Bis. <i>week</i>)
	[wi ⁿ do]	‘window’ (Bis. <i>windo</i>)
	[wel]	‘well’ (Bis. <i>well</i>)
	[wenesdei]	‘Wednesday’ (Bis. <i>Wenesdei</i>)

The segment /w/ is also attested as the second member of a CC sequence in both verbs and nouns. In almost all cases, the approximant follows a bilabial consonant. Cognates have been identified for three of the items in Avava (Crowley 2006a). One of the Avava cognates involves an intervocalic labio-velar approximant; the other two have labio-velar nasals.

(2.50)	[mwit]	‘peck’
	[^ŋ gwas]	‘cross’ (Avava [kawat])
	[tata ^m bwet]	‘target-shoot’
	[lal:a ^m Bwix]	‘gnaw’
	[nemwel]	‘k.o.vine (Avava [im ^w il])
	[ni ^m Bwas]	‘male pig’
	[ni ^m bwet]	‘point (in a game)’
	[nimwet]	‘traditional knife’ (Avava [em ^w et])
	[ni ^m bwetuv]	‘yam lean-to’
	[ni ^m bwiliŋ]	‘body, log’
	[nipwis]	‘k.o.coconut epiphyte’

The verb [^ŋgwas] ‘to cross’ displays the clearest evidence that these series involve a sequence of two consonants rather than a labialised consonant, or a consonant followed by the high back rounded vowel [u]. When the subject/mood prefix is attached, it takes the form associated with CCV stems rather than CV stems:

(2.51)	CCV stem	[niti- ^ŋ gwas]	‘we(IN) crossed’
	CV stem	*[nit- ^ŋ gwas]	

Sequences of approximant followed by vowel (CV) syllabify as a single syllable. This contrasts with sequences of two vowels (VV), where the first is high such as [ie]. Such VV sequences form two separate syllable peaks.

Syllabification is discussed further in §2.5.

2.3.10. Geminates

A number of sonorant consonants, comprising the liquids [l, r], and the nasals [m, n], along with the plain fricative [s], and the three plain plosives [p, t, k], are attested in geminate sequences. Contrastive pairs can be found for singletons and the corresponding geminate sequences. Geminate sequences are treated in the same way as heterogeneous sequences by the phonotactic rules of the language.

(2.52)	[papak]	‘piggy’	[p:ar]	‘fall out (of teeth)’
	[pis]	‘wear (headband)’	[p:is]	‘be sore’
	[pipis]	‘pee’		
	[tox]	‘exist’	[t:ox]	‘grab, yank’
	[kakao]	‘cacao’	[k:an]	‘eat’
	[nemasikian]	‘tiredness’	[sik:i]	‘be lost’
	[mas]	‘be dead’	[m:as]	‘be dry’
	[nunun]	‘dive’	[nun:un]	‘spirit’
	[leŋ]	‘remove husk’	[l:eŋ]	‘hang, droop down’
	[rax]	‘clear ground’	[r:ax]	‘hunt in fresh water’
	[saϕ]	‘dance’	[s:aϕ]	‘sharpen’

Geminate plosives are articulated with an audibly delayed release while geminate continuants are held for a longer duration than singletons. In each case, the geminate takes considerably longer than the singleton consonant to pronounce. The following tables display a comparison of the length of geminate and singleton consonants. The careful speech tokens measured in Table 2.4. were extracted from a recording session. In this session, two language

consultants provided their own illustrative sentences for a word list containing items with singleton and geminate consonants. The spontaneous tokens measured in Table 2.5. were extracted from text recordings, where there was a focus on content rather than form. No data is provided for the alveolar nasal, which forms a geminate sequence only rarely. The velar nasal is not attested as a geminate.

	Number of careful speech tokens	Average length in milliseconds		Number of careful speech tokens	Average length in milliseconds	Average increase in duration of geminate
[p]	11	55(28)	[p:]	11	206(44)	x3.7
[t]	8	75(27)	[t:]	7	191(58)	x2.5
[k]	9	42(27)	[k:]	10	157(37)	x3.7
[m]	16	88(19)	[m:]	10	195(34)	x2.2
[l]	17	70 (14)	[l:]	14	171 (44)	x2.4
[r]	5	71(13)	[r:]	5	165(32)	x2.3
[s]	16	91(25)	[s:]	13	222(28)	x2.4

Table 2.4. Consonant length in careful speech (standard deviations shown in parentheses)

	Number of spontaneous tokens	Average length in milliseconds		Number of spontaneous tokens	Average length in milliseconds	Average increase in duration of geminate
[p]	7	85(30)	[p:]	16	153(32)	x1.5
[t]	12	67(21)	[t:]	10	161(35)	x2.4
[k]	10	71(24)	[k:]	13	173(31)	x2.4
[m]	15	73(22)	[m:]	6	114(50)	x1.6
[l]	16	56(23)	[l:]	13	143(36)	x2.5
[r]	12	43(14)	[r:]	16	121(43)	x2.8
[s]	18	93(19)	[s:]	12	172(21)	x1.8

Table 2.5. Consonant length in spontaneous speech (standard deviations shown in parentheses)

A clear difference can be seen in the lengths of singleton and geminate consonants. In careful speech, the average length of a geminate is more than double the average length of a singleton. In more spontaneous speech, the

average length of a geminates is at least one and a half times the length of a singleton, and in most cases is considerably longer.

2.4. The vowel inventory

	Front	Back
High	i (y)	u
Mid	e (ø)	o
Low	a	

Table 2.6. The Neverver vowel inventory

The vowel inventory of contemporary Neverver contains five contrasting segments. There is no evidence of contrastive vowel length (a feature that is found in neighbouring languages, including Naman (Crowley 2006b:29) and Avava (Crowley 2006a:18) and no evidence of a phonemic schwa (a segment that is found in Naman (Crowley 2006b:29), V'ënen Taut (Fox 1979:1) and Northeast Malakula (McKerras, pers. comm.). Among the older speakers in the community, there is evidence of two further phonemic contrasts in the vowel inventory, with a pair of non-low front rounded vowels. These contrastive segments are indicated in parentheses in Table 2.6. above. Pearce (pers. comm.) describes a similar phenomenon in Unua, with younger generations contrasting five vowel segments and older speakers displaying up to eight vowels, although the segmental status of these additional vowels remains unclear in Unua.

2.4.1. Distinctive features for Neverver vowels

	i	(y)	e	(ø)	a	o	u
± back	-	-	-	-	+	+	+
± high	+	+	-	-	-	-	+
± round	-	+	-	+	-	+	+

Table 2.7. Distinctive features for Neverver vowels

2.4.2. Contrastive sets for the contemporary vowel segments

The five vowel segments that contrast in contemporary Neverver can be established through the following contrastive sets:

(2.53)	[mil]	‘again’	[^m bir]	‘argue’
	[melmel]	‘deeply’	[^m ber ^m ber]	‘long’
	[malmal]	‘naked’	[^m bar]	‘blind’
	[mol]	‘rest’	[^m bor]	‘shy’
	[mul]	‘change, renew’	[^m burum]	‘sweep’

2.4.3. Contrastive front rounded vowels /y/ and /ø/

The high front rounded vowel /y/ is attested in just one or two lexical items. One example is [βyl] which means ‘debone (meat)’. Older community members believe the form and meaning of this word to be indigenous; younger speakers are unfamiliar with the word. The commonly occurring word ‘moon, month’ is attested with both the high back rounded vowel [naβul] and the high front rounded vowel [naβyl]. Because of the limited data available for /y/, it is not possible to establish consistent minimal pairs with [y] and [i], although there is a minimal pair for [y] and [u].

- (2.54) [βyl] ‘debone’
 [naβyl~naβul] ‘moon, month’
 [βul] ‘buy’
 [βili] place name
 [βilβal] ‘sacred’

As the only lexical item that is exclusively articulated with the vowel [y], we might hypothesise that [βyl] ‘debone (meat)’ is a borrowed item, although a brief scan of the available lexicons of neighbouring languages has not produced a cognate form. Interestingly, younger speakers did not hear /y/ as distinct from /u/ and when hearing [βyl], reproduced it with a back rounded vowel as [βul].

The non-high front rounded vowel /ø/ is only attested in the speech of community members aged around 40 years and above. Younger speakers use /e/ in all instances. In those speakers aged 40 to 60 years, we find [ø] apparently in free allophonic variation with [e] in some items. In speakers over 60 years old, /ø/ occurs consistently in the verb [βør] ‘work’, providing a contrast with [βer] ‘say, want’:

	Younger Speakers	Aged 40+	Aged 60+
‘work’	βer	βør~βer	βør
‘say, want’	βer	βør~βer	βer
‘do, make’	βe	βe	βe

Table 2.8. Articulation of the front mid vowels

2.4.4. Realisations of the high front vowel /i/

In the Neverver speech community, older community members often realise the high front vowel as a schwa [ə] in rapid speech. The schwa appears particularly in words with adjacent syllables that contain /i/ such as *irvix* [ərβəx]

‘Good!’. In contrast to older speakers, the rapid speech of younger speakers tends towards a higher and more forward, though still lax, articulation of the high front vowel. Therefore, among younger speakers we find the same word *irvix* ‘Good!’ articulated both as [irβix] and [ɪrβix].

2.4.5. Realisations of the high back vowel /u/

The high back vowel /u/ is also commonly pronounced with lax articulation as [ʊ]. This is more noticeable when the vowel follows a non-labial consonant, though it is not exclusively limited to this environment. The tense [u] articulation is more noticeable following labial sounds and word finally, but again it is not exclusively limited to this environment and we find the allophones [u] and [ʊ] alternating rather freely.

(2.55)	[βu ~ βʊ]	‘go’
	[^m Burβur ~ ^m Bʊrβʊr]	‘completely, totally’
	[nimɣut ~ nimʊt]	‘man, person’
	[lux ~ lʊx]	‘live, stay’

2.4.6. Diphthongs

Three diphthongs, [au], [ei], and [ai], are attested in the corpus. The diphthong [au] is the most common diphthong, occurring in a number of nouns and verb stems. The status of these vowels as diphthongs is considered in §2.5.4. Examples of common nouns are given in (2.56), along with attested local nouns and verbs.

(2.56)	[nau]	‘cane’	Common nouns
	[naur]	‘fresh water prawn’	
	[naut]	‘place’	
	[naus]	‘rain’	
	[ni ⁿ daut]	‘bush man’	
	[aut]	‘ashore’	Local noun
	[maur]	‘live’	Verbs
	[raus]	‘seek exchange’	

The diphthong [au] forms a contrastive set with [a] and [u].

(2.57)	[raus]	‘seek exchange’
	[ras]	‘be overripe’
	[rus]	‘wear’

(2.58)	[maur]	‘live’
	[maran]	‘tomorrow’
	[nemar]	‘hunger’
	[mur]	‘shed leaves’

The diphthong [ei] has a very limited distribution. Contrastive sets cannot be established with other vowels. It does however, occur very commonly in the corpus in the third person singular pronoun, and in a small number of other items, including borrowings.

(2.59)	[ei]	‘he’	Pronoun
	[ei]	‘hey!’	Vocative
	[limei]	woman’s name	Personal nouns
	[mei]	‘May’ (Bis. <i>mei</i>)	
	[eibel]	‘Able’	
	[wenesdei]	‘Wednesday’ (Bis. <i>Wenesdei</i>)	Temporal noun

The diphthong [ai] also has a very limited distribution and does not form contrastive sets with other vowels. It occurs in one local noun. It also occurs in a number of personal nouns, which may have been borrowed into Neverver.

(2.60)	[aijem]	‘home, dwelling’	Local noun
	[maija]	woman’s name	Personal nouns
	[aila]	woman’s name	
	[dʒosaija]	man’s name	
	[wailu]	‘k.o.yam’	
	[nais]	‘k.o.traditional dance’	

2.4.7. Multi-vowel sequences

Almost all stems in Neverver are consonant-initial. One exception is the verb [is] ‘be bad’. The nominalised form /ni-is-ian/ is treated as having four syllables in the hymn corpus, as in [ni.i.si.an]. This supports the analysis of /is/ as vowel-initial. When inflected with the third person singular realis prefix [i-], a V₁V₁ sequence forms, as in /i-is/. This monosyllabic word is stress-bearing, so it is difficult to discern whether the form involves a stressed ‘long’ vowel that occupies two V positions on the CV tier [‘i:is], or a stressed degeminated vowel

that occupies just one position on the CV tier [‘is]. Given the lack of other V₁V₁ sequences in the language, we might propose that the sequence /i-i/ is in fact degeminated and is articulated as [‘is].

A further example of a vowel-initial stem is /ul/ ‘atone’. When this verb is inflected for the third person singular realis prefix /i-/, it is articulated as a bisyllabic sequence, although the text example displays a centralising of the front vowel, and a lax articulation of the back vowel, as in [ə.ʊl] rather than *[i.ʊl].

A small number of two-vowel, apparently tautomorphemic, sequences are attested in the corpus. These sequences are bisyllabic. Sequences involving [+high][-high] pairs are found in morphemes that are commonly used in contemporary Neverver. Other sequences are restricted to single lexical items and are either archaic or borrowed.

(2.61)	[i.e]	[toriet]	‘crow’
		[nies’n]	‘fluid’
	[i.a]	[m-mial]	‘ST-red’
		[-i.an ~ -jan]	‘NSF’
	[o.a]	[lo.a]	‘high ranked man (archaic)’
	[o.e]	[ni ^m bet-loetun]	‘k.o.breadfruit (local borrowing)’
	[e.u]	[ni ^m bet-leus]	‘k.o.breadfruit (local borrowing)’

When the nominalising suffix [-ian] attaches to a vowel-final stem, the high front vowel of the suffix undergoes glide replacement, resulting in a monosyllabic articulation. Elsewhere, the nominalising suffix is bisyllabic.

- (2.62) /u-ian/ [ne.βa.βu.jan] ‘journey’
 /a-ian/ [ne.ta.ta.jan] ‘promise’
 /o-ian/ [net.las.ɣo.jan] ‘forgiveness’
 /e-ian/ [nep:e.jan] ‘weaving’

2.5. Phonotactic constraints

In the description of phonotactic constraints on Neverver, a framework of autosegmental phonology is employed, principally following the work of Clements and Keyser (1983) and Goldsmith (1990). Autosegmental phonology involves the separation of different types of phonemic information onto tiers. The three-tiered model of Clements and Keyser (1983) is sufficient to describe the phonological structure of words in Neverver. Linear sequences of phonemes, which can also be described as sets or matrices of distinctive features, are ordered on the segmental tier. The components of these linear strings are assigned to vowel positions (V slots) and consonant positions (C slots) on the CV tier. V slots form the peak of syllable nodes on the syllable tier. There are strict limitations on the number of C slots that may be associated with each V slot in the formation of syllables. The MAXIMUM ONSET PRINCIPLE (Khan 1976, cited in Gussenhoven & Jacobs 2005) applies, ensuring that onsets are formed before coda consonants are assigned to syllables.

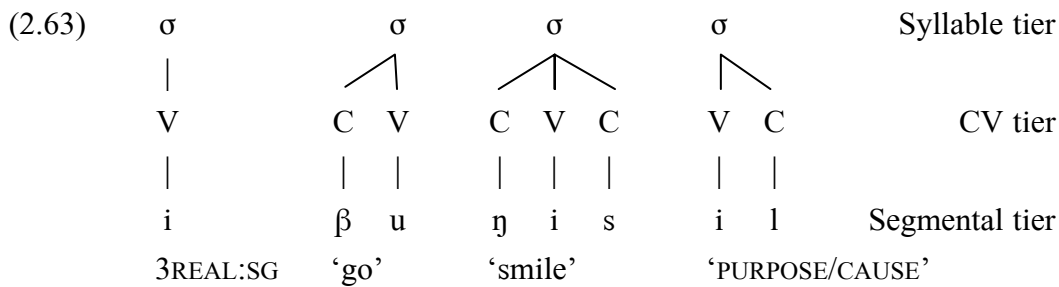
When looking at linear sequences of segments, we can observe multiple instances of contiguous consonants. This is particularly the case when looking at verb stems, many of which begin with geminate or heterogeneous sequences of consonants. More important however, is the fact that when we examine the syllabification of words, we observe that in almost all cases, syllables are formed

with onsets and codas that are simple. Syllables with the structures V, CV, CVC and VC are attested in the corpus. Based on these syllable structures, we can formulate a simple phonotactic constraint for Neverver:

Syllable Constraint: The basic syllable structure in Neverver is (C)V(C).

2.5.1. One-to-one association

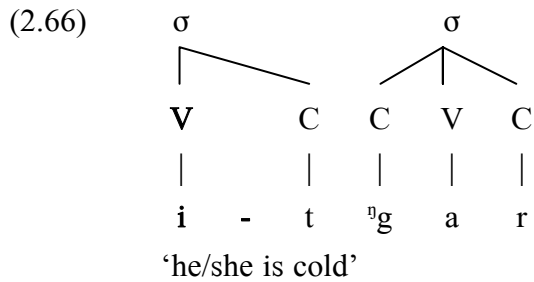
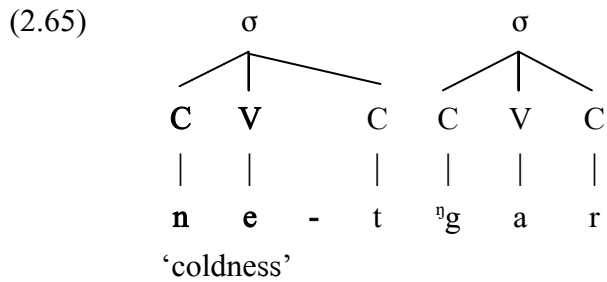
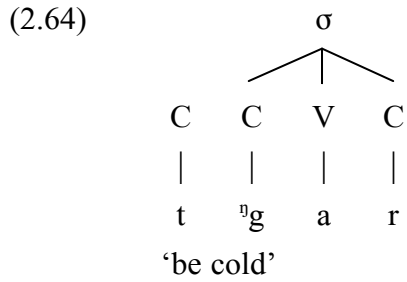
Segments may be associated with C slots and V slots in a one-to-one relationship. This type of association is exemplified in (2.63), where the four realisations of the canonical syllable in Neverver are displayed.



2.5.2. Unassociated C slots

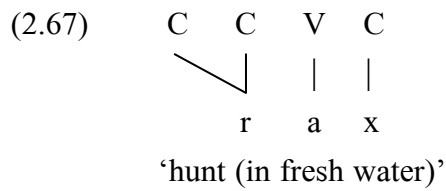
The contrast in the behaviour of stems that have the shape CV and stems that have the shape CCV is central to the formation of words in Neverver. When a stem has the form CCV, the first C is unassigned to the syllable structure of the stem. In the formation of nouns, it occupies the available coda slot in the syllable structure of the common noun prefix /n(V)/. It associates with the syllable node immediately preceding the initial stem syllable. In the formation of verbs, it occupies an available coda slot in the obligatory subject/mood prefix and again, it associates with the syllable node immediately preceding the initial stem syllable. The examples below display a stem that, with the addition of

appropriate affixal morphology, may form either a noun or a verb. In each case, the unassociated stem consonant attaches to the syllable structure of the prefixed material.

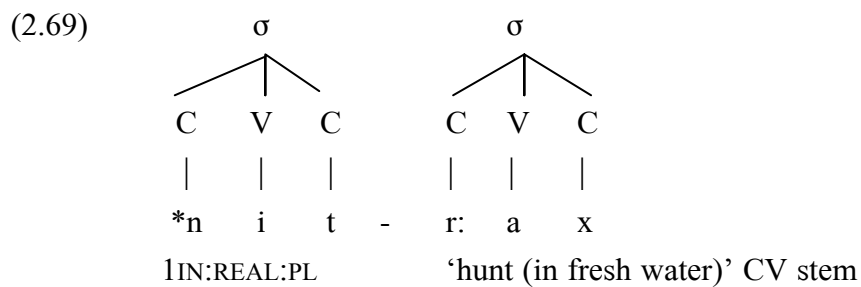
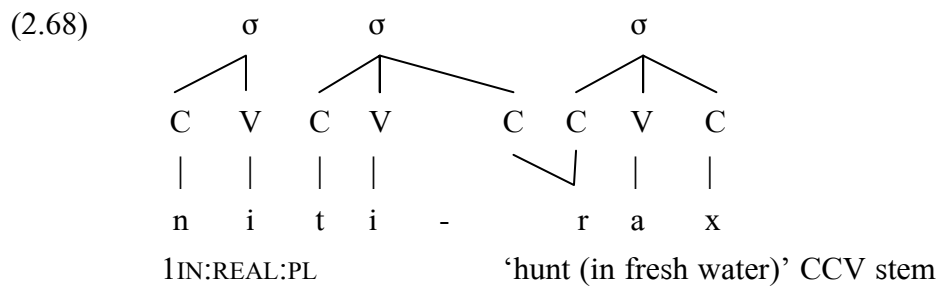


2.5.3. Type A simultaneous association

In Type A simultaneous association, one segment is associated with two positions on the CV tier. This is the case with geminate consonants. A geminate consonant occupies one segmental position, but is associated with two C slots on the CV tier.



Evidence for this analysis is displayed in the behaviour of morpheme-initial geminate consonants. Initial C_1C_1 sequences in verb stems behave like heterogeneous C_1C_2 sequences when combining with subject/mood prefixes. Example (2.68) shows the formation of the inflected verb which assumes a CCV stem; example (2.69) displays the unacceptable construction based on an analysis of [r:ax] ‘hunt (in fresh water)’ as a CV stem.

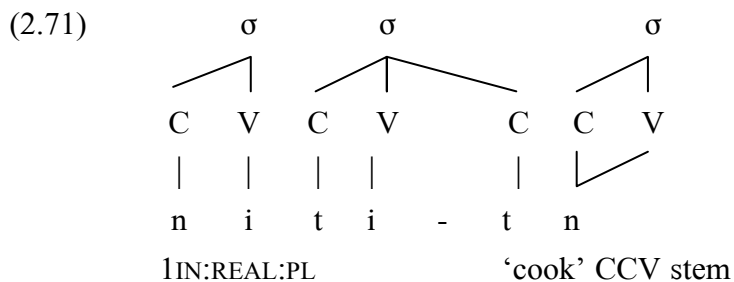


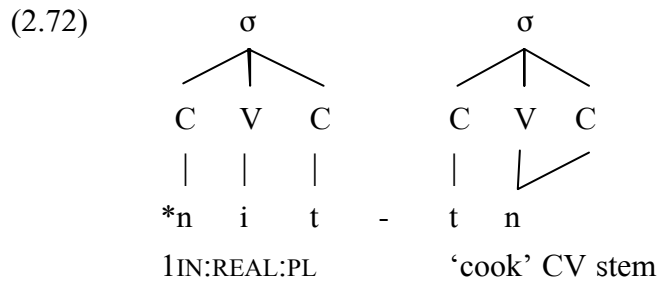
Syllabic consonants also display Type A simultaneous association. Consonants that syllabify belong to a sub-set of sonorant segments that contains the nasals /m/ and /n/ and the liquid /l/. Syllabic consonants may appear stem-initially before another consonant segment, or stem-finally after another

consonant segment. Examples of morphemes with final syllabic consonants include:

- (2.70) [t̩] 'three'
 [s^mbas̩] 'walk with stick'
 [t̩] 'cook'
 [βrat̩] 'true, real'

Syllabic consonants occupy two slots on the CV tier. The syllabification of inflected verbs provides evidence that syllabic consonants are assigned to a CV string on the CV tier, rather than the inverse VC string. Verb stems like [t̩] 'cook' take the subject/mood prefix that is associated with CCV stems rather than CV stems. Example (2.71) displays the attested form of the verb [t̩] with the first person inclusive plural prefix in realis mood. The prefix takes the form associated with CCV stems. Example (2.72) displays a logically possible but unacceptable construction containing the prefix associated with CV stems.





There is a tendency in rapid speech for the alveolar nasal to be pre-stopped in the transition from the plain fricative [s] to the nasal [n], as indicated in the alternations presented in for the items in (2.73).

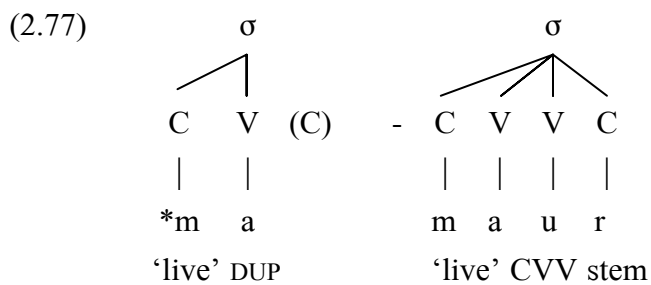
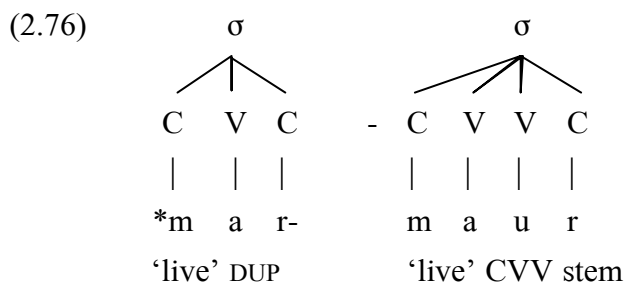
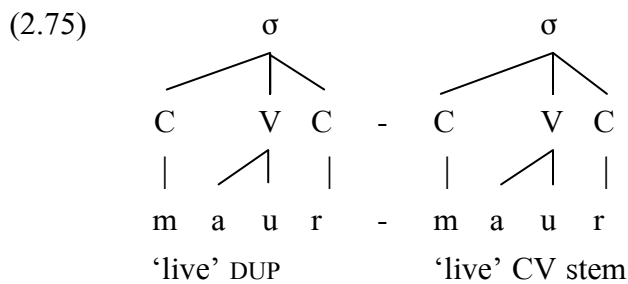
- (2.73)
- | | |
|---|---|
| [^m bis.ŋ ~ ^m bis.ʔŋ] | ‘downward, down’ |
| [mas.ŋ ~ mas.ʔŋ] | ‘half’ |
| [ni.es.ŋ ~ ni.es.ʔŋ] | ‘body fluid (of plants, animals, humans)’ |
| [nus.ŋ ~ nus. ʔŋ] | ‘penis’ |

When stem-initial consonant sequences involve a nasal followed by a consonant, we find that initial nasals also syllabify. This only occurs in lexical items where the syllable is preceded by another syllable which has a coda-consonant. Otherwise, the nasal is simply assigned to the available coda position of the preceding syllable.

- (2.74)
- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| [kut.m.la] | ‘clearing’ from ‘LOCPN’ + ‘open (i.e. not forested)’ |
| [nolo ^g .m.rix] | ‘chicken with multi-colored feathers’ |

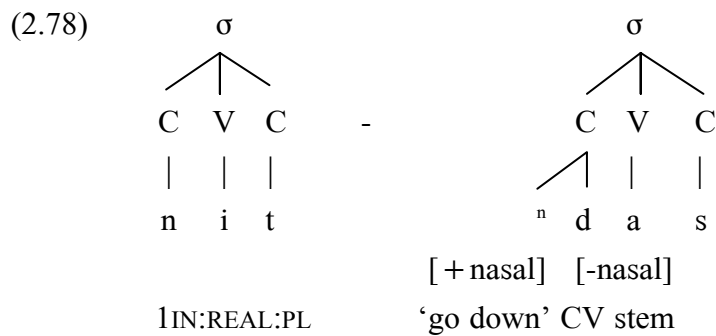
2.5.4. Type B simultaneous association

In Type B simultaneous association, one position on the CV tier is associated with two segments on the segmental tier. This is the case with the diphthongs identified in §2.4.6. A diphthong occupies two segmental positions, but is associated with just one V slot. Evidence for this analysis comes from the verb [maur] ‘live’ when it is reduplicated. The reduplicative prefix has the form CV(C), with just one available V slot. The reduplicative affix for [maur] is [maur-] rather than [mar-] or [ma-] which we would predict if each vowel in the diphthong occupied a separate V-slot.

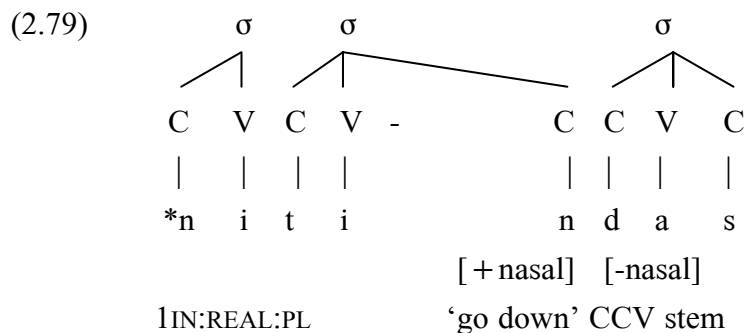


When we claim that two segments are associated with a single slot on the CV tier, we are actually claiming that two segmental feature matrices are associated with the same CV tier position. As well as accounting for the behaviour of diphthongs, this analysis allows us to account for the numerous prenasalised segments in Neverver. Prenasalised segments occupy one C slot on the CV tier but display both positive and negative values for the feature [\pm nasal].

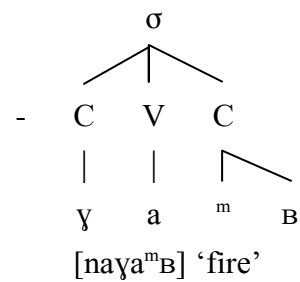
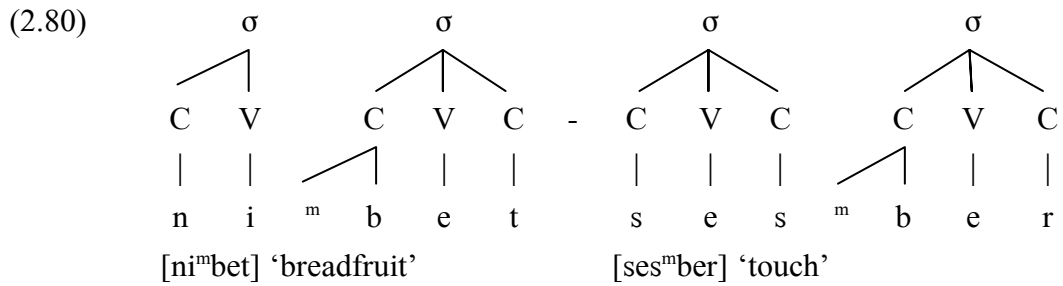
The values [+nasal] and [-nasal] are associated with a single C slot, as displayed in the attested form of [ˠdas] ‘go down’ in (2.78), which inflects as a CV stem.



The values [+nasal] and [-nasal] would normally be distributed over two phonemically distinct segments, occupying two C positions on the CV tier, as displayed in the unacceptable inflection of the verb [ˠdas] ‘go down’ in (2.79), which assumes a CCV stem.

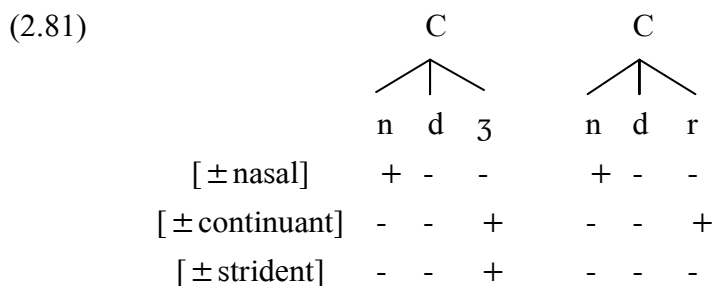


The multi-morphemic name for a kind of breadfruit displayed in (2.80) contains several prenasalised consonants. By analysing prenasalised consonants as occupying just one slot on the CV tier, all five syllables conform to the canonical (C)V(C) syllable structure.



‘k.o.breadfruit (that cooks quickly on the fire)’

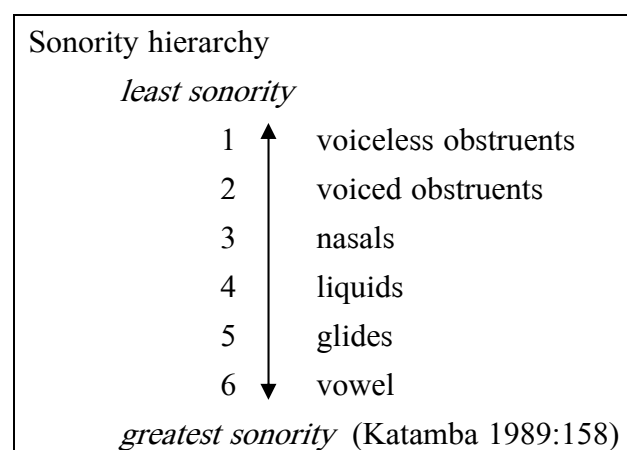
The prenasalised affricate [ⁿɖ] and the prenasalised alveolar trill [ⁿdʀ] involve three sets of features associated with a single C slot on the CV tier. The salient distinctive feature assignments for these two sounds are reproduced here from Table 2.3. above.



2.5.5. Violations of the phonotactic constraint

In general, syllables must conform to the structure (C)V(C), a structure which disallows consonant clusters as onsets or codas. There are a small number of positions where the constraint on the basic syllable structure is violated. The first involves items with initial /tC/ sequences. The second involves the boundaries between compounded morphemes. In each case, a complex onset must form. When we examine the complex onsets in the examples below, we find that the consonant segments display increasing sonority. This sonority-increase conforms to the universal SONORITY SEQUENCING GENERALISATION which in one form states: ‘In any syllable, there is a segment constituting a sonority peak that is preceded and /or followed by a sequence of segments with progressively decreasing sonority values’ (Selkirk 1984:116).

The sonority sequencing generalisation implies that sonority is a scalar notion. This is captured on the sonority hierarchy reproduced from Katamba (1989) below:



In the cases where Neverver’s language specific syllable constraint is violated, we find that a universal constraint applies instead.

2.5.5.1. Initial /tC-/ sequences

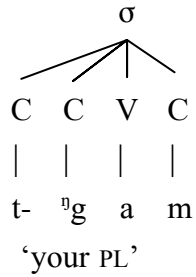
A small number of items in the corpus begin with an initial /tC/- sequence. Possessive determiners are derived from the personal pronouns (see §3.1.) by attaching the possessive prefix /t-/ to the stem of a personal pronoun¹⁴. When a pronominal stem begins with a vowel, the personal prefix is dropped and the possessive prefix may then attach to the stem. This happens with [t-ox] ‘your’. In the other two cases of vowel-initial pronouns [ei] and [aⁿd^r], irregular /tV-/ forms occur. The possessive pronouns displayed in (2.82) below observe the phonotactic constraint on syllable structure and are not problematic.

(2.82)	[tox]	‘your.sg’	[(i)ox]	‘you’
	[titi]	‘his/her/its’	[ei]	‘he/she’
	[titi ⁿ d ^r]	‘their’	[a ⁿ d ^r]	‘they’

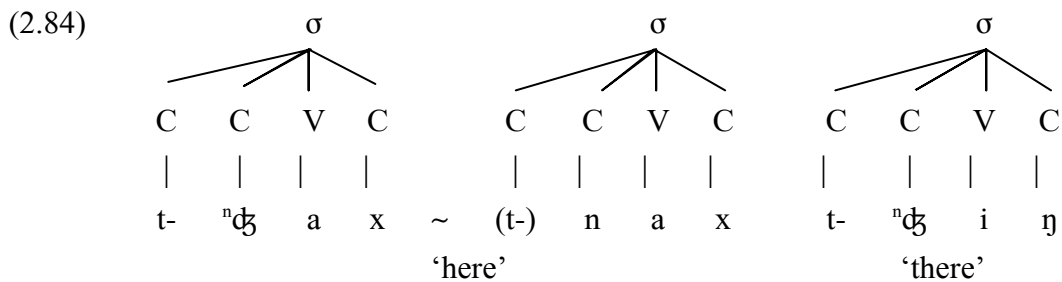
When the pronominal stem begins with a consonant, the attachment of the possessive prefix [t-] produces an initial cluster. The four /tC/ constructions in (2.83) are monosyllabic and clearly violate the phonotactic constraint on syllable structure.

(2.83)	σ C C V t- n a ‘my’	σ C C V C t- ʰg i t ‘our IN’	σ C C V C t- m a m ‘our EX’
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¹⁴ The possessive prefix has a zero allomorph, which occurs when the preceding word is n-final. This allomorphy is discussed in §3.1.2 and §5.1.1.



Two of the three local demonstrative nouns begin with a consonant cluster. The forms [t^hɕax] ‘here’ and [t^hɕiŋ] ‘there’ comprise the verb stems [nɕax] ‘be here’ and [nɕiŋ] ‘be there’ and a prefix [t-]. The alternative proximal form [tnax] ‘here’ also displays an initial cluster; however, the [t-] appears only inconsistently in the corpus. In particular, when the preceding morpheme ends with a [+nasal] segment, the [t-] prefix is typically suppressed.

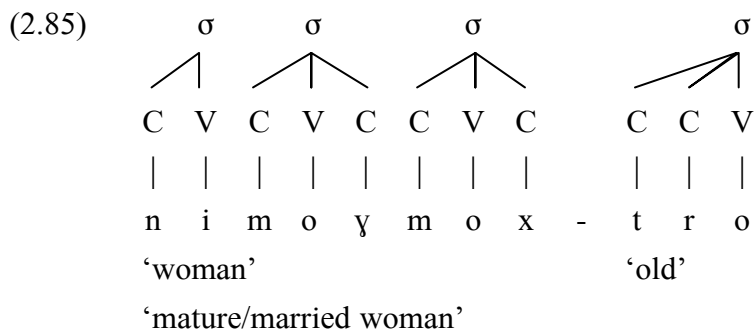


As we have seen with the possessive determiners described in §2.5.5.1. above, the attachment of the prefix [t-] to a CV stem of any kind produces an initial cluster. The third demonstrative noun [taŋ] ‘there (not visible)’, comprising the prefix [t-] and the anaphoric demonstrative [aŋ], does not violate the phonotactic constraint on syllable structure.

Further, the modifier /tle/ ‘another’ comprises an initial /t-/ followed by another consonant. Unlike the other t-initial forms discussed above, there is no evidence that /tle/ is a complex morpheme.

2.5.5.2. The formation of compounds

Another position where the phonotactic constraint on syllable structure is violated is in the formation of various types of compounds. When a stem is compounded, it may attach to another stem that has a coda consonant. If the compounded morpheme is a CV stem, there is no possible violation of the phonotactic constraint on syllable structure; however, when the compounded morpheme is a CCV stem, and the morpheme that it attaches to already has a word-final consonant, the unassigned stem-initial C must associate with its own syllable node.



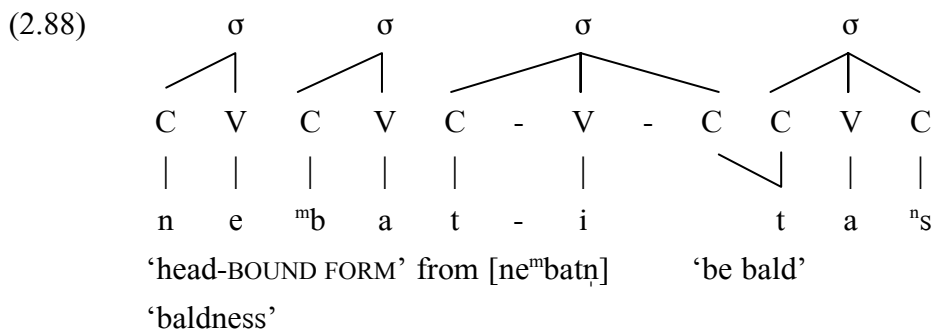
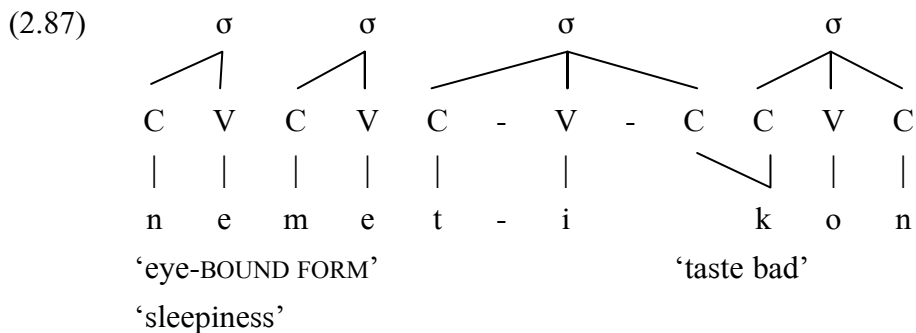
A range of compounded structures that display CCV stems are displayed in

(2.86) below.

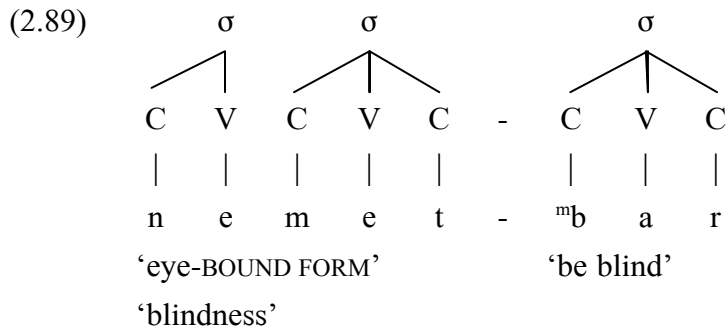
(2.86)	Noun-verb	[^m baŋ-ssor]	man’s name from [^{ne^m} baŋ] ‘banyan’; [ssor] ‘talk’
	Noun-noun	[ni ⁿ ɕʒal-tmas]	‘k.o.tree’ from *[ni ⁿ ɕʒal]; [netmas] ‘devil’
	Verb-noun	[yil- ^ɳ gren-ix]	‘dig to end of a tuber with s.t.’ from [yil] ‘dig’; [ni ^ɳ gren] ‘end of long object’

Verb-verb [ᵑgolᵑgol-ᵐb-jal] ‘gossip’ from [ᵑgolᵑgol] ‘chat’;
 [m-jal] ‘ST-fly’

There are items in the corpus involving Noun-Verb compounds that display evidence of resyllabification in order to adhere to the basic syllable constraint in Neverver. In the two examples presented below, the noun terminates with a plain plosive, and the compounded CCV verb stem begins with a geminate plain plosive. C₁C₁ sequences display level sonority and thus it is not surprising that they are dis-preferred clusters. The epenthetic vowel [i] breaks up the C-CC sequence to allow for syllabification that adheres to the phonotactic constraint (see §2.6.3.5. for further occurrences of epenthetic [i]).



When the compounded verb stem has an initial CV structure, the epenthetic vowel does not occur.



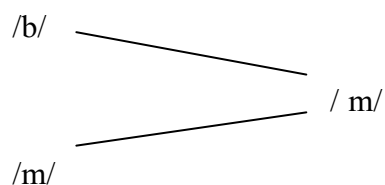
2.6. Phonological processes

2.6.1. Neutralisation

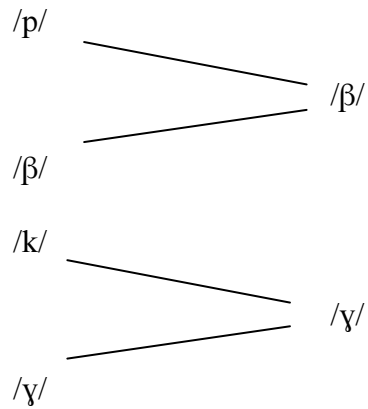
The neutralisation of phonemic contrasts has been discussed above with respect to a number of word-final phonemes. At present, the segments contrast in other positions, but are in relatively free variation in word-final position.

The contrast between two of the three complex alveolar segments, and plain alveolar equivalents is being neutralised in the direction of the plain segment. The contrast between /ɖʒ/ and /s/ is being neutralised to /s/ word-finally (see §2.3.6.); the contrast between /D/ and /r/ is being neutralised to /r/ word-finally (see §2.3.8.3.).

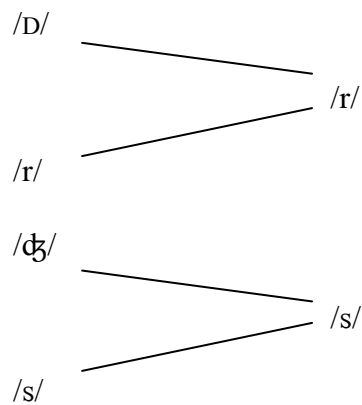
(2.90) Word-final neutralisation of bilabial nasal and prenasalised bilabial plosive for younger speakers



(2.91) Word-final neutralisation of plain plosives and fricative segments at the bilabial and velar places of articulation



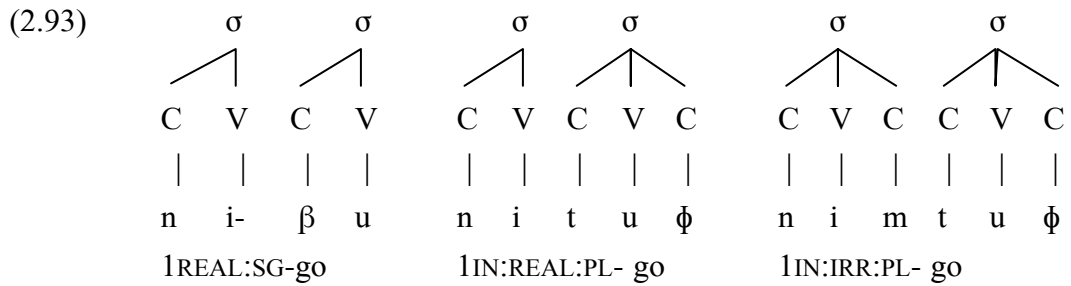
(2.92) Neutralisation of complex and plain alveolar segments



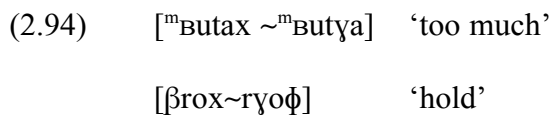
2.6.2. Metathesis

Metathesis can be seen to apply to a small number of items in the corpus. One example is the high-frequency motion verb /βu/ ‘go’. When this verb stem is attached to a subject prefix complex that ends with the dual morpheme /r/ or the plural morpheme /t/, the verb is articulated as [uβ].¹⁵

¹⁵ We might also treat this process as one in which the two segments that comprise the morpheme ‘go’ are underlyingly unspecified for C or V. When the morpheme is inflected as a verb, C or V status is assigned depending on the shape of the subject prefix complex. This type of analysis would require an additional rule to produce the correct voicing. Word-final devoicing



Metathesis also occurs in the serial verb [^mbutax] ‘too much’ and in the verb [βrox] ‘hold’. The serial verb displays the word-final sequence /ay/ which is attested as both [ax] and [ya] with no difference in meaning. The verb ‘hold’ is rather more complicated. It is attested as [βrox] and [rɣoϕ]. The same consonant segments /β, ɣ, r/ are found in each articulation, but the order appears to rotate. Like the ‘too much’ lexeme, there is no difference in meaning between the two forms.



The variant forms of these two items are socially distributed, with older speakers producing [^mbutya] and [βrox] more consistently, and younger speakers producing [^mbutax] and [rɣoϕ] more consistently.

2.6.3. Epenthesis

Epenthetic sounds appear commonly in Neverver. There are two rather different types of epenthetic sounds in the language. The first type, described in

is common in rapid speech Neverver, but there is no requirement for morpheme-initial consonants to be voiced.

§2.6.3.1. to §2.6.3.4. following, involves the insertion of a transitional sound in a highly specified phonological environment. As such, it tends to be a product of rapid speech, although it has resulted in well-established allomorphy in some cases. Such transitional sounds are not reflected in the orthographic representation of the language. The second type, described in §2.5.5.3. above and in §2.6.3.5. below, involves the insertion of a phoneme to break up consonant sequences. This is a strict phonotactic process and is preserved in the orthographic representation throughout this work.

2.6.3.1. Epenthetic schwa

In rapid speech, the transition between certain sounds is made with an epenthetic schwa. The environment in which the schwa occurs is where one syllable ends with a velar fricative and the next begins with a liquid or nasal. This transition involves an increase in sonority, as liquids and nasals are more sonorant than fricatives.

(2.95)	[lux]	‘live, stay’
	[luɣəlux~luɣlux]	‘wait’
	[rax]	‘clear ground’
	[raɣərəx~raɣrax]	‘do weeding’
	[nelaɣəlax]	‘purple swamphen’
	[naɣələn~naɣalen~naylen]	‘leg’
	[naɣəmal~naɣamal~naymal]	‘house’

In the items that display reduplication in (2.95), the schwa tends to be a product of rapid speech. Schwa-less articulation is produced in careful speech

styles. Younger speakers may pronounce ‘leg’ and ‘house’ with a medial [a] rather than [ə], although again, in careful speech the schwa is generally not articulated at all. The final item ‘house’ derives from Proto Oceanic **kamali(R)* ‘men’s meeting house’ (Green & Pawley 1998:50), and arguably illustrates vowel elision ([naya^hmal] to [naɪmal]) rather than epenthesis ([naɪmal] to [naɪəmal]).

When a stem ends with a velar fricative but begins with a consonant that is not a liquid or nasal, the schwa does not occur.

(2.96) [tuxtux] ‘beat ITERATIVE’ from [tux] ‘strike’

2.6.3.2. Epenthetic plosives [d] and [g]

In rapid speech, an epenthetic plosive appears where a morpheme with a final nasal is followed by a morpheme beginning with a vowel. The plosive is homorganic with the preceding nasal.

(2.97) [an^d i-rβix] ‘that/who is good’
 [netan^d is] ‘something bad’
 [ei aŋ^g iŋ] ‘that’s it!’

The examples given above involve alveolar and velar nasals, both of which are [-labial]. In slower speech, the epenthetic plosive is absent.

2.6.3.3. Epenthetic plosive [b]

A similar kind of process can be seen in the rapid articulation of the bilabial nasal /m/ although in the examples below, the following environment involves a

liquid rather than a vowel. In this context, a homorganic labial plosive is inserted between the bilabial nasal and following liquid.

- (2.98) [em^blina] woman's name
[nem^blaŋ] 'pool'

Neither of these examples involves a particularly clear morpheme boundary; however, the intrusive plosive still appears to be a function of rapid speech, at the transition point where the closure of the oral cavity, formed for the articulation of the [-continuant] bilabial nasal is released into the [+continuant] liquid. In careful speech, the plosive is absent. Intrusive plosives of this kind are also present in other languages including English, where we have the lexicalised pronunciation of words like *number* (from Latin *numerus*).

2.6.3.4. Established allomorphy for the irrealis nasal /m/

Instances of a sound that might also be categorised as an epenthetic [b] appear in complex lexical items. Verbs that take a singular subject and that are inflected for irrealis mood take a subject prefix that ends with the irrealis morpheme *m-*. When the associated verb stem begins with a liquid, the approximant /j/, or a vowel, we find the irrealis morpheme is articulated as [mb] rather than [m]. This established allomorphy is represented as [m^b], contrasting with the intrusive plosive [b] described in §2.6.3.3.

- (2.99) [i^mb-laϕ] '(s)he will get it'
[i^mb-rax] '(s)he will clear the ground'

[i^mb-jal] ‘(s)he will fly’

[i^mb-is] ‘it will be bad’

Among older speakers, there are some instances in the corpus of a plain nasal being articulated in this environment; however, almost all speakers consistently use the plosive articulation. It is interesting to note that speakers prefer the morpheme to be written as ‘b’ in this context rather than as the plain nasal ‘m’. This suggests that what was perhaps originally an epenthetic sound has become an allomorph of the irrealis nasal.

Irrealis nasal /m/ : [m ^b] / __ r, l, j, V
--

This same sound is beginning to appear in the speech of some younger community members, preceding verb stems beginning with the velar fricative /ɣ/. In this context however, the [b] is still very much epenthetic and a product of rapid speech, alternating with the plain nasal in careful speech styles. Speakers prefer the irrealis morpheme to be realised as the plain nasal in this environment in orthographic representations.

(2.100) [im-ɣan~im^b-ɣan] ‘(s)he will eat (something)’

[im-ɣitl~im^b-ɣitl] ‘(s)he will recognise (something)’

The unproductive stative prefix /m-/ follows a similar pattern, being articulated as [m^b] when it precedes the palatal approximant /j/. /m-jal/ ‘be flying about’ is articulated as [m^bjal]. The stative prefix is also articulated as a

prenasalised plosive before some liquids, though not all. For example, /m-rey/ ‘be raw’ is articulated as [m^hrey] while /m-rar/ ‘be numb’ is articulated as [m^hrar]

Above, we observed that a homorganic epenthetic plosive occurs between a nasal and a vowel. The bilabial nasal is also realised as a prenasalised homorganic plosive when followed by a vowel in the formation of subject prefixes which are attached to verb stems.

- (2.101) [ni^mbit-] ‘we(IN:IRR)-’
[a^mbir-] ‘they(IRR:DL)-’

The plosives that appear in these subject prefixes are obligatory. The irrealis morpheme in the examples above is never articulated as a plain nasal; it must be realised as a prenasalised plosive when it is followed by a vowel (see §6.1.).

2.6.3.5. Epenthetic [i]

The most pervasive process of epenthesis in Neverver can be observed in the formation of inflected verbs. This process is mentioned in §2.5.3. and described in detail in §6.1. on verbs; however, a brief summary is presented in this section to introduce this important process. In the formation of inflected verbs, a prefix marking person, mood and number is attached to the verb stem. Depending on the person and number of the subject, and the mood of the proposition being encoded, the subject/mood prefix may involve final consonants. Should the verb stem begin with a consonant sequence, the resulting inflected form would produce a sequence of up to four consonants. When an inflected form is syllabified, these consonant sequences are broken up by the insertion of an

epenthetic [i], in order to observe the syllable constraint. Indigenous and borrowed items behave in the same manner.

(2.102)	/ni-βlem/	[niβ.lem]	‘I came’
		CVC.CVC	
	/nit-βlem/	[ni.tiβ.lem]	‘we(IN) came’
		CV.CVC.CVC	
	/nimt-βlem/	[nim.tiβ.lem]	‘we(IN) will come’
		CVC.CVC.CVC	
	/kat-stoβ-da/	[ka.tis.toβ. ^h da]	‘you paused’
		CV.CVC.CVC.CV	
	/nat-pripe/	[na.tip.ri.pe]	‘we(EX) prepared’
		CV.CVC.CV.CV	

When syllabified, each word displays syllables with simple onsets and codas, preserving the required (C)V(C) structure of syllables. In chapter six we consider the formation of subject/mood prefixes, and we hypothesise that wherever consonant sequences may potentially form clusters, an epenthetic vowel is inserted to ensure that the basic syllable constraint is observed.

2.6.4. Apocope and syncope

In the rapid speech of many community members, nasals are dropped when they are simultaneously morpheme-final and phrase-final. This is an example of apocope.

- (2.103) /niβlem/ [niβle] 'I came'
 /kumbulem/ [kumbule] 'come!'
 /aŋ/ [a] 'ANA'

In a small number of complex items, a stem-internal vowel is present that is absent in associated simple lexical items. These pairs may illustrate either apocope, with an underlying medial vowel dropped in certain contexts, or syncope, with a medial vowel inserted in certain contexts.

- (2.104) [neyel-βas] 'four-legged creature' from [naylen~nayəlen~nayalen]
 'leg'; [βas] 'four'
 [niliβ-maβus] 'tusk growth stage' from [nilβun] 'tooth';
 [maβus~maβis] 'white'

The simple nouns presented in (2.104) are likely to reflect historically complex morphemes, as the final /n/ in [naylen] and [nilβun] looks very much like the third person singular Proto Oceanic possessor suffix **-ñā* which is associated with direct possession (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:76). This point is discussed further in chapter five.

2.7. Stress

Stress is not phonemically contrastive. A purely auditory analysis suggests that primary stress is assigned to the penultimate syllable of polysyllabic lexical stems and falls on the single syllable of monosyllabic stems. When lexical items contain more than one stem, stress is assigned separately to each stem.

2.7.1. Stress assignment in nouns

The basic stress-assignment pattern presented above is illustrated in the following items:

(2.105)	[¹ naus]	‘rain’
	[¹ ni.ʝo]	‘water’
	[¹ na.βu ⁿ s]	‘banana’
	[¹ naɣ.len]	‘leg’
	[ni. ¹ te.rɪx]	‘child’

In each item in (2.105) above, the common noun prefix is counted in the assignment of stress.

The lexical items in (2.106) below are complex, involving the form /niliβ-/ ‘tooth’. This morpheme has the independent form /nilβun/. The nominal morpheme is followed by a second morpheme which serves to classify the growth stages of pig tusks. /maβus/ is a modifier meaning ‘plain, white’ and /teβ/ is a verb stem meaning ‘grow’; /ssuŋ/ is not attested in other constructions with an independent meaning. We find that stress is assigned to the modifying or classifying element independently of the initial nominal morpheme so that these compound nouns are stressed twice.

(2.106)	[¹ niliβ- ¹ maβus ~ ¹ maβis]	‘tusk growth stage, tusk is just beginning to appear’ from [maβus ~ maβis] ‘plain, white’
---------	--	---

[¹ niliϕ- ¹ ssuŋ]	‘tusk growth stage, third stage of classification’ from *[ssuŋ]
[¹ niliϕ- ¹ teϕ]	‘tusk growth stage, where full circle is achieved’ from [teϕ] ‘sprout, begin to grow’

The word for ‘four legged creature’ is also morphologically complex and has stress marked on both lexical morphemes.

- (2.107) [ne.ˈyel.βas] ‘four legged creature’ from [¹naɣ.len] ‘leg’; [βas] ‘four’

2.7.2. Stress assignment in verbs

Stress falls on first syllable of the verb stem, regardless of the shape of the subject/mood prefix. The prefix, which is obligatorily attached to verb stems, is disregarded in the assignment of stress¹⁶.

- (2.108) [is¹ɣam] ‘one’
 [im¹bulem] ‘(s)he will come’
 [nitiβ¹lem] ‘we(IN) came’

When a stem undergoes reduplication, the first syllable of the stem always receives primary stress. This is true of both productive reduplication in verbs and inherent or fossilized reduplication in nouns.

¹⁶ The exception to this pattern is the rare case of the vowel initial stem [is] ‘be bad’. This stem, as noted in §2.4.7, is monosyllabic when inflected with singular realis subject/mood prefixes and the full inflected syllable is stress bearing [¹is].

- (2.109) [na.^mbit.^lliŋ.liŋ] ‘we left (her)’
 [nit.^lmal.ma.lu] ‘we dispersed’
 [ni.^lmoy.mox] ‘woman, female’

In the articulation of imperative constructions, stress is placed both on the initial subject/mood prefix and then again on the initial syllable of the verb stem according to the stress assignment pattern described above:

- (2.110) [ˈkam.^ltuɸ] ‘go away!’
 [ˈkum.^lɣan] ‘eat up!’
 [ˈkum.^lbu.lem] ‘come!’

This distinctive patterning allows for a contrast between ‘Go away!’ as an imperative construction and ‘You will go’ as, for example, a construction with future time reference.

2.8. Intonation patterns

Intonation in Neverver is a simple but crucial marker of the relation that phrases and clauses bear to one another. The most important intonational distinction that we can observe in the text corpus is between terminal and non-terminal intonation. Terminal intonation involves falling pitch over at least the final constituent of a clause, while non-terminal intonation is prototypically restricted to the final syllable of a phrase or clause and varies between slightly rising pitch, and level or slightly falling pitch.

Polar interrogatives have a distinct intonation pattern that involves rising pitch on the penultimate syllable, and falling pitch on the final syllable.

A small number of examples are presented in the sections below, illustrating different intonation patterns. Further examples are distributed throughout this work as relevant.

2.8.1. Terminal intonation

Terminal intonation (indicated by ↘) is a fall in pitch that often encompasses an entire clause, but minimally involves the final constituent of given clause.

Terminal intonation signals the completion of an idea, and at the same time, the termination of a structural unit. Terminal intonation is generally followed by a pause and is associated with:

- simple declarative clauses;
- content questions with interrogative lexemes (constituent interrogatives) (see §9.3.);
- clauses with complex nuclei, including incorporated objects and nuclear serial verbs (see chapter ten);
- clauses with complex cores as in core serial verbs (see chapter eleven).

A simple declarative clause with inherent negative polarity is presented below.

(2.111) [netas ang at-rosix ↘]

fish ANA 3REAL:PL- not.want

‘The fish didn't want to (carry him).’ [NVKS04.22: 134.526]

2.8.2. Non-terminal intonation

Non-terminal intonation typically involves a small rise in pitch (indicated by ↗). It may also involve level/falling intonation (indicated by →) in the articulation of the final syllable in a phrase. The key characteristic of non-terminal intonation is that the pitch of the final syllable is always comparatively higher than the pitch level that is reached in subsequent terminal intonation.

Non-terminal intonation has a range of functions including marking:

- boundaries of clause-internal noun phrases with modification, including relative clauses and possessive/associative constructions, (see chapter five);
- the boundary of a fronted phrase (see §9.6.);
- boundaries of clause-internal temporal phrases and pre-posed adverbial subordinate clauses (see §13.3.);
- the boundary of the repeated tail in tail-head linkage (see §13.4.);
- the boundary of a clause or phrase overtly conjoined to another (see §13.5.);
- the boundary of a clause or phrase juxtaposed to another (see §13.6.).

The example following shows rising intonation on both a subject and an object noun phrase where the head noun is modified.

(2.112) [ale niⁿda titi niterix-moymox lele↗]
so mother 3PS:SG child - female small

[i-βer-ix niterix-moymox lele ↗, i-βer]
 3REAL:SG- say -VI child - female small 3REAL:SG- say
 ‘Then the small girl's mother told the small girl...’ [NVKS20.28:
 142.915]

Both non-terminal rising and level/falling intonation function to mark the boundary of any non-final clause in a series of juxtaposed clauses that display inter-propositional semantic relationships. Multiple examples of this pattern are presented in chapter thirteen.

2.8.3. Polar interrogatives (§9.3.2.)

The intonation pattern for polar interrogatives differs from the falling intonation associated with constituent interrogatives. Polar interrogatives are uttered with a slight rise in pitch on the penultimate syllable, and a fall in pitch on the final syllable.

(2.113) [noʔowit ku-roŋil ku^mb-le^mb ↗ na ↘]
 octopus 2REAL:SG- can 2IRR:SG- carry 1SG
 ‘Octopus! Can you carry me?’ [NVKS04.24: 143.101]

2.9. Orthographic conventions

In the remainder of this work, a practical orthography is employed. Phonetic detail is added only where relevant. The practical orthography, using italics, is displayed in Table 2.9. below.

Contrasting Segments	Orthographic Representation
a	<i>a</i>
e	<i>e</i>
i	<i>i</i>
o	<i>o</i>
u	<i>u</i>
(œ)	<i>(ë)</i>
(y)	<i>(ü)</i>
m	<i>m</i>
n	<i>n</i>
ŋ	<i>ng</i>
p	<i>p</i>
t	<i>t</i>
k	<i>k</i>
^m b	<i>b</i>
^m B	<i>bb</i>
ⁿ d	<i>d</i>
ⁿ d ^r	<i>dr</i>
^ŋ g	<i>g</i>
β	<i>v</i>
ⁿ ɕ	<i>j</i>
s	<i>s</i>
ʎ	<i>kh</i>
r	<i>r</i>
l	<i>l</i>
j	<i>y</i>
w	<i>w</i>

Table 2.9. A practical orthography for Neverver

The vowel sounds in brackets (described in §2.4.) represent contrasts that are no longer found in the contemporary speech of younger community members.

The use of diacritics will however, allow the preservation of these distinct sounds in written records.

The representation of the prenasalised alveolar trill has been achieved with the digraph *dr* (as we find in Fijian (Schütz 1985)). This digraph makes use of *d*

and *r*, symbols that are used elsewhere to represent the separate segments /d/ and /r/. In terms of auditory perception, there is no practical way to distinguish between the articulation of the complex segment [ʰdʳ] and any potential instances of the sequence [ʰdr]. Where the sequence bridges a morpheme boundary, /d/ and /r/ will be separated typographically.

The velar fricative is represented with the digraph *kh*, as in *Lingarakh*, the name of one of the Neverver speaking villages. Crowley uses the same digraph in his orthography of Naman (2006b) and Musgrave (2007) follows this convention in her Neve'ei orthography.

Finally, it must be pointed out that the use of the digraph *bb* to represent the bilabial trill [ᵐᵇ] differs from the use of other double consonants to represent geminates. This inconsistent solution nonetheless leads to no confusion as prenasalised segments (including the bilabial trill) may not form geminate sequences. The representation of the bilabial trill with *bb* is employed in the orthographies of other Malakula languages, including Avava (Crowley 2006a) and Uripiv (McKerras pers. comm.).

Chapter Three

Nominals

A range of pronominal and nominal forms are attested in Neverver. Independent personal pronouns encode basic person and number contrasts; prefixes derive possessive determiners and possessive pronouns from the basic pronominal stems (§3.1.). Three main noun classes are attested, consisting of common, personal, and local nouns (§3.2. – §3.5.). A fourth pronominal-noun category blends the features of the pronominal system with the properties of the major noun classes (§3.6.). Nouns can be derived through the processes of nominalisation (§3.7.) and compounding (§3.8.).

3.1. Pronouns

3.1.1. Independent personal pronouns

Neverver has a set of independent pronouns that contrast first, second and third person forms for singular and non-singular referents. In the non-singular series, there is a distinction between inclusive and exclusive first person pronouns. A separate dual, trial, or paucal series, attested in neighbouring languages including Avava (Crowley 2006a:38) and Naman (Crowley 2006b:56) is not reflected in the set of independent pronouns in Neverver although it is attested in verbal prefixes (see Table 3.2. following and §6.1.).

	Singular		Non-singular
First person	<i>(i-)na</i>	Inclusive	<i>(i-)gít</i>
		Exclusive	<i>(i-)nam ~ (gu)mam</i>
Second person	<i>(i-)okh</i>		<i>(i-)gam</i>
Third person	<i>ei</i>		<i>adr</i>

Table 3.1. The independent pronoun paradigm

The initial *i-* occurs optionally with the first and second person forms and is likely to be a remnant an earlier pronominal article, reconstructed for Central Eastern Oceanic as **i* (Pawley 1972:32, 58). This initial *i-*, glossed as a personal prefix, is obligatory on the personal interrogative *i-sikh* ‘who’; however it does not appear elsewhere in the corpus.

The independent pronouns, with the optionally articulated *i-*, may serve as grammatical subjects, objects, or objects of prepositions. They also serve as reflexive pronouns in the object position, cross-referencing the person and number of the grammatical subject. Independent pronouns typically refer to animate entities; however, it is possible for a pronoun to refer to a topical inanimate entity that serves as the grammatical object, or as part of a reflexive construction, again with the pronoun in object position. This is a point of contrast with the possessive determiners discussed in §3.1.2. following, which can only be used to refer to animate possessors.

All subjects (pronominal and nominal) of verbal constructions are cross-referenced in a subject/mood prefix which is attached to the verb stem. There are no pronominal affixes associated with grammatical objects on the verb. A significant point of contrast can be seen between the independent pronouns and the subject/mood prefixes. The independent pronouns make a simple two-way number contrast between singular and non-singular while the subject/mood prefixes encode a three-way distinction between singular, dual and plural. This

means that the non-singular independent pronouns carry less information than their bound counterparts. The following table presents the paradigm of subject/mood prefixes that we find when a verb is marked for realis mood. The presence of the optional vowel *(i)*- is conditioned by phonotactic constraints (see §2.6.3.5.; §6.1.).

	Singular		Dual	Plural
First person	<i>ni-</i>	Inclusive	<i>nir(i) -</i>	<i>nit(i)-</i>
		Exclusive	<i>nar(i)-</i>	<i>nat(i)-</i>
Second person	<i>ku-</i>		<i>kar(i)-</i>	<i>kat(i)-</i>
Third person	<i>i-</i>		<i>ar(i)-</i>	<i>at(i)-</i>

Table 3.2. The realis paradigm of subject/mood prefixes

Combinations of independent pronouns and their associated subject/mood prefixes are almost all articulated as indicated by the forms in Table 3.1. and Table 3.2. The second person singular forms differ in that they are often contracted in rapid speech, and the high vowel of the subject/mood prefix lowers. The combination of *i-okh* ‘2SG’ and *ku-* ‘2REAL:SG’ is realised as [oʏo-] or even simply [ʏo-]. The high vowel of the first person singular subject/mood prefix *ni-* also lowers to [e], particularly (although not exclusively) in environments where the following syllable has the vowel /e/ as its peak.

In addition to the bound pronominal forms listed in Table 3.2., there is also an impersonal form of the subject/mood prefix. This form *ar(i)-* is a homophone of the third person dual realis prefix. The irrealis forms differ however, with the impersonal prefix being *am-* or *abi-* while the third person dual irrealis prefix is *abir-* or *abr(i)-*. The impersonal construction is discussed in full in §9.5. Of relevance here is the fact that the impersonal prefix may not co-occur with an independent pronoun.

Subject/mood prefixes are obligatory in all verbal constructions in Neverver. When a subject argument can be retrieved from the surrounding context, the subject/mood prefix is likely to be the only overt encoding of that argument. In contrast, independent pronouns are not obligatory. The distribution of independent pronouns is quite restricted. In narrative texts for example, third person singular pronouns occur most often in the following environments:

- as reflexive objects, co-indexing the person and number of the subject argument (obligatory);
- as resumptive pronouns in subject or object position when a topical human argument has been fronted (optional);
- when there are two human participants with clear gender roles (optional).

In example (3.1), the object pronoun *ei* is used reflexively; this use is determined by verb *dak* ‘fall down, land’, which is inherently reflexive.

- (3.1) *Ba* *iskham* *i-vlem* *mil* *i-dak*
when INDEF.PN 3REAL:SG- come again 3REAL:SG- fall.over

ei *aran* *nivkho* *ang*
3SG LOC.on k.o.tree ANA

‘When one (bird) came again and landed on the Nivkho tree...’
[NVKS06.100]

In example (3.2), the subject pronoun *ei* is used resumptively, repeating the person and number of the topicalised noun phrase *niterikh mokhmokh ang* ‘the young woman’.

- (3.2) *Be niterikh mokhmokh ang ei i-ka -kkan si*
 but child female ANA 3SG 3REAL:SG- DUP- eat NEG
 ‘But the girl, she couldn’t eat.’ [NVKS11.38]

In example (3.3), there are two human participants of contrasting gender. The female functions as the grammatical subject of the first clause, encoded by the subject/mood prefix *i-*. When the grammatical subject shifts to the male participant in the next clause, he is represented with the male pronominal-noun *mang* to distinguish him from the previous female subject (see §3.6. for a full description of pronominal-nouns). The female is the grammatical object of this clause, but rather than being represented with the female pronominal-noun *vinang*, she is simply encoded with the gender-neutral third person pronoun *ei*. This appears to be possible because of the nature of the event. Marriage necessarily involves a male and female participant. The presence of the male participant, signalled by *mang*, requires a second participant who must be female. The gender of the second participant does not need to be expressed.

- (3.3) *I-vlem, mang i-lav ei*
 3REAL:SG- come man:ANA 3REAL:SG- get 3SG
 ‘She came and the man married her.’ [NVKS10.112]

Although pronouns can be used to encode human participants, much more productive use is made of the gendered pronominal-nouns *vinang* ‘the (previously mentioned) woman’ and *mang* ‘the (previously mentioned) man’.

3.1.2. Possessive determiners

The first and second person possessive determiners are derived from the independent personal pronoun series; they differ in that they may begin with the possessive prefix *t-* rather than the personal *i-* marker, which is attached to independent pronouns. The prefix *t-* has a zero allomorph that occurs when the preceding possessed nominal (or noun phrase) is *n*-final. In other environments, the *t*-form occurs.

The third person forms display some irregularity. A contrast is made between *t*-forms and bare forms; however, this contrast is achieved through suppletion rather than allomorphic variation in the third person. The *t*-form of the third person possessive determiner is *titi*. *Titi* is suffixed with the plural marker *(a)dr* to indicate a non-singular possessor. The plural marker takes the form of the third person non-singular pronoun. When following an *n*-final word, the bare form of *titi* is not **iti*, but rather *ei*, or *adr* in the plural. Like the regular first and second person forms, the bare possessors take the form of the independent pronouns.

	Singular		Non-singular
First person	<i>(t-)na</i>	Inclusive	<i>(t-)git</i>
		Exclusive	<i>(t-)nam ~ (t-)mam</i>
Second person	<i>(t-)ox</i>		<i>(t-)gam</i>
Third person	<i>titi~ei</i>		<i>titi-dr ~ adr</i>

Table 3.3. The possessive determiner paradigm

Possessive determiners refer exclusively to human (or anthropomorphised) possessors. Non-human possessors are expressed by means of a different construction involving the nominal modifying particle *an*. Possessive constructions are discussed fully in §5.1.

3.1.3. Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns are also derived from the independent pronoun paradigm. Possessive pronouns comprise the base pronoun morphemes, with the *t-* possessive prefix, and the addition of a nominalising prefix *at-*.

Nominalising Prefix + Possessive Prefix + Independent Pronoun

When the nominalising prefix is attached, the possessive pronoun can stand alone as the head of a noun phrase. The third person possessive pronoun forms make use of the supplet *titi* morpheme rather than the independent personal pronoun forms. Thus, we find *at-t-na* ‘mine’ and *at-titi-dr* ‘theirs’.

	Singular		Non-singular
First person	<i>at-t-na</i>	Inclusive	<i>at-t-git</i>
		Exclusive	<i>at-t-nam</i>
Second person	<i>at-t-okh</i>		<i>at-t-gam</i>
Third person	<i>at-titi</i>		<i>at-titi-dr</i>

Table 3.4. The possessive pronoun paradigm

3.2. Noun classes

Nouns can be analysed as belonging to three main classes: Common Nouns, Personal Nouns, and Local Nouns. These three noun classes are found commonly in Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:37) and have been reconstructed for Proto-Oceanic (Pawley 1972:32-33¹⁷; Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:69). The noun classes, and their associated sub-classes in Neverver can be summarised as follows:

¹⁷ Pawley uses the term ‘locative bases’ for the class of Local Nouns (Pawley 1972:32-33)

(3.4) Common Nouns Indigenous items

Borrowed items

Personal Nouns Proper Names

Kin Terms

Local Nouns Place Names

Familiar Places

Absolute Local Nouns

Locative Part Nouns

Temporal Nouns

In addition to the three noun classes listed, a fourth class of nouns also appears in Neverver. These items are pronoun-like in terms of semantics but noun-like in terms of syntax. These pronominal-nouns are an important feature of the reference system of Neverver and subdivide as follows:

(3.5) Pronominal-Nouns Neutral pronominal-nouns

Gendered pronominal-nouns

3.3. Common nouns

Most nouns fall into the large class of Common Nouns. Common nouns prototypically denote entities in the environmental, cultural and technological context of the Neverver speakers. Prototypical members of the class of common nouns are characterised in the following ways:

- Common nouns are typically marked by an initial sequence that takes the shape *n(V)*-.
- Common nouns may be modified by a relative clause.
- Common nouns may be replaced by the pronominal-noun *an* ‘the one’.
- Common nouns may be followed by a numeral or quantifier.
- Common nouns may be determined by a demonstrative determiner.
- Common nouns select the interrogative *niskhan* ~ *neskhan* ‘what’ which also carries the common noun prefix.

3.3.1. The function and distribution of the common noun prefix *n(V)*-

The first common noun criterion noted above indicates that the large majority of common nouns in Neverver carry an initial *n(V)*- sequence. Out of around 1440 common nouns in the corpus, some 1280 nouns (87%) carry the common noun marker. Common nouns that do not carry *n(V)* are almost all either borrowings or *l*-initial words (described in §3.3.4. on non-prototypical common nouns). There are also a small number of baby-talk items that lack the initial *n(V)*, such as *koko* ‘flower’, *papak* ‘piggy’, and *tattapo* ‘poo’.

The *n(V)* sequence most likely derives from an historically earlier morpheme associated with non-human common nouns. The morpheme has been reconstructed for Proto Eastern Oceanic as **na* (Pawley 1972) and for Proto Oceanic as either **na* or **a* (Crowley 1985). The antecedent of Neverver’s common noun prefix is thought to have been associated with the specificity or definiteness of the noun phrase being marked.

Crowley (1985) notes that the reconstructed article is reflected in different ways in Eastern Oceanic Languages. Of particular relevance to Neverver, he

observes that there are languages in Malakula which display the following type of common noun marking:

Productive marking on many or most (but not all) common nouns, with a reflex of **na* or **a*. The form of the marker is a prefix that is regularly separable from the noun in a fairly wide range of clearly definable grammatical contexts. (Crowley 1985:151)

This description of the behaviour of common noun marking fits data in the Neverver corpus reasonably well; however Neverver appears to be in a transition phase at present, with a previously productive prefix becoming fused with, and thus inseparable from, many nominal stems. In Neverver, the reflex of the earlier article has the form *n(V)*. Rather than being associated with definiteness, it functions simply to mark a morpheme as a common noun. Speakers of Neverver do not perceive the *n(V)* morpheme to be distinct from the noun itself, and nouns are always cited with *n(V)* attached. If one were, for example, to record a noun stem without *n(V)*, this would be considered an error by a native speaker.

In terms of linguistic analysis, there are many cases in which the common noun marker can be treated as a prefix as it is separable in predictable contexts. Particularly, *n(V)*- is removed when the noun in question is incorporated as a verbal object. It also is removed when the noun forms the second part of a nominal compound. There are a small number of noun-verb pairs distinguished only by the presence of *n(V)*- marking the noun, or a subject/mood prefix marking the verb. Finally, *n(V)*- is part of a productive simulfix used to derive

nouns from verb stems. The processes of object incorporation and nominal compounding are illustrated with the common noun *nevat* meaning ‘stone’:

- (3.6)
- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>ne-vat</i> | n. ‘stone’ |
| <i>dang-vat-ikh</i> | v. ‘remove stones from a cooked laplap (with s.t.)’ |
| <i>sukhsukh-vat</i> | v. ‘lift out stones’ |
| <i>niar-vat</i> | n. ‘stone wall’ |
| <i>nisal-vat</i> | n. ‘coconut cream’ (traditionally boiled with heated stones)’ |

Some pairs of noun and verb are distinguished only by the presence of the common noun prefix or subject/mood prefix. The attachment of the common noun prefix serves as a simple nominalisation process. Verb stems are listed in their common citation form, with the impersonal subject/mood prefix *ar(i)-*. A small number of the noun-verb pairs attested in the corpus are presented following:

- (3.7)
- | | | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>ar-bbut</i> | ‘step’ | <i>na-bbut</i> | ‘footprint’ |
| <i>ar-lu</i> | ‘shoot’ | <i>nu-lu</i> | ‘arrow’ |
| <i>ari-ssamu</i> | ‘sweep’ | <i>ni-ssamu</i> | ‘broom’ |
| <i>ari-tgar</i> | ‘be cold’ | <i>ne-tgar</i> | ‘coldness’ |
| <i>ari-vkhal</i> | ‘fight’ | <i>ne-vkhal</i> | ‘fight’ |
| <i>ar-khavakh</i> | ‘plant (yams)’ | <i>na-khavakh</i> | ‘yam mound’ |
| <i>ari-slot-ikh</i> | ‘make a ceremonial
yam heap for s.o.’ | <i>no-slot</i> | ‘ceremonial
yam heap’ |

Finally, a nominalising simulfix, the first part of which involves the initial *n(V)*- prefix, is attested frequently in the corpus. A small number of nominalised verb stems are displayed following, including a borrowed stem which is subject to the same nominalisation processes.

(3.8)	<i>jal</i>	‘sick’	<i>ni-jal-ian</i>	‘sickness’
	<i>kkan</i>	‘eat’	<i>ni-kkan-ian</i>	‘food’
	<i>maur</i>	‘live’	<i>ne-maur-ian</i>	‘life’
	<i>sav</i>	‘perform dance’	<i>ne-sav-ian</i>	‘a dance’
	<i>kuk</i>	‘cook’	<i>ni-kuk-ian</i>	‘cooking’

The common noun prefix is not an obligatory marker of common noun membership. This means that there a number of lexical items that behave as common nouns but are not marked with an initial *n(V)*- sequence. Peripheral members of the common noun class, including personal nouns and local nouns which are used as common nouns, do not take the prefix. Recent borrowings also do not take this prefix, although they do behave in other ways like common nouns.

As well as finding common nouns without the common noun prefix, we also find the prefix appearing outside the common noun class. This happens in particular when personal proper nouns and proper place names are derived from common nouns and continue to bear the common noun prefix despite functioning as personal or local nouns. An example of a personal proper noun shaped like a common noun is *Nokho-an-mial* (a man’s name meaning ‘vine of red’); an example of a proper place name shaped like a common noun is *Nio-sal* (the name of a hamlet near a swampy area, literally ‘water’ + ‘float’).

It was noted above that the status of the $n(V)$ sequence is in transition at present. As such, there are a large number of common nouns for which the boundary between the common noun prefix and nominal stem cannot be established. There is no evidence of these morphemes occurring without the common noun prefix. We must rely on reconstructions of an earlier stage of the language to establish that these nouns were historically complex.

- (3.9) nVC nouns
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| <i>nakhut</i> | ‘louse’ |
| <i>nibbsen</i> | ‘saliva’ |
| <i>nelemen</i> | ‘tongue’ |
| <i>nokhowit</i> | ‘octopus’ |
| <i>nur</i> | ‘dew’ |

The form *khowit* does not occur independently of *no* in the corpus; nor does the form *khut* appear without *na*. Although these forms may have been separable in the past, there is no evidence that they are separable in the corpus of contemporary Neverver.

3.3.2. The form of the common noun prefix

The common noun prefix has the basic form $n(V)$ -. In this section, conditions related to the presence and form of the prefix vowel are considered.

The examples of common nouns that clearly carry a prefix in §3.3. almost all display nominal stems which are consonant-initial. This is the environment in which we find the common noun prefix attested as nV -. When noun stems have an initial syllable of the shape CV, and the V segment is [+back] (that is, /a, o,

u/), the prefix vowel may be subject to a form of distance assimilation, harmonising towards the articulation of the second vowel. This process is illustrated by the forms *na-khavakh* ‘yam mound’, *nu-lu* ‘arrow’ and *no-slot* ‘ceremonial yam heap’ in (3.7) above. Vowel harmony is not obligatory and a single speaker will vary in his/her articulation of nouns. For example, the noun *nobo* ‘song’ has been attested in this harmonised form as well as the non-harmonised forms [ni^mbo] and [nə^mbo]. Likewise, the noun *na-glat* ‘nettle’ has been attested in this harmonised form, as well as [ni^ɰglat] and [ne^ɰglat]. Not all [+back] stems are attested with harmonised noun markers. *Nidam* ‘1. yam, 2. year’ is one such example, attested only as [ni^ɰdam] and [ne^ɰdam] but never the harmonised form [na^ɰdam].

Based on the data in the corpus, it appears that the shape of the common noun prefix before consonants is determined by at least two separate conditioning factors. As noted above, potential sites for vowel harmony involve CV-initial stems where the V segment is [+back]. This accounts for [+back] vowels in the prefix. The distribution of [-back] vowels including [ni~nə] and [ne] before CV stems appears to be socially conditioned. Younger speakers perceive the ‘correct’ form of the common noun prefix to be [ni] with [ne] and [nə] (as well as any harmonised vowels) belonging to a more relaxed speech style. Such ‘relaxed’ forms are considered inappropriate in written records and *ni-* is the preferred orthographic representation. In contrast to the view point of younger speakers, older speakers have expressed the view that [ni] forms sound overly formal. For older speakers, it is more appropriate for the written form to reflect either a harmonised vowel or the [ne] variant.

When considering the shape of the common noun prefix, we find that there are a number of items in the corpus where it is difficult to separate the prefix

- (3.12) *nuvul* ‘sago palm grater’ **nivul*; **navul*; **nevil*
navul ‘moon, month’ **nivul*; **nuvul*; **nevil*
 [naβul~naβyl] POc **pulan* ‘moon, month’ (Osmond 2003:158)

The rather limited evidence presented here for vowel-initial stems suggests that the presence of the vowel in the common noun prefix is rule-governed: when a nominal stem is vowel-initial, the common noun prefix takes the shape *n-*; elsewhere the prefix has the shape *nV-*. The difficulty is of course, in determining which stems are vowel-initial. Prefixed nouns with the segmental sequence *nVV* seem good candidates for vowel-initial stems.

- (3.13) *nVV* nouns
- naur* ‘fresh water prawn’
 POc **quraŋ* ‘prawn’ (Pawley 1996:140)
- naus* ‘rain’
 POc **qusan* ‘rain’ (Ross 2003:141)
- nial* ‘sun’
 PMP **qajaw*, **qalejaw* ‘sun, daylight’; POc **qaco*
 (Osmond 2003:154, after Blust)
- niat* ‘sago palm, thatch’
 POc **qatop* ‘thatch, roof’ (Green & Pawley 1998:52)

Reconstructions of these items suggest that an initial consonant may have been systematically lost from the beginning of each item, leaving a vowel-initial stem. Lynch (n.d.) hypothesises that Proto Oceanic **q* is lost in most environments in Nevever. It must be acknowledged however, that there is no

synchronic evidence that the boundary between common noun prefix and stem is salient in these lexical items in Neverver today.

Because the identification of the boundary of the common noun prefix is problematic, nouns are only marked for this prefix (signalled by a hyphen) in this particular chapter and only in cases where there is clear evidence of prefixation. Elsewhere, the common noun prefix is not separated from the noun stem.

3.3.3. A note on the syllabification of segmental vowel sequences

Unlike the harmony we observed in non-adjacent vowels, when a common noun is formed with the segmental sequence nV_1V_2 , the two adjacent vowels remain dissimilar. In the corpus, nouns of this shape include [+high][-high] combinations which are articulated as disyllabic:

- (3.14) *niat* [ni.ʃat] ‘thatch’
 n-io [ni.ʃo] ‘water’
 nuag [nu.^wa^ʒg] ‘canoe, boat’

In nouns that have the segmental shape nV_1V_2 , where the vowel combination involves rising transition [+low][-low], a diphthong is formed. The following nouns are monosyllabic.

- (3.15) *n-aut* ‘place’
 naus ‘rain’

<i>nauj</i>	‘pawpaw’
<i>nais</i>	‘k.o.dance’

3.3.4. Non-prototypical common nouns

A small sub-category of indigenous common nouns are marked by the prefix *le-* rather than *n(V)-*. Most of the nouns in this non-prototypical sub-class display the semantic characteristics of female gender, smallness, and/or light colouring. The inherently reduplicated stative verb stem *lele* ‘small’ may well be related to this prefix. The same prefix, attested as both *le-* and *li-* is also employed in the formation of traditional names of women (listed in example (3.36) following).

(3.16) FEMALE

<i>lebblat</i>	‘hen’
<i>lemari</i>	‘wild hen’
<i>lebbwas</i>	‘castrated pig’
<i>leturjar</i>	‘spinster’
<i>letvur</i>	‘fallow garden’
<i>lebrot</i>	‘thin sow (after birthing)’

SMALL; LIGHT COLOURED

<i>levrivras</i>	‘hornet’
<i>levatvat</i>	‘fantail’
<i>lerikhrikh</i>	‘k.o.vine (small, stinging leaves)’
<i>lemang</i>	‘white fruit bat’

<i>lekhuiliang</i>	‘k.o.lizard (light coloured)’
<i>lesevsev</i>	‘wild man (mythical, reportedly small and long-haired)’
<i>lemruk</i>	‘big toe, thumb’
<i>leskhus</i>	‘index finger, second toe’
<i>lesbo~lesibo</i>	‘middle finger, third toe’
<i>letakh</i>	‘ring finger, fourth toe’
<i>lebat</i>	‘little finger, little toe’

Numerous borrowings have been absorbed into Neverver. Borrowings from Bislama, with English and French origins, are quite easily identifiable. Some borrowings from indigenous Vanuatu languages have also been identified by Neverver speakers. It appears that historically, borrowings into the common noun class took on the morphological characteristics of indigenous common nouns in that they were marked with the common noun prefix. Thus, we find the following borrowed items in Neverver:

- (3.17) *navoka* ‘avocado’ (Bis. *avoka*; French *avocat*)
 nawolwolu ‘hermit crab’ (reported Uripiv borrowing)
 nidaro ‘taro’ (Bis. *taro*)

More recently however, items have been borrowed into the common noun class without the addition of the common noun prefix. These direct borrowings follow the same pattern as personal and local nouns that can be used as common nouns without the addition of the common noun prefix.

- (3.18) *buk* ‘book’ (Bis. *buk*)
buluk ‘cow’ (Bis. *buluk*)
klas ‘glass’ (Bis. *glas*)
maret ‘marriage, wedding’ (Bis. *maređ*)
siv ‘ship’ (Bis. *sip*)
sukul ‘school, church’ (Bis. *skul*)
susut ‘chayote’ *Sechium edule* (Bis. *susut*)

3.3.5. Common nouns with temporal meanings

A small set of common nouns express temporal meanings. These include the word for ‘day’, ‘month’, two words for ‘year’ (3.19), and the traditional names of the months or moon cycles (3.24) – (3.35). These nouns carry the common noun prefix *n(V)-*. The words for ‘month’ and ‘year’ are also attested with non-temporal senses. The overlap between the calendar notion of the year, and the gardening cycle of yams is encoded in the Neverver lexicon.

- (3.19) *nabbung* ‘day’
nimdan nial ‘time’ from *nimdan* ‘eye’; *nial* ‘sun’
nibbung(an) ‘occasion’
navul [naβul ~ naβyl] ‘1. month, 2. moon’
nidam ‘1. year, 2. yam’
nisikha ‘year, age’; also *Khamasikha* ‘yam master’

When common nouns are used to express temporal locations, they are preceded by the locative preposition *lon*. In contemporary Neverver, temporal

nouns are modified by relative clauses to express the meanings of ‘last year’ and ‘next year’.

- (3.20) *Ei i-vlem ma ij lon nidam an*
 3SG 3REAL:SG- come RMT ANT LOC year NMOD
i-vu ij.
 3REAL:SG- go ANT
 ‘He came ages ago, last year.’ [NVE01.10] (lit. in the year that has gone)

- (3.21) *Ei im-bbulem lon nidam an im-bbulem ang*
 3SG 3IRR:SG- come LOC year NMOD 3IRR:SG- come ANA
 ‘He will come next year.’ [NVE02.10] (lit. in the year that will come)

When common nouns are used to express temporal spans, a common temporal noun is modified with a post-posed number clause. Prepositions are not used to introduce these temporal expressions. As such, these common nouns are behaving like local nouns with temporal meaning, described in §3.5.4. following.

- (3.22) *Ni-sil nabbung i-skham,*
 1REAL.SG- burn day 3REAL.SG- one
 ‘I roast it for one day.’ [NVDL02.12]

- (3.23) *Mil nat-lukh nabbung i-ru*
 again 1EX:REAL:PL- live day 3REAL:SG- two
i-tl
 3REAL:SG- three
 ‘Again, we were there for two or three days...’ [NVDL04.29]

The traditional names for the cycles of the moon have fallen out of use. English lexemes, borrowed into Bislama and then into Neverver, are used instead to refer to calendar months. Although some of the older speakers of Neverver are able to recall names for the months of the year, there is some inconsistency in the sequencing and labelling of months.

The series of month names that is generally thought to reflect traditional usage is reproduced below. Local interpretations of the names are provided where available and related morphemes are identified. The year begins in May, with the official start of the yam harvest. Twelve month names are listed although there is no one-to-one relationship between moon cycles and the solar calendar year, and it is possible that some of the named phases may have been longer than a single moon cycle.

- (3.24) *Niblongmur* ‘May’ from *mur* ‘shed leaves (of yams)’
 (The time when the leaves wither and fall from
 the yam vines, signalling the beginning of the
 harvest.)

- (3.25) *Nekkanbor* ‘June’ from *kkan* ‘eat’; *bor* ‘tasteless, unseasoned’
(The time when yams are eaten in abundance.)
- (3.26) *Nekkanbrokhari* ‘July’ from *kkan* ‘eat’
(The time when leaves of the Nakhari plant (*Cordyline* varieties) are gathered and cooked as laplap wrappings.)
- (3.27) *Navulbrongnaj* ‘August’ from *navul* ‘month, moon’; *brong* ‘common, ordinary, useless’
(The time before gardening preparations begin.)
- (3.28) *Nisuda* ‘September’ from *su* ‘meet’; *da* ‘PART’
(The time when a few yams have started to sprout (?).)
- (3.29) *Nelavlav~Nilavda* ‘October’ from *lav* ‘get’; *da* ‘PART’
(The time when some planter yams are carried to gardens to be planted.)
- (3.30) *Nelavlavlab ~*
 Nelavlavran ‘November’ from *lav* ‘get’; *lab* ‘many’
(The time when most yams are planted.)

- (3.31) *Nilavlavarikh* ‘December’ from *lav* ‘get’; *varikh* ‘insufficient’
(The time when yam planting is almost finished, just a few late yams are put in.)
- (3.32) *Nibongvkhal* ‘December/January’ from *vkhal* ‘fight’
(The time of illness, when malaria is common.)
- (3.33) *Nibilkhenbet* ‘January/February’ from *?khan* ‘eat’; *nibet* ‘breadfruit’
(The time when a particularly large variety of breadfruit is eaten.)
- (3.34) *Navulbrang* ‘February/March’ from *?brong* ‘common, ordinary, useless’
(The time when there is little to do, yams are growing, some vines are beginning to die.)
- (3.35) *Nepraskha* ‘April’ from *?Nepra* place name; *nisikha* ‘yam, year’
(The month when the yam master (*Khamasikha*) inspects the yam gardens prior to harvest and makes sacrifices; yam vines are beginning to die.)

3.4. Personal nouns

The category of Personal Nouns includes the personal proper names of individuals as well as kin terms when they are used to refer to specific individuals. In many Oceanic languages, personal nouns can be distinguished by their occurrence with a personal article. Hyslop (2001:74), for example, partly characterises the class of Proper Nouns in the Lolovoli dialect of Ambae as being those nouns that occur after the personal article *i*. Personal pronouns also take this personal article in Ambae. A reflex of this article is present in the pronominal system of Neverver, but it is not attested in relation to personal nouns. It appears that the related Malakula languages of Naman, Avava and Neve'ei do not mark personal nouns in this way either (cf. Crowley 2006a, 2006b, Musgrave 2007). Thus, we find that personal nouns are characterised in other ways in Neverver.

Semantically, personal nouns are used to refer to specific, known, and generally human individuals. Syntactically, this noun class can be described as exhibiting the following set of characteristics. The first three characteristics relate particularly to the semantics of personal nouns as uniquely identifying expressions in that each point disallows modification of the personal noun:

- Personal nouns may not appear as the head of a relative clause;
- Personal nouns may not be followed by a quantifier or numeral;
- Personal nouns may not be determined by a demonstrative determiner;
- Personal nouns select the interrogative *isikh* 'who';
- Personal nouns take the personal preposition *tuan*.

3.4.1. Personal proper names

Personal proper names in Neverver derive from a number of sources. One traditional means of forming women's names is the use of a prefix of the shape /IV-/. As noted in §3.3.4. above, the prefix *le-* marks a number of non-prototypical common nouns that exhibit the semantic features of female gender, diminution, and light colouring. When marking women's names, the prefix is most commonly realised as either *le-* or *li-* and there is a minimal pair of women's names [lina] and [lena] in contemporary use. The prefix combines with various morphemes including many which can be identified as verb stems.

- (3.36) *Lerakhsil* from *rakh* 'clear ground'; *sil* 'burn'
 Lerakhbel from *rakh* 'clear ground'; *bel* 'chase'
 Lemelsas from *mel* 'deeply (of sleep)'; *sas* 'hurry'
 Libel from *bel* 'chase'
 Limel from *mel* 'deep (of sleep)'
 Levkhaling from *vkhal* 'fight'; *ling* 'leave'
 Livanu from *nevanu* 'region'
 Lena from *na* pronoun 1SG
 Lina from *na* pronoun 1SG

Not all traditional women's names are formed in this way. *Anies*, *Anjon*, *Ana-Aki*, *Ela* and *Meli* are also traditional names that do not bear the *IV-* morpheme. Given the long-established tradition of exogamy among the Mindu people however, it is plausible that at least some of these names derive from other local languages.

Most girls are given a traditional name by an older female relative at birth. As well as these traditional names, it is fashionable for women to be given a ‘modern’ name of (typically) English origin. Such names include Helen-Rose, Emma, Cinderella and Nellie. Many young women prefer to be known by their modern rather than traditional name.

Unlike traditional women’s names, there is no identifying morpheme associated with traditional men’s names. Men’s names appear to derive simply from compounded stems of various kinds or from phrases. In some cases, compounded common nouns retain their common noun prefix; in other cases the common noun prefix is dropped when the personal proper name is formed.

- (3.37) *Vatdal* from *nevat* ‘stone’; **dal*
 Nokhoanmial from *nokho* ‘vine’; *mial* ‘red’
 Bernio from *ber* ‘long’; *nio* ‘river’
 Bangsukh from *nebang* ‘banyan’; *sukh* ‘rise’

Compounding is also an important process in the formation of contemporary names. In one family, the sons were named Peter [pita], Eric [erik], and Jason [ɕesen]. Their recently born nephews have been named Peter-son [pitasen] and Eric-son [eriksen], after the maternal uncles.

Local oral history describes the renaming of men each time they took a new rank. Today, only one living community member has a traditional rank. Chief James of Limap began the process of moving through the male ranks as a boy. Today, his traditional name is taboo although exactly why the name is taboo has not been made clear. Chief James has used his English name for most of his

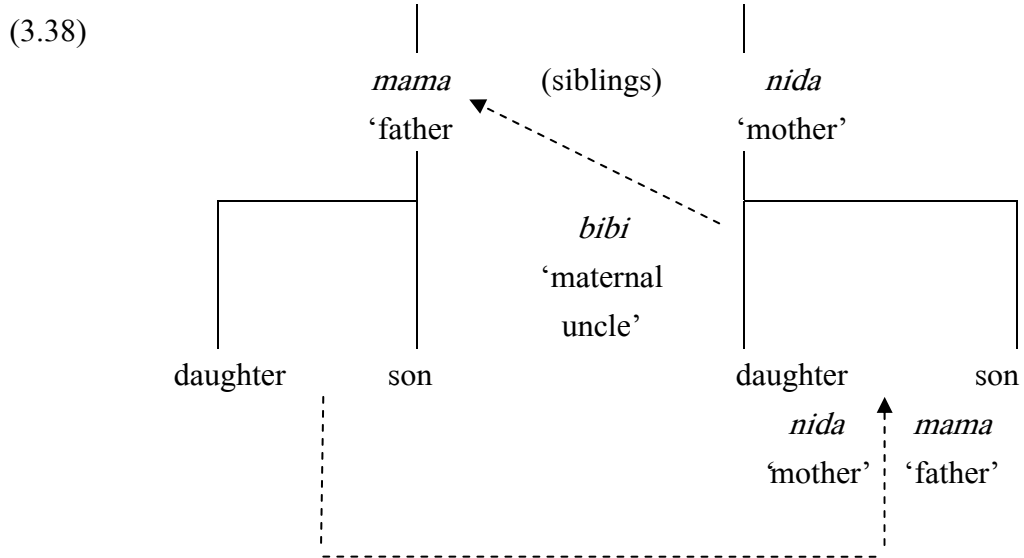
life. The traditional ranking system has been replaced by hierarchies associated with the Presbyterian Church. The system of renaming as men rise through social ranks has been revived within the Presbyterian Church hierarchies. Men are renamed with biblical names when they are designated as Elders in the Church hierarchy. For example, Peniyas Bong was renamed Elder Jethro when he became an Elder in the Church. Perhaps because this rank was assigned quite recently, most people continue to refer to this individual as Peniyas, except on religious occasions. Elder Seth, who has held his rank for a longer period of time, is only referred to only by his rank name. His indigenous name, Setakhar, is known by community members but not used. Today, many men are given names of English origin at birth. Biblical names such as Luke, Philemon and Jacob are particularly popular.

3.4.2. Personal kin terms

A small set of kin terms are used in everyday conversations. Of most interest in the kinship terminology for Neverver is the term *bibi* 'maternal uncle'. While paternal uncles, along with both paternal and maternal aunts, are referred to using the terms *mama* 'father' and *nida* 'mother', the maternal uncle has a special kin term. This kin term corresponds with the central role that the maternal uncle plays in the lives of his nieces and nephews.

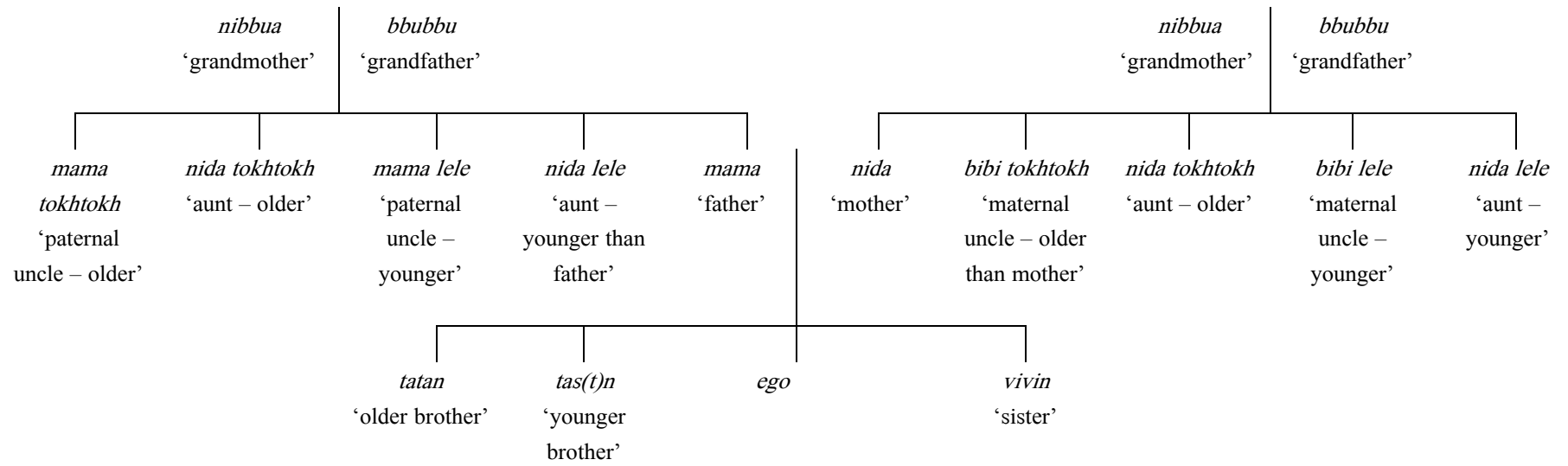
In the community today, maternal uncles are responsible for negotiating the marriages of their nieces and nephews. Historically, if the maternal uncle died, his sister's son would have the right (or possibly obligation) to marry the maternal uncle's widow, thus becoming the adoptive father of his cousins. Today, this special relationship remains encoded in the kinship system. The children of a maternal uncle continue to address their cousins (their paternal

aunt's children) as 'mother' and 'father'. These relationships are displayed in (3.38). An expanded family tree is displayed in (3.39).



Kin terms commonly combine with personal proper names to refer to individuals who bear a particular relation to the speaker such as *Nida Lina* 'Aunty Lina' and *Bbubbu Douglas* 'Grandfather Douglas'. Strict name taboos apply to parents, and to all in-laws. In order to avoid using a taboo name, people can be referred to by their social position, such as *nida titi Helen* 'mother of Helen' rather than their kin relationship *Nida Lina* 'Aunty Lina'.

(3.39)



Another name-avoidance strategy involves the assignment of a nickname by those to whom the name taboo applies. Kin terms combine with words from other classes to allow the identification of specific individuals according to physical characteristics. *Bbubbu Berber* ‘Grandfather Long (Legs)’ names an older man who always wears long trousers. This example displays a kin term followed by an uninflected stative verb stem *ber(ber)* ‘be long, tall’. *Nibbua Nemetvas* ‘Grandmother Glasses’ displays a kin term followed by a compounded common noun which derives from the bound form *nemet-* ‘eye’ and the stem *vas* ‘four’. *Nibbua Lekkot* ‘Grandma Lekkot’ is the avoidance name for *Lerakhsil Moti*, the oldest living community member. *Kkot* is a stem meaning ‘be talkative’; here it combines with the prefix *le-* to form a female name.

Kin terms can be used as both personal and common nouns. This type of flexibility in class membership is observed by Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002:69) in their description of Proto-Oceanic: ‘kin nouns evidently fell into both the personal and the common human categories. If they referred to identifiable individuals and were equivalent to a proper name, e.g. ‘my father’, they were treated as personal nouns; otherwise they were common human.’ Considerable overlap between the categories of personal and common noun is evident in (3.40) following, often with a possessive determiner being employed to personalise an otherwise common noun.

(3.40)	Common nouns	Personal nouns
	<i>nimokhmokh</i> ‘woman’	
	<i>nimokhmokh tro</i> ‘mature woman, spouse’	<i>nimokhmokh (tna)</i> ‘(my) wife’

<i>nimukhman</i> ‘man’	
<i>khavut tro</i> ‘mature man, spouse’	<i>khavut (tna)</i> ‘(my) husband’
<i>niterikh mukhman</i> ‘boy’	
<i>nimkhut</i> ‘man’	<i>nimkhut (na)</i> ‘(my) son’
	<i>tatan (na)</i> ‘(my) older brother’
	<i>tas(t)n (na)</i> ‘(my) younger brother’
<i>niterikh mokhmokh</i> ‘girl’	
<i>niviturtur</i> ‘adolescent girl’	<i>nivin (na)</i> ‘(my) daughter’
<i>nividro</i> ‘post-adolescent girl’	<i>vivin (na)</i> ‘(my) sister’
<i>nesal</i> ‘friend’	<i>salan (na)</i> ‘(my) cousin/same generation relative’
<i>nakhabbun</i> ‘grandchild’	<i>nakhabbun (na)</i> ‘(my) grandchild’
<i>nimkhudan</i> ‘family, blood relative’	<i>nimkhudan (na)</i> ‘(my) family, blood relative’
<i>nelakh</i> ‘male in-law’	<i>nelakh (tna)</i> ‘(my) brother-in- law’
<i>nivilakh</i> ‘female in-law’	<i>nivilakh (tna)</i> ‘(my) sister-in-law’

When a kin term is used as a common noun, it may be followed by a numeral as in *nida i-skham* ‘a mother’, a quantifier as in *bibi turien* ‘some uncles’, or a demonstrative *nida ang* ‘the mother’. This is disallowed when the same item is used as a personal noun.

3.5. Local nouns

The third category of nouns is the class of Local Nouns. The members of this noun class subdivide into local nouns with spatial meanings, and local nouns with temporal meanings. Spatial local nouns include proper place names, nouns denoting familiar places, named parts of the physical environment, and locative part nouns. Temporal local nouns include parts of the day, and time counters.

Local nouns have the following characteristics:

- Local nouns may not occur as the object of a preposition; instead, local nouns occur in unmarked locative adjunct phrases.
- Local nouns of space select the interrogative form *abi* ‘where’; local nouns of time select the interrogative form *angas* ‘when’.

3.5.1. Proper place names

The sub-class of proper place names is characterised by the ability of member items to occur in a construction of the form *nemakh* ‘denizen’ + proper place name. No other noun, local or otherwise, may modify *nemakh* in this way. The interrogative *abi* ‘where’ may be used to question where a particular person or group of people is from.

- (3.41) *nemakh Marin* ‘the people of Marin’
 nemakh Malbit ‘the people of Malbit’
 nemakh abi? ‘the people of where?’; ‘Where are they from?’

Examples of proper place names are displayed below. Many places are named for their physical characteristics and comprise recognisable stems. Other

place names are used exclusively to refer to particular locations, with no related forms in the contemporary corpus. The following list displays some place names that have the shape of compound nouns (see §3.8.), some that appear to have the shape of traditional women's names, and others that share their shape with traditional men's names. The initial sequence *lo-* appears on a number of place names and is likely to be related diachronically to the locative preposition *lon*.

- (3.42) *Niosal* ‘place of the swamp’ from *nio* ‘water, river’; *sal* ‘float’
- Nigrinio* ‘place where the river ends’ from *nigrin* ‘end of long object’; *nio* ‘water, river’
- Lingarakh* the village of Lingarakh
- Limav* the village of Limap
- Lomelvavi* ‘place of the abundant Melvavi plant’ from *melvavi* ‘k.o.plant’
- Loniolele* ‘place of the small river’ from *nio* ‘water, river’; *lele* ‘small’
- Lovan-* ‘place of the abundant Nemidang fruit’ from *nevan*
- midang* ‘fruit’; *nemidang* ‘kind of tree’
- Vatokhas* the hamlet of Vatokhas from *nevat* ‘stone’ and *khas* ‘bite’
- Ala* the hamlet of Ala
- Vili* the hamlet of Vili
- Kove* the hamlet of Kove from *kove* ‘coffee’; Bis. *kofè*

3.5.2. Local nouns denoting familiar places

Three local nouns in the corpus fit into the category of morphemes denoting familiar places. Like the English word *home*, the meaning of each item is dependent on the individual who utters it. A central part of what it means to be a member of the Neverver speech community is to have possession of a home, located in a village or hamlet, and land where one is able to cultivate crops.

- (3.43) *aiyem* ‘(one’s) home’
 lokhavre ‘(one’s) village’
 lakha ‘the bush (where one gardens)’

Both *aiyem* and *lokhavre* may also behave as common nouns, taking common noun modifiers including numerals and quantifiers. They may also be possessed. The third item *lakha* ‘the bush (where one gardens)’ is interesting in that there is a corresponding common noun of the shape *nakha* which means ‘tree, wood’. This is the only pair in the corpus to encode a common-local contrast in this way.

3.5.3. Local nouns denoting significant features of the physical environment

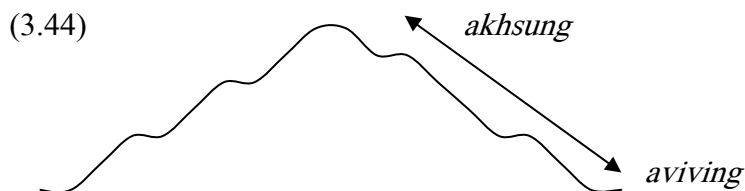
3.5.3.1. The absolute frame

A small set of local nouns refers to parts of the physical environment. The terms have absolute reference in that they have ‘axes fixed in geographic space’ (Foley 1997:216). Levinson (2003), in his investigation of linguistic encodings of spatial thinking, observes that:

Many languages make extensive, some almost exclusive, use of ... an absolute frame of reference on the horizontal. They do so by fixing arbitrary fixed bearings, ‘cardinal directions’, corresponding one way or another to directions or arcs that can be related by the analyst to compass bearings. (Levinson 2003:48)

The absolute frame is employed in Neverver to describe physical locations that are some distance apart. Thus, it is most frequently used for orienting events and participants on the island of Malakula, or within the larger Pacific region. Absolute local nouns are distinct in that they may not be followed by any nominal modifiers or by demonstrative adverbs. They stand alone in locative adjunct phrases.

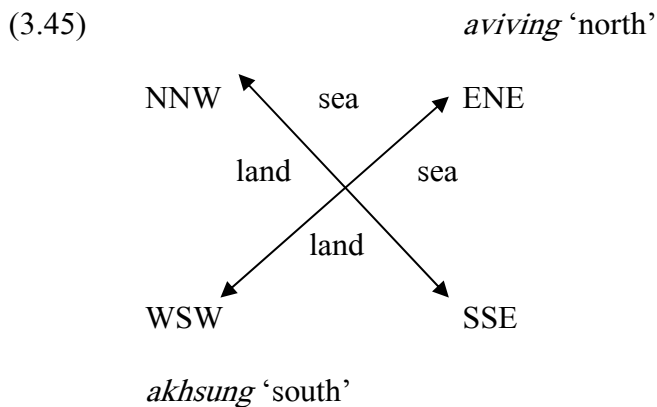
On the horizontal plane, a contrast is made between the words *akhsung* ‘inland’ and *aviving* ‘seaward’. *Akhsung* and *aviving* do not refer to points, but to arcs which extend almost 180°. Rather than forming a north-south or west-east axis, the horizontal plane follows the lay of the land. Thus, inland is also uphill and upriver, while seaward is also downhill and downriver.



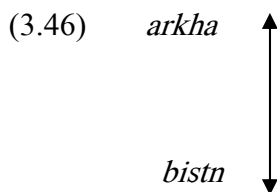
If a direction is transverse, or across a slope rather than up or down, the absolute/deictic form *atl* is used (see §3.5.3.2.). This form is not distinguished

for left or right, but is instead accompanied by a gesture or eye-gaze from the speaker to indicate the intended direction.

The Neverver speech community is almost entirely located on the eastern coast of Malakula. The coast line runs in a north-north-west [NNW]/south-south-east [SSE] direction and the rivers along which the Neverver speakers are settled run perpendicular to the coast line. In Neverver, *akhsung* ‘inland’ has been extended to express the compass direction of ‘south’, while *aviving* ‘seaward’ has been extended to express the compass direction of ‘north’. Like transverse directions, east and west are not distinguished in the lexicon.



On the vertical plane, a simple contrast is made between up and down.



A plausible explanation of the derivation of *arkha* ‘up’ is the fusing of the locative preposition *aran~ar* ‘LOC.on’ and the stem of the common noun ‘tree’ *na-kha*. This may have meant something like ‘up a tree’ historically, and today

the item can be used in this sense to refer to the top of a tree; it is used more generally to refer to ‘up’ on the vertical axis. *Bistn* is not demonstrably related to any other item.

3.5.3.2. The absolute/deictic frame

A set of items that are morphologically related to the absolute local nouns form the class of Absolute/Deictic local nouns. Hyslop (2002) identifies a complex set of absolute/deictic directionals in the Lolovoli dialect of Ambae. In the Lolovoli dialect, ‘the primary distinction made by the directionals is an absolute distinction, and these forms are marked to specify direction relative to the participants in the speech act’ (Hyslop 2002:52). In Neverver, absolute/deictic local nouns are absolute in the sense of referring consistently to a particular direction; they are deictic in that they are bound to the speaker’s point of view. The points of view of other participants are not encoded in Neverver.

The absolute/deictic frame can be used for objects that are right beside the speaker, as well as those that are out of sight; however, it tends not to be used for larger scale distances as the basic absolute frame is used for that purpose. The first two items below are identical to the absolute local nouns used for the vertical plane. The next two items are morphologically related to the absolute nouns in §3.5.3.1. above. A morpheme of the shape [(V)ŋ] is dropped when these absolute nouns are used deictically and we can observe rather inconsistent changes to the non-initial vowels.

(3.47)	Absolute Local Nouns	Absolute/Deictic Local Nouns
	<i>arkha</i> ‘up’	<i>arkha</i> ‘above’
	<i>bistn</i> ‘down’	<i>bistn</i> ‘down, on the ground’
	<i>akhsung</i> ‘inland’	<i>akhus</i> ‘inland’
	<i>aviving</i> ‘seaward’	<i>avev</i> ‘seaward’
	---	<i>atl</i> ‘over, transverse’

Unlike absolute local nouns, absolute/deictic nouns may be followed by one of three demonstrative local nouns, which allow the speaker to identify the distance of some object or event inland, seaward or in a transverse direction from him or herself. For example, while *akhsung* means ‘inland’ generally, *akhus* means ‘further inland than the speaker’. The demonstrative forms that combine with the absolute/deictic local nouns signal the distance of an object with respect to the speaker. A three way contrast is made between proximal, intermediate/visible, and distal/not visible. Some irregularity can be seen in the transverse forms, with the transverse marker being dropped in the proximal form, and fusing with the absolute/deictic marker in the intermediate form.

(3.48)	<i>akhus tjakh</i>	‘inland (of me) here’
	<i>akhus tjing</i>	‘inland (of me) within eyesight’
	<i>akhus tang</i>	‘inland (of me) out of sight’
	<i>avev tjakh</i>	‘seaward (of me) here’
	<i>avev tjing</i>	‘seaward (of me) within eyesight’
	<i>avev tang</i>	‘seaward (of me) out of sight’

<i>tjakh/tnakh</i>	‘over here (by me)’
<i>atling</i>	‘over there within eyesight’
<i>atl tang</i>	‘over there out of sight’

3.5.3.3. Locative part nouns

The final sub-class of spatial local nouns includes locative part nouns. These items allow the speaker to orient events and participants relative to some specified object (the whole) such as a house or village. Islands, rivers and fires are considered to possess edges and these edges are denoted by the word *aut*. Interestingly, there is no noun to refer to the culturally undesirable location of being in the ocean. This is expressed in a preposition phrase *lon nutusu* ‘in the sea’.

(3.49)	<i>bbukhut</i>	‘inside’
	<i>vere</i>	‘outside’
	<i>aut</i>	‘ashore, edge’
	<i>lile</i>	‘nearby’
	<i>ale</i>	‘far away’
	<i>son</i>	‘somewhere’

Like the Absolute/Deictic nouns listed in the previous section, these local nouns may be followed by a demonstrative local noun as in *bbukhut tang* ‘inside there (out of sight)’. They are distinct in that they may also be followed by the nominal modifying particle *an* in expressions such as *vere an Lavni* ‘outside Lavni’.

3.5.4. Temporal local nouns

Temporal local nouns fall into two semantic sub-classes. These are parts of the day and time counters. Temporal reference, like spatial reference, may be absolute or relative.

3.5.4.1. Parts of the day

The diurnal span is divided into three segments: morning; afternoon; and night. When unmodified, the parts of the day refer to the current diurnal span. This may involve an absolute temporal reference as in ‘this morning’, ‘this afternoon’, or ‘tonight’. Alternatively it may involve a temporal reference where some other diurnal span serves as the reference point, as in ‘in the morning’, ‘in the afternoon’, or ‘at night’ of some established diurnal span. Realis mood marking signals that the relevant temporal location precedes the reference time. Irrealis mood marking signals that the relevant temporal location follows the reference time.

- (3.50) *mitabbukh* ‘morning’
 livkhat ‘night’
 livrav ‘afternoon’

- (3.51) *Ga* *i-ver* *im-bbulem* *nakh* *mitabbukh*
 and 3REAL:SG- want 3IRR:SG- come here morning
 lon *Fraede?*
 LOC Friday

‘And he wants to come here on Friday morning?’ [NVCV10.83]

(3.52) *Ba i-tur mitabbukh, i-ver-ikh*
 when 3REAL:SG- get.up morning 3REAL:SG- say -APPL
ni-mokhmokh titi...
 NPR-female 3PS:SG
 ‘When he got up in the morning, he told his wife...’ [NVKS02.47]

(3.53) *I-tukhtukh nimdali livkhat dran i-skham*
 3REAL:SG- strike door night TMPPN 3REAL:SG- one
 ‘He knocked on the door at night one time.’ [NVCT03.8: 39.981]

A fourth item, *lonial* ‘lunchtime’ is also encoded in the lexicon. *Lonial* is used for the time when people stop work to eat their midday meal. It can also be used as a common noun in the same form to refer to the midday meal itself. *Lonial* ‘lunchtime’ is not attested in the text corpus, but does occur in everyday speech and in elicited data. It is likely to comprise the locative preposition *lon* and the common noun *nial* ‘sun’.

The parts of the day may be modified. Specific modifiers are used with each item.

(3.54) *mitabbukh lala* ‘early morning, dawn’
lonial savsav ‘midday’
livrav sese ‘late afternoon/dusk’
livkhat mastang ‘midnight (archaic)’
livkhat tattang ‘midnight’

The modifier *lala* ‘early’ can also follow the time counter *tue* ‘long ago, of the past’ in the phrase *tue lala nisid* (long ago + early + thing:INDEF). This phrase occurs at the beginning of some traditional stories meaning ‘once upon a time’, literally ‘something from long ago’. The modifiers, *sese*, *savsav* and *tatang*, all three of which display inherent reduplication, are not attested elsewhere in the corpus. The form *mastn* (which is likely to be related to the temporal modifier *mastang*) is used to mean ‘half’.

Parts of the day can take the frequentative marker *sakhsakh*, which also functions independently as an adverbial meaning ‘all the time’.

- (3.55) *Mitabbukh sakhsakh, mang i-tur*
morning FREQ man:ANA 3REAL:SG- get.up
‘Every morning, the man got up.’ [NVKS02.3]

When speakers want to establish more clearly a particular diurnal span as the temporal location of an event, they can combine parts of the day with time counters. Either the part of the day or the time counter can serve as the head in this construction.

- (3.56) *mitabbukh barnakh ~ barnakh mitabbukh* ‘this morning’
mitabbukh maran ~ maran mitabbukh ‘tomorrow morning’
livrav barnakh ~ barnakh livrav ‘this afternoon’

Parts of the day appear frequently in narrative texts to signal the location of events within the narrative time frame. In such texts, temporal local nouns often

occur in phrases marked by the adverbial subordinator *ba* ‘when’. In this context, the temporal noun may be followed by the nominal modifying particle *an*, optionally accompanied by *mil* ‘again’, to indicate the next occurrence of that particular part of day in the narrative sequence.

- (3.57) *ba livrav, mama blev bbubbu ar-uv mil*
 when afternoon father with grandfather 3REAL:DL- go again
 ‘When it was afternoon, Dad and Granddad went again.’
 [NVKI03.60]

- (3.58) *ba mitabbukh an mil ba i-vlem*
 when morning NMOD again when 3REAL:SG - come
i-khit ar-khavukh nokhos ang
 3REAL:SG- see IMPS:REAL- plant garden ANA
 ‘When it was the next morning, when he came, he saw the garden
 had been planted.’ [NVKS10.27]

3.5.4.2. Time counters

The second set of temporal nouns comprises the sub-class of time counters. Like the basic parts of the day, these items may have either absolute or relative temporal reference.

- (3.59) *barnakh* ‘today, now’
barikh ‘today, now’
maran ‘tomorrow’

<i>was</i>	‘the day after tomorrow’
<i>titl</i>	‘three days from now’
<i>tivas</i>	‘four days from now’
<i>tilim</i>	‘five days from now’
<i>muran</i>	‘next year’
<i>abbung</i>	‘yesterday’
<i>nanas</i>	‘the day before yesterday’
<i>nabbung itl</i>	‘three day’s ago’
<i>tue</i>	‘long ago, of the past’ (also a nominal modifier ‘old’)
<i>sakhsakh</i>	‘all the time’ (also post-verbal aspect modifier)
<i>baskham</i>	‘forever’ (not attested in a text)
<i>mamrakh</i>	‘suddenly’ (not attested in a text)
<i>las</i>	‘occasion:INDEF’ (requires a quantifier or numeral modifier)

Speakers of contemporary Neverver generally make use of the English names for the days of the week, which (like the names for months) have been borrowed into Bislama and from there into Neverver. Of the items listed above, the words for ‘today’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘yesterday’, and ‘long ago’ are commonly used; the others have fallen out of use. To refer to days in the future, the expression *nimdan nial iblim* (eye + sun + 3IRR:SG-five) ‘in five days time’ is used rather than *tilim* by younger speakers. To refer to days past, the expression *nabbung itl* (day + 3REAL:SG-three) ‘three days ago’ is used.

Time counters can be marked overtly for relative temporal reference. Again, we find the relative subordinator *an* (and optionally *mil* ‘again’) to signal ‘the next’ or ‘that’.

- (3.60) *Maran an, ba i-vu, i-khit*
 tomorrow NMOD when 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- see
 ‘The next day, when he went, he saw...’ [NVKS11.24]

The behaviour of the lexeme *barnakh* ‘now, today’ is somewhat distinct from the other members of the subclass of time counters. As well as functioning as a modifier of the parts of day in expressions such as *mitabbukh barnakh* ‘this morning’, *barnakh* may also appear with the deictic demonstrative determiners *anjing* ‘that’ or *anjakh* ‘this’. The addition of *anjakh* does not appear to alter the meaning of the temporal expression, except perhaps to add emphasis:

- (3.61) *Barnakh anjakh, nida t-okh i-mas*
 now this mother PSDT- 2SG 3REAL:SG- dead
 ‘Right now your mother is dead.’ [NVKS20.60: 281.123]

Anjing requires a relative interpretation when combined with a time counter. The form *anjing* alternates with the base form *jing* in this context as in *barnakh anjing ~ barnakh-jing* ‘right then, at that time’.

(3.62) *Barnakh anjing, ar-ver ar-rot i-is*
 now that 3REAL:DL- say 3REAL:DL- feel 3REAL:SG- bad
 ‘At that time, they said they felt bad.’ [NVKS02.83]

3.6. Pronominal-nouns

Alongside the noun classes described above, there is also a small set of pronoun-like nominals in Neverver. These items typically behave like pronouns in their semantics; however, syntactically, they function as common nouns and they permit certain types of modification. Crowley (2006b:62) identifies similar items in the Naman language:

These are pronoun-like in that they do not freely accept the full range of noun phrase modifiers. They are further pronoun-like in that they have no fixed reference and can only be used when the linguistic or non-linguistic context provides sufficient clues to enable their particular referents to be determined. (Crowley 2006b:62)

Rather than classifying the forms as pronominal, Crowley categorises these items as demonstrative nouns. This is primarily because the Naman items are obligatorily bound to post-posed demonstrative determiners. In Naman, they make a three-way contrast, referring to human entities, non-human entities and places. Neverver has forms that make a slightly different contrast. The form *an* ‘the one’ relates to entities that can also be encoded with common nouns; the forms *kut* ‘the place’ relates to spatial expressions encoded as local nouns and

dran ‘the time’ relates to temporal expressions encoded as local nouns. *Vin* relates to entities that can be encoded with female personal nouns and *man* relates to entities that can be encoded as male personal nouns.

Syntactically, pronominal-nouns differ from the gender-neutral third person singular pronoun *ei* in terms of the modifiers that are permitted to occur with them. Apart from the limiters *me*, *lume* ‘only’, the third person singular pronoun does not permit post-modifiers. In contrast, the pronominal-nouns *an* ‘the one’ and *kut* ‘the place’ must be followed by either a deictic demonstrative or a relative clause introduced by the nominal modifying particle *an*. When *an* (functioning as a pronominal-noun) is followed by a deictic demonstrative, it is not overtly expressed.

(3.63) Common pronominal-noun

- an an...* ‘the one that...’
- \emptyset *anjing* ‘that one’
- \emptyset *anjakh* ‘this one’

(3.64) Local pronominal-noun (space)

- kut an...* ‘at the place where...’
- kut anjing* ‘at that place’
- kut anjakh* ‘at this place’

(3.65) Local pronominal-noun (time) ¹⁸

dran an... ‘at the time when...’

dran anjing ‘at that time’

The pronominal-noun *an* can be used to refer to both human and non-human entities, with non-human referents being rather more common. It is also used to refer to an event as a whole, rather than a particular participant within an event. Human entities are more frequently encoded with the gendered pronominal-nouns described below, or independent pronouns, than with *an*. The form *kut* is restricted to referring to physical locations while *dran* is restricted to temporal locations.

In addition to the neutral pronominal-nouns, there is also a pair of gendered pronominal-nouns. *Vin* refers to female entities and *man* refers to male entities. Like the neutral pronominal-nouns, the gendered pronominal-nouns are also obligatorily modified by either a post-posed demonstrative, or a relative clause. In addition to the deictic demonstratives, the gendered items also take the anaphoric demonstrative, which is fused with the pronominal-nouns as *vinang* ‘the woman’ and *mang* ‘the man’.

¹⁸ The form *dran* ‘the time’ generally behaves in the same way as *an* ‘the one’ and *kut* ‘the place’, but it is distinct in that it cannot be modified by *anjakh* ‘this/now’; instead, the lexical item *barnax* ‘now’ is used to express this meaning. *Dran* can be modified by the indefinite numeral relative clause *i-sxam* ‘one’ and it can function as a temporal subordinator ‘when’ and a conditional marker ‘if’. See §13.3.

(3.66) Female pronominal-noun

<i>vin an i-ve</i>	‘the woman who made...’ (elicited construction)
<i>vinang</i>	‘the woman’
<i>vin anjakh</i>	‘this woman’
<i>vini-akh</i>	‘this woman’ (rare)
<i>vin anjing</i>	‘that woman’

(3.67) Male pronominal-noun

<i>man an i-rongrok</i>	‘the man who wanted...’
<i>man an i-ru</i>	‘the two men’
<i>mang</i>	‘the man’
<i>man(d)-ikh</i>	‘that man’ (2 nd male participant; rare)
<i>man-jakh</i>	‘this man’
<i>mini-akh</i>	‘this man’ (rare)
<i>man-jing</i>	‘that man’

The pronominal-nouns can be marked for plural. *Man* is attested regularly in the corpus with a plural marker. This follows the fused anaphoric demonstrative in the construction *mang adr* ‘the men’. In this construction, an epenthetic velar stop appears between the velar nasal and the initial vowel of *adr* as in [maŋ^gaⁿd^r]. The equivalent female construction is not attested in any naturally occurring texts, but *vinang adr* ‘the women’ (also with an epenthetic [g]) was considered to be an acceptable construction by language consultants.

The gendered pronominal-nouns can serve as possessors. The possessed entity is followed by the third person singular possessive demonstrative, and then

the possessor. The possessor can also precede the possessed entity. An intonation break separates possessor and possessed and in such cases, we find the pronominal-noun only or we find the third person singular pronoun form that occurs in environments following segments other than /n/.¹⁹

- (3.68) *mama titi vin-ang* ‘the father of the woman’
 vin-ang, neman ‘the woman’s brother’
 aiem titi mang ‘the home of the man’
 mang, ni-batn ‘the man’s head’
 mama titi ‘his/her father’
 ei, no-llon ‘his/her heart’

The morphemes employed in the gendered pronominal-nouns also appear in a number of gendered human nouns, including the related common noun *nimukhman* ‘man’. The female common noun *nimokhmokh* ‘woman’ is unrelated to the pronominal-noun *vin*.

¹⁹ We can speculate that the purpose of this possessor fronting is topicalisation. The present work is essentially a study of sentence grammar and a detailed study of topicalisation will form part of a separate investigation into discourse, as Givón (2001b) observes that:

In spite of being grammatically manifest at the clause level, topicality is *not* a clause-level property of referents, but rather a discourse-dependent one... What makes [...] participants topical is *not* the fact that they are grammatically coded as topical (subject, object) in the self-contained clause. Rather they are so coded grammatically because they are topical across a certain span of *multi-propositional discourse*. Their topicality is thus due to their being recurrent referents in some larger discourse. (Givón 2001b:254)

(3.69)	Female nouns		Male nouns
	<i>ni-vin</i>	‘daughter’	<i>ni-mukhman</i> ‘man’
	<i>natn na-vin</i>		
	<i>vivin</i>	‘sister’	<i>ne-man</i> ‘brother’
	<i>ni-terikh vin-dro</i>	‘adolescent girl’	<i>ni-terikh</i> ‘boy’
			<i>mukhman</i>
	<i>(ni)mokhmokh vino</i>	‘widow’	(?) <i>ni-druman</i> ‘body’
	<i>ni-villakh</i>	‘female in-laws’	

3.7. Nominalisation processes

Nouns can be derived by two nominalisation processes in Neverver. Simple nominalisation involves the attachment of the common noun prefix *n(V)-* to a stem. Simulfix nominalisation involves the combination of the common noun prefix *n(V)-* and a nominalising suffix with the shape *-ian*.

3.7.1. Simple nominalisation

The simple process by which a noun can be derived from a verb stem was introduced in §3.3.1. on the common noun prefix. This process is not productive and verb-noun pairs such as those previously listed are not abundant in the corpus. The data set is duplicated following to illustrate simple nominalisation:

(3.70)	<i>ar-bbut</i>	‘step’	<i>na-bbut</i>	‘footprint’
	<i>ar-lu</i>	‘shoot’	<i>nu-lu</i>	‘arrow’
	<i>ari-ssamu</i>	‘sweep’	<i>ni-ssamu</i>	‘broom’

<i>ari-tgar</i>	‘be cold’	<i>ne-tgar</i>	‘coldness’
<i>ari-vkhal</i>	‘fight’	<i>ne-vkhal</i>	‘fight’
<i>ar-khavakh</i>	‘plant (yams)’	<i>na-khavakh</i>	‘yam mound’
<i>ari-slot-ikh</i>	‘make a ceremonial yam heap for s.o.’	<i>no-slot</i>	‘ceremonial yam heap’

3.7.2. Simulfix nominalisation

A far more productive nominalisation process in Neverver is that involving the simulfix comprising the common noun prefix *n(V)-* and the nominalising suffix *-ian*. The simulfix is most commonly attached to an intransitive verb stem; however, a range of other verb stems as well as parts of speech may undergo nominalisation.

3.7.2.1. Nominalising intransitive verb stems

The basic and most commonly occurring nominalisation process involves intransitive verb stems of the kind illustrated in (3.71).

- (3.71)
- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>ni-jal-ian</i> | ‘sickness’ from <i>jal</i> ‘sick’ |
| <i>ni-kkan-ian</i> | ‘food’ from <i>kkan</i> ‘eat’ |
| <i>ni-lukh-ian</i> | ‘birth place’ from <i>lukh</i> ‘live’ |
| <i>ne-maur-ian</i> | ‘life’ from <i>maur</i> ‘live’ |
| <i>ne-sav-ian</i> | ‘a dance’ from <i>sav</i> ‘perform dance’ |
| <i>ne-tang-ian</i> | ‘grief’ from <i>tang</i> ‘grieve’ |
| <i>ni-tur-ian</i> | ‘place of work’ from <i>tur</i> ‘stand up’ |
| <i>ni-vtakh-ian</i> | ‘the end/afterwards’ from <i>vtakh</i> ‘be last’ |

- ni-tokh-ian* ‘place where one lives’ from *tokh* ‘exist’
ni-mas-ian ‘funeral’ from *mas* ‘die’

Borrowings from Bislama follow this same pattern in the corpus, as the example of the borrowed item *kuk* following illustrates. The Bislama form *storian* is often used as a noun without further modification in Nevevev. This is most likely possible because the word itself shares the shape of a nominalised stem. The fully nominalised form *no-storian* is very similar to the indigenous form *no-ssor-ian* ‘talk, story’ and the two are used interchangeably by many speakers.

- (3.72) *ni-kuk-ian* ‘cooking’ from *kuk* ‘cook’ Bis. *kuk*
(no)-storian ‘a story’ from *storian* ‘chat’ Bis. *storian*

3.7.2.2. Nominalisation and reduplication of intransitive stems

A small number of intransitive stems appear in a reduplicated form when nominalised. In the case of *gon* ‘meet’, the reduplication may be associated with a large number of participants.

- (3.73) *ni-gon-gon-ian* ‘meeting; gathering’ from *gon* ‘meet’
ni-bit-bit-ian ‘a mistake’ from *bit* ‘be wrong’

3.7.2.3. Nominalising transitive verb stems with experiencer subjects

Transitive stems that encode a human experiencer in the subject grammatical relation may also be nominalised.

- (3.74) *no-rong-rok-ian* ‘love’ from *rongrok* ‘want’
no-rokamsuk-ian ‘belief’ from *rokamsuk* ‘believe’
no-rongil-ian ‘knowledge’ from *rongil* ‘be able; know’

3.7.2.4. Nominalising prototypical transitive stems

When prototypical transitive stems are nominalised, these stems are generally reduplicated. The reduplication of such stems is a general detransitivising process, and does not only occur in nominalisations (see chapter eight). The use of reduplication to detransitivise is characteristic of Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:44). The examples following display the nominalisation of detransitive reduplicated stems on the left, and simplex transitive stems on the right. The nominalisations are often rather lexicalised.

- (3.75) *ni-lav-lav-ian* ‘harvest’ from *lav* ‘get s.t.’
ni-bir-bir-ian ‘competition’ from *bir* ‘argue with s.o.’
ni-tos-tos-ian ‘writing’ from *tos* ‘mark s.t. or s.o.’
ni-vul-vul-ian ‘bride price’ from *vul* ‘buy s.t.’
ni-div-div-ian ‘an example’ from *div* ‘measure s.t.’
ni-ti-tn-ian ‘a meal’ from *tn* ‘roast s.t.’

3.7.2.5. Nominalisations involving other word classes

A common noun and a verb stem can nominalise together. The common noun prefix *nV-* remains attached to the initial noun and the nominalising suffix *ian* attaches to the verb stem.

- (3.76) *n-aut-met-ian* ~ ‘night time, pre-Christian times’ from *n-aut*
n-aut-met-met-ian n. ‘place’; *met* v. ‘be dark’
n-aut-ran-ian ‘day time, Christian times’ from *n-aut* n. ‘place’;
 ran ‘be light’

There are some instances of verb-verb compounds with the nominalising simulfix. In example (3.77) following, both stems are attested independently in nominalisations in the corpus.

- (3.77) *ni-vuvam-bratn-ian* ‘the first real one’ from *vuvam* ‘be first’;
 *vratr*²⁰ ‘be true, real’
ni-vuvam-ian ‘before, the first’
ni-vratn-ian ‘the truth’

In example (3.78), only the first stem is attested in a nominalised construction. The second stem, meaning ‘block’, does not nominalise.

²⁰ As a verb stem, the form of this lexeme is always [βratn]; as a nominal modifier, it takes the form [ᵐbratn].

- (3.78) *ne-tata-gor-ian* ‘engagement/marriage’ from *tata* ‘promise’; *gor*
‘block’
ne-tata-ian ‘a promise’
**ne-gor-ian*

There is one instance in the corpus of a personal noun and verb stem being compounded and nominalised. In this case, the common noun prefix is not attached to the personal noun; however, the nominalising suffix is present. This nominalisation is distinct in that it creates a human agent or ‘doer’ rather than a more abstract ‘thing’.

- (3.79) *khamas-ver-ian* ‘a hard worker’ from *khamas* n. ‘master’; *ver* v.
‘work’

There is also one example of a verb stem and local noun nominalisation. This involves the stem *is* ‘be bad’, which itself is attested in a nominalised construction. When it combines with the local noun, the common noun prefix is attached to the verb stem. The final nominalising suffix is not attached to the local noun. The verb **is-arkha* ‘punish, to exact retribution’ is not attested in the corpus.

- (3.80) *ni-is-arkha* ‘punishment, retribution’ from *is* v. ‘be bad’;
arkha ‘up’
ni-is-ian ‘evil’

One nominalisation involves a verb stem **khakho* that is not attested independently in the corpus. This is the form *na-khakho-ian* ‘possessions’.

The post-nominal quantifier *ngatian* ‘all, every’ undergoes nominalisation, with the common noun prefix attaching to the quantifier base. The form *na-ngatian* is used very generally to refer to ‘everyone’ and is distinct from other pronoun-quantifier sequences including *git ngatian* ‘all of us’ and *adr ngatian* ‘all of them’.

Perhaps the most unusual nominalisation in the corpus involves the locative pronominal-noun and a verb stem. This nominalisation is unusual because the common noun prefix is attached to the locative pronominal-noun. The nominalisation following was produced by one of the oldest speakers; however, younger language consultants recognised the noun as an acceptable lexical item.

- (3.81) *nu-kut-lab-ian* ‘everywhere’ from *kut* ‘LOC PN’ ‘the place’;
lab v. ‘many’

3.8. Compound nouns

3.8.1. Noun + Noun compounds

Nouns can form compounds with other nouns. Generally, the second member of the compound loses the common noun marker $n(V)$ -. This first set of compounds involves the creation of common nouns.

- (3.82) *niterikh-mukhman* ‘boy’ from *niterikh* ‘child’; *nimukhman* ‘man’
niterikh-mokhmokh ‘girl’ from *niterikh* ‘child’; *nimokhmokh*
‘woman’
noron-batn ‘hair’ from *noron* ‘leaf’; *nibatn* ‘head’

There is evidence that some local nouns are formed from noun-noun compounds, as example (3.83) illustrates. In this example, the initial *n(V)*-marker is replaced by the marker *lo-* which is associated with some place names and is probably related to the locative preposition *lon*.

- (3.83) *Lo-van-midang* ‘place of abundant nemidang fruit’ from *nevan*
‘fruit’; *nemidang* ‘k.o.tree’

Other local nouns form noun-noun compounds without the loss of either common noun marker.

- (3.84) *Nio-nevat* ‘the stony river’ from *nio* ‘water, river’; and *nevat*
‘stone’

3.8.2. Noun + Verb compounds

A number of local nouns are formed from noun-verb compounds. In such cases, the noun precedes the verb and the verb stem is not inflected.

- (3.85) *Nio-sal* ‘place of the swamp’ from *nio* ‘water’; *sal* ‘float’
Netmat-lab ‘place of peace’ from *netmat* ‘peace’; *lab* ‘many’

<i>Nias-var</i>	‘place of the nias tree’ from <i>nias</i> ‘k.o.tree’; <i>var</i> ‘pick’
<i>Lonio-lele</i>	‘place of the small river’ from <i>nio</i> ‘water, river’ and <i>lele</i> ‘small’
<i>Lakha-tro</i>	‘the old forest’ from <i>nakha</i> ‘tree’; <i>tro</i> ‘old’

It appears that a number of strategies are used in the formation of local noun compounds. The last two examples displayed above show different patterns in their morphology. *Lonirolele* comprises a marker of the shape *lo-* which is associated with some place names, followed by a common noun with its common noun prefix still attached, and then an uninflected stative verb stem. *Lakhatro* comprises the local noun for ‘bush’ (related to the common noun *nakha* ‘tree’) followed by an uninflected stative verb stem. In this case, the common noun marker is replaced by *la-*.

Common nouns can also be formed from noun-verb compounds. The examples following display nouns encoding body parts in combination with verb stems. We can observe that in each case, the final *-n* is dropped when the compounded verb is attached. In chapter six, we consider the origin of the final *-n*, suggesting that it derives from an earlier possessive suffix.

(3.86)	<i>nebat-kher</i>	‘a stubborn person’ from <i>nebatn</i> ‘head’; <i>kher</i> ‘be strong’
	<i>nekhel-vas</i>	‘four-legged creature’ from <i>nakhlen</i> ‘leg’; <i>vas</i> ‘four’
	<i>nidling-mut</i>	‘marked ear’ from <i>nidlingan</i> ‘ear’; <i>mut</i> ‘?’ short

Chapter Four

The Noun Phrase

The Neverver noun phrase is head-initial. A range of lexical items can stand as the noun phrase head (§4.1.). Noun phrases are attested in different syntactic positions in the clause (§4.2.). Along with lexical post-nominal modifiers, the noun phrase has several other modifier positions (§4.3.). Nouns may be entirely unmodified (§4.4.), or carry intensifying, quantifying, limiting and demonstrative modifiers, as well as phrases expressing possession, and clauses expressing number and more complex delimiting information (§4.5.). Noun phrases can be conjoined in a number of different ways, with the most important structure involving an inclusory pronoun (§4.6.).

4.1. Noun phrase heads

A number of different types of words are able to function as the head of the noun phrase [NP] in Neverver. The most frequently occurring NP head in the corpus is the common noun. Such nouns may stand alone in the NP (4.1) or may be modified (4.2). Personal nouns, including personal names (4.3) and kin terms when referring to specific individuals (4.4) may serve as the head of an NP. Personal names and kin terms often combine to identify individuals who have a taboo relation (parent, in-laws) to the speaker (4.5). Local nouns, including proper place names (4.6), nouns denoting familiar places (4.7) and locative part nouns (4.8) may function as the head of the NP. NPs with local nouns as heads are restricted in distribution, almost exclusively occurring in unmarked locative adjuncts (4.6) - (4.8). There are a few occurrences in the

corpus of local nouns occurring as the subjects of non-verbal clauses (4.9).

Some motion verbs permit local nouns to stand alone as their direct objects

(4.10). The local pronominal-noun *kut* ‘the place’ can also serve as the direct object of these motion verbs (4.11).

(4.1) Unmodified common noun

Niat i-tokh si.

Sago.Palm 3REAL:SG- exist NEG

‘There wasn't any Sago Palm thatch.’ [NVKS02.32]

(4.2) Modified common noun

Niterikh-mukhman ang i-tur

child - male ANA 3REAL:SG- get.up

‘The boy got up.’ [NVKS02.04]

(4.3) Personal noun

Nepi i-vu lakh lakh me

Nepi 3REAL:SG- go quiet just

‘Nepi just went quietly.’ [NVCV01.30: 448.206]

(4.4) Kin term (personal usage)

Nida i-vor man(d) akh.

mother 3REAL:SG- sit EMPH here

‘Mum is sitting right here.’ [NVKS02.62]

- (4.5) Modified kin term (personal usage)

Bbubbu Nokho-an-mial i-ver te
grandfather vine – NMOD - red 3REAL:SG- say COMP
'Neskhan?'
what

'Grandfather Nokhoanmial said 'What?'' [NVKI03.56]

- (4.6) Proper place name

Ale nimkhut turien at-uv Vorkha
then man some 3REAL:PL- go Vorkha

'Then, some men went to Vorkha.' [NVKI03.91]

- (4.7) Noun denoting familiar place

Ave, na nida t-na im-bbulem si aiyem
No, 1SG mother PSDT- 1:SG 3:IRR:SG- come NEG home

'No, my mother won't/can't come home.' [NVKS01.17]

- (4.8) Locative part noun

I-vu i-vor man bbukhut
3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- sit EMPH inside

'She went and actually sat down inside.' [NVKS01.26]

- (4.9) Proper place name: non-verbal clause

Nepanglab, aiyem titi nemat, nibutriri i-skham
Nepanglab home 3PS:SG snake hill.top 3REAL:SG- one

ing

EXCL

‘Nepanglab, the home of the snake, was a hill top!’ [NVKS12.56:
411.781]

(4.10) Absolute local noun

Ale i-vu i-sber akhsung

then 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- reach inland

‘Then, he went inland.’ [NVKI07.42]

(4.11) Modified local pronominal-noun

Ba i-vu i-vev kut anjing

when 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- go to LOCPN that

‘When he went to that place...’ [NVKS02.08]

Members of the set of independent personal pronouns (4.12) may serve as the head of the NP. The demonstrative determiners *anjakh* ‘this’ (4.13) and *anjing* ‘that’ (4.14) serve as NP heads. In this position, the demonstratives function as pronouns.

Quantifiers typically modify common nouns and independent pronouns; however, they may also stand alone as NP heads when the noun to which they refer can be retrieved from the preceding context. In (4.15) below, the first instance of *turien* serves to modify the noun, while the second appears on its own. The number ‘one’ frequently appears as the head of the NP, with a fused third person singular subject/mood marker. We find this numeral functioning as

a noun in both verbal (4.16) – (4.17) and non-verbal (4.18) clauses.²¹ The final group of words that may serve as the head of the NP involves nominalisations of verb stems (4.19).

(4.12) Independent pronoun

Ei i-khab-ikh me nodongon Nakhabatekh.

3SG 3REAL:SG- full -APPL just sap k.o.tree

‘She was just full of Nakhabatekh sap.’ [NVKS11.43]

(4.13) Demonstrative determiner (functioning as pronoun)

Anjakh i-ver te i-nam nabr-uv

this 3REAL:SG- say COMP PSNPR- 1EX:NSG 1EX:IRR:DL- go

‘This one said we should go.’ [NVKS18.75: 372.065]

In (4.13), *anjakh* refers to the speaker’s older brother; the speaker blames him for their disobedience.

(4.14) Demonstrative determiner (functioning as pronoun)

Anjing me na ni-ver nim-bbuer-da

that just 1SG 1REAL:SG- want 1IRR:SG- say -PART

‘That is all I wanted to mention.’ [NVKS16.110: 477.836]

²¹ The numeral *skham* ‘one’, while preserving some verbal qualities, can behave quite differently from verb stems in some contexts. Example (4.18) is a non-verbal clause: the numeral is serving as the head of the NP that plays the grammatical role of subject. See §5.3 for a detailed description of number.

(4.15) Quantifier (functioning as indefinite pronoun)

Bibi abit-lav nokhon nidam turien,
maternal.uncle 3IRR:PL- get face yam some
mama abir-lav turien
father 3IRR:DL- get some

‘(Her) maternal uncles would get some yam tubers, (her) paternal uncles would get some (yams).’ [NVKI06.111]

(4.16) Numeral (functioning as indefinite pronoun)

Nat-dum, iskham i-vrokh nevrana na
1EX:REAL:PL- run INDEF.PN 3REAL:SG- hold hand 1SG

‘We ran, one held my hand...’ [NVKI03.39]

(4.17) Numeral (functioning as indefinite pronoun)

I-ver ‘I-skhen, ni-tbbukh iskham
3REAL:SG- say 3REAL:SG- not.so 1REAL:SG- have INDEF.PN

‘He said ‘On the contrary, I have one.’ [NVKS06.31]

(4.18) Numeral (functioning as indefinite pronoun)

Iskham nevas met, iskham nevas mavis
INDEF.PN wild.yam dark one:INDEF wild.yam white

‘One is black wild yam; one is white wild yam.’ [NVKS01.74]

(4.19) Nominalisation

Nat-khan me ni-kkan-ian an i-mrekh
1EX:REAL:PL- eat just NPR- eat -NSF NMOD 3REAL:SG- raw

‘We just ate food that was raw.’ [NVKS07.4: 22.154]

4.2. The syntactic functions of the noun phrase

Noun phrases function in a number of distinct syntactic positions in the clause structure of Neverver. These positions are illustrated below.

(4.20) Subject of a verbal clause

Niterikh lele ang i-vlem aiyem.
child small ANA 3REAL:SG- come home

‘The small child came home.’ [NVKS06.59]

(4.21) Object of a verbal clause

I-na ni-somda niterikh lele
PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG- discover child small

t-na i-ru.
PSDT- 1SG 3REAL:SG- two

‘I found two of my small children.’ [NVKS18.122: 639.254]

(4.22) Fronted subject

Be niterikh mokhmokh ang ei i-ka-kkan si
but child female ANA 3SG 3REAL:SG- DUP- eat NEG
'But the young woman, she couldn't eat.' NVKS11.38

(4.23) Object of a preposition

Nat-jik arkha ar nakhmal
1EX:REAL:PL- put up LOC.on house
'We put (them) up, on the house.' [NVDL01.06]

(4.24) Subject of a non-verbal predicate (common noun)

Nikhijan na Miriam
name 1SG Miriam
'My name is Miriam.' [NVCT06.1: 0.0]

(4.25) Predicate of a non-verbal clause (common noun)

Ei tastn nibbuas lele ang
3SG young.brother male.pig small ANA
'His younger brother was the small boar.' [NVKS08.64]

Aiyem 'home' in (4.20) and *arkha* 'up' in (4.23) further illustrate local nouns as NP heads in unmarked locative adjunct positions.

The distribution of NP heads according to their functions is summarised in the following table. Common nouns, nominalisations, personal nouns and personal pronouns occur in most positions while local nouns are more strongly

constrained. Gaps in the table indicate functions that are not attested in the corpus, and that could not be elicited from language consultants.

	Subject	Object	Extra Clausal Topic	Object of Preposition	Unmarked Locative Adjunct	Subject of Non-Verbal Clause	Predicate of Non-Verbal Clause
Common Noun	√	√	√	√		√	√
Nominalisation	√	√	√	√		√	√
Personal Noun	√	√	√	√			√
Personal Pronoun	√	√	√	√		√	√
Local Noun		√			√		√
Quantifier	√	√					
Demonstrative	√	√	√			√	√
Numeral (as indefinite pronoun)	√	√				√	√

Table 4.1. Functions of the NP according to NP head type

4.3. The structure of the noun phrase

The noun phrase is head-initial. When an argument is overtly encoded in a noun phrase, the element functioning as the nominal head is the only obligatory element. A head noun may stand alone in the noun phrase or it may be modified by a number of different types of post-modifiers. The basic order of constituents in the noun phrase can be summarised as follows:

Nominal Head	(Lexical Modifier)	(Intensifier)	(Possessive)	(Quantifier)	(Demonstrative)	(Plural)	(Relative clause)	(Limiter)
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Figure 4.1. Structure of the noun phrase

There are no instances in the corpus of a noun phrase with the maximum modifier positions filled. It is not unusual however, for a head noun to take two or three modifiers. NPs with four modifiers also appear in the corpus. The main restriction that applies is that quantifiers are semantically incompatible with number relative-clauses and thus are never attested in the same construction.

(4.26) Head + possessive

Nida t-na i-vlem ij
 mother PSDT-1SG 3REAL:SG-come ANT

‘My mother has come.’ [NVKS01.25]

(4.27) Head + possessive + quantifier

Bibi abit-lav nokhon nidam turien
 maternal.uncle 3IRR:PL-get face yam some

‘(Her) uncles would get some yam tubers.’ [NVKI06.111]

(4.28) Head + quantifier + plural

Nar-lem me nisin ngatian edr
 1EX:REAL:DL-carry just thing:INDEF many PL

‘We carried many things.’ [NVKI20.11]

(4.29) Head + possessive + demonstrative

Vinang i-vu i-sir nida titi
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-fetch mother 3PS:SG

ang i-vlem

ANA 3REAL:SG-come

‘The woman went and brought her mother back.’ [NVKS01.21]

(4.30) Head + possessive + relative clause (number)

I-na ni-somda nisidan t-na

PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-discover thing:INDEF PSDT-1SG

i-ru

3REAL:SG-two

‘I found two things of mine.’ [NVKS18.120: 629.408]

(4.31) Head + possessive + plural

Baga nimkhudan na at-lem nisidan

then family 1SG 3REAL:PL-carry thing:INDEF

t-na edr, nimaling t-na edr...

PSDT-1SG PL bed PSDT-1:SG PL

‘Then my family carried my belongings, my bedding...’ [NVDL05.10]

(4.32) Head + demonstrative + plural

At-lav nibarbar ang adr

3REAL:PL- get pig ANA PL

‘They got the pigs.’ [NVKI06.59]

(4.33) Head + possessive + relative clause (number) + limiter

Nakhmal t-nam i-skham me
house PSDT-1EX:NSG 3REAL:SG- one just
i-tokh man
3REAL:SG- exist EMPH

‘There is just one of our houses/rooms.’ [NVCT05.30: 389.971]

(4.34) Head + possessive + plural; head + relative clause

Nimkhudan na er abit-lav-lu noslot
family 1SG PL 3IRR:PL-get-COMPL ceremonial.yam.heap
an adr at-jik
NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL-put

‘My family was going to take away the yam heap that they (the other family) put (there).’ [NVDL05.16]

(4.35) Head (compound) + lexical modifier + relative clause

khavut-tro lele an i-vlem ang
husband-old small Nmod 3REAL:SG-come ANA

‘the little old man who came’ [NVCT05.47: 487.098]

4.4. Unmodified nouns

Unmodified nouns occur frequently in the corpus. Such nouns appear to serve three functions in connected text. These are firstly, the encoding of indefinite non-referring expressions; secondly, the encoding of definite referring expression; and thirdly, the encoding of generic expressions. Christopher Lyons

(1999) distinguishes between definite and indefinite as hearer-centered notions, and between referring and non-referring as speaker-centered notions. The contrast between these notions is summarised in the table below:

Indefinite Expressions	signal the speaker's belief that the hearer is unaware of the intended referent	associated with referring or non-referring expressions = speaker may/may not have particular referent in mind
Definite Expressions	signal the speaker's belief that the hearer is aware of the intended referent	associated with referring expressions = speaker has particular referent in mind

Table 4.2. Contrasting definite and indefinite expressions

4.4.1. Encoding indefinite non-referring expressions with zero modification

A noun with zero modification can be used to encode an entity that the speaker perceives to be indefinite and non-referring. The bare noun is usually the first and only mention of such an entity in the text. This sub-set of expressions with no modifiers are indefinite in the sense that the speaker assumes the hearer will not identify a particular referent. They are non-referring as the speaker does not have a particular referent in mind, but any member of the category or type of referent mentioned.

In example (4.36) below, the noun *nibarbar* 'pig' encodes a type of entity rather than a specific animal. The noun is the first and last mention of pigs in the narrative, which is a traditional account of the arrival of the coconut and sago palm on Malakula.

- (4.36) *Niterikh-mukhman ang i-tur i-vu*
 child-male ANA 3REAL:SG-get.up 3REAL:SG-go
i-raus i-tnga-kh
 3REAL:SG- seek.exchange 3REAL:SG- search(visually) -APPL
nibarbar
 pig
 ‘The young man got up and went and looked for pigs/a pig to
 exchange.’ [NVKS02.04]

4.4.2. Encoding definite referring expressions with zero modification

A noun with zero modification can be used to encode an entity that the speaker perceives to be definite and referring. In this case, a previously introduced or contextually available entity is reiterated with the bare noun phrase. In example (4.37) the bare noun *nisib* ‘knife’ can be interpreted as a definite referring expression. It is actually the first overt encoding of ‘knife’, but it occurs in a text about copra production. Copra production is specified as the topic of the text in the opening statement of the recording. Copra production, by association, includes the tools needed to carry out this process. A knife is one of these tools and as such, becomes contextually available.

- (4.37) *Ba ni-tur mitabbukh ni-vrokh nisib*
 when 1REAL:SG- get.up morning 1REAL:SG- hold knife

ni-vu *ni-rukhrukh*

1REAL:SG-go 1REAL:SG-gather.coconuts

‘When I get up in the morning, I grab (the/my) knife and go and gather coconuts.’ [NVDL02.01]

In the same text, we find the unmodified noun *nani* ‘coconut’ used to encode the coconut which is being processed. This is the first overt encoding of *nani*, but again this entity is evoked in the introductory statement of the recording. A number of events are encoded in verb forms which refer specifically to things that are done to coconuts, including the detransitive *rukhrukh* ‘gather coconuts’ in the previous example.

- (4.38) *Ni-vus-vus* *nani* *i-vlem* *sur* *nesal*
1REAL:SG-DUP-carry coconut 3REAL:SG-come near road
‘I carry the coconut to the road.’ [NVDL02.08]

The lack of modification of the referring noun phrase in (4.37) might be explained in terms of non-salience as the knife receives no further mention in the text. The same cannot be said of the coconut in (4.38) however, as *nani* ‘coconut’ is mentioned explicitly in subsequent clauses in this text about copra production.

4.4.3. Using unmodified nouns to encode generic expressions

Example (4.1) and §4.1 above illustrates the use of a bare noun to encode a generic expression. In that example, *niat* ‘Sago Palm’ or ‘Sago Palm thatch’ is referred to as a generic entity. Example (4.39), an elicited construction,

confirms this analysis. We can observe the use of the singular subject/mood marker with generic nouns in these examples.

- (4.39) *Netas* *i-tokh* *lon* *nitusu*
 fish 3REAL:SG-exist LOC sea

 ‘There are fish in the sea.’ [NVKW10.12]

Generics can be distinguished from other definite referring expressions in that no antecedent expression or association with a previously mentioned entity is required for their successful reference. They can be distinguished from indefinite non-referring expressions in that subsequent mentions of a particular member of the generic category can be treated as definite, whereas there are no subsequent mentions of indefinite non-referring expressions.

4.5. Nominal modification

4.5.1. Lexical modifiers

Members of the sub-class of stative verbs may serve as modifiers of a head noun. In this position, the verbs are uninflected. Not all stative verbs are attested in this position in the corpus, but those listed below occur frequently.

- (4.40) *ber(ber)* ‘long, tall’
 bratn ‘true, real’
 lele ‘small, young’
 mer ‘left’

<i>siasu</i>	‘holy’
<i>ttaj</i>	‘bald’
<i>ttis</i>	‘sacred’
<i>tro</i>	‘old’
<i>met(met)</i>	‘dark, black’
<i>yovyov</i>	‘white’
<i>mial</i>	‘red’
<i>yangyang</i>	‘yellow’

A sequence of two stative verbs in the post-nominal position was produced in an elicitation session but this kind of sequence is rare in the corpus.

- (4.41) *nakhatkhat metmet lele* (basket + black + small)
‘small black basket’
- nibarbar yovyov tokhtokh* (pig + white + big)
‘big white pig’

Noun-verb compounds followed by stative modifiers display the same structural organisation as sequences of stative modifiers, but can be distinguished because of their lexicalisation. *Nivis-bratn* ‘traditional bow’ and *khavut-tro* ‘mature man, husband’ are two compounds which may take post-nominal lexical modifiers as in (4.42).

- (4.42) *nivis-bratn lele* (bow-real + small)
‘small traditional bow’

khavut-tro lele (husband-old + small)

‘little old man’

4.5.2. Intensifiers

Three intensifiers serve adjectivally. Members of this class are distinct from lexical modifiers in that they are not attested as independent verbs in the corpus. *Tokhtokh* ‘huge, important’ generally modifies human and anthropomorphised entities. *Vor* ‘huge’ generally modifies inanimate entities. There is some overlap in the distribution of these two items and they can also combine to emphasise the size and significance of a particular entity. *Metesa* ‘excellent’ modifies inanimate entities and is rather rare in the corpus. *Tokhtokh* and *metesa* can also modify an inflected verb.

- (4.43) *nimkhut tokhtokh* ‘leader, Pastor’ from *nimkhut* ‘man’
nebang vor ‘huge banyan tree’ from *nebang* ‘banyan tree’
nolog tokhtokh vor ‘large ceremonial laplap’ from *nolog* ‘laplap’
nio metesa ‘excellent water/juice’ from *nio* ‘water, river’
i-lablab tokhtokh ‘he grew up/became big’ from *lablab* ‘be big’
i-rvikh metesa ‘it is really good, great’ from *rvikh* ‘be good’

4.5.3. Possessives

Possessors follow the nominal head and any stative or intensifying modifiers associated with that nominal head. Other types of nominal modifiers associated with the nominal head follow the possessor. Possession in Neverver is noteworthy in that it does not display the directly marked inalienable construction, which is characteristic of many Oceanic languages (cf. Lichtenberk

1985; Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002). Possession constructions are formulated on the basis of the sentience of the possessor. Human possessors are encoded in a different construction from non-human possessors. Among non-human possessors, a distinction is made between inherent possession, where there is a natural or inalienable relationship between possessum and possessor, and associative possession, where the relationship between possessum and possessor is constructed. In associative possession, the nominal modifying particle [NMOD] *an* signals the possessive relationship. Types of possession are summarised in Table 4.3. below and illustrated in the following examples; a full description is presented in §5.1.

Human possession	possessum + possessive determiner + (personal noun)
Non-human Inherent	possessum + possessor
Non-human Associative	possessum + NMOD + possessor

Table 4.3. Possessive constructions in Neverver

(4.44) Human possession

bibi titi niterikh ang

maternal.uncle 3PS:SG child ANA

‘the maternal uncle of the child’ [NVKI02.10]

(4.45) Non-human inherent possession

nivilun noto ang

feathers chook ANA

‘the feathers of the chook’ [NVKI16.23]

(4.46) Non-human associative possession

nokho an nibarbar ang
vine NMOD pig ANA

‘the rope of the pig’ [NVKI21. 35: 165.463]

4.5.4. Quantifiers

Another category of simple post-nominal modifiers involves members of the small set of quantifiers. This category comprises the following items:

- (4.47) *balian* ‘all, every’ from *bal* ‘fill’
ngatian ‘many, every’ from *nangat* ‘hundred’
turien ‘some’
tle ‘another’

The quantifiers *balian* and *ngatian* appear to derive from other morphemes. *Balian* most likely derives from the verb stem *bal* ‘fill’ and could be analysed as carrying the nominalising suffix *-ian*, though clearly this suffix does not function as a nominaliser in this context. *Ngatian* may derive from a common noun with the form *na-ngat* ‘hundred’. *Ngat* is not attested independently as a verb stem; however, there is a relationship between the meanings of the noun ‘hundred’ and the quantifier ‘many, every’. The use of large numbers as quantifiers is attested in other Oceanic languages, including Maori with *rau* meaning ‘hundred, multitude, another’ (Williams 1971:328), and *mano* meaning ‘thousand, indefinitely large number’ (Williams 1971:176). Like *bal*, *ngat* carries the suffix *-ian* when it functions as a quantifier. *Ngatian* can be fully nominalised as the noun *na-ngat-ian* ‘everyone’.

In most cases where a noun is quantified, the quantifier is the only modifier in the noun phrase; however, it is possible for a quantifier to appear in sequence with other post-nominal modifiers. In a small number of noun phrases, the quantifier is followed by a plural marker which functions to emphasise the plurality of the head noun (see (4.28) above).

Another commonly occurring construction involves a pronominal NP head followed by a quantifier. This construction functions to select one, some or all of a group of entities involved in a particular event. A pronominal head modified by a quantifier can also copy the person and number of a lexical head that immediately precedes it. This allows for several contrasts in meaning to be expressed.

- (4.48) *nida turien* (mother + some) ‘some mothers’
 adr turien (3NSG + some) ‘some of them’
 nida adr (mother + PL) ‘the mothers’
 [nida] [adr turien] (mother + 3NSG + some) ‘some of the
 mothers’ lit. ‘mother(s), some of them’

The noun *nisin* ‘thing:INDEF’ is used when the lexical content of an expression is unknown. This item frequently occurs in the corpus with modification in the form of a number relative clause, or a quantifier.

- (4.49) *nisin-skham ~ nisin i-skham* ‘something’
 nisin turien ‘some things’

<i>nisin ngatian</i>	‘many things’
<i>nisin balian</i>	‘anything’

The quantifier *tle* does not occur with *nisin* ‘thing:INDEF’ because ‘another’ implies that the addressee is already familiar with the class of object being referred to. Instead, this quantifier may follow the definite form *niten~netan* ‘thing:DEF’ in the phrase *netan tle* meaning ‘another one (of the things just mentioned)’.

When the unknown entity is human, the common noun *nimkhut* ‘male, human’ modified by a number relative clause is used in the singular. In the plural, *ngatian* modifies *nimkhut*, or the fully nominalised form *na-ngatian* ‘everyone’ is used instead.

(4.50)	<i>nimkhut i-skham</i>	‘someone’
	<i>nimkhut ngatian</i>	‘everyone’
	<i>na-ngatian</i>	‘everyone’

The construction *nimkhut ngatian* ‘everyone’ occurs just twice in the corpus, with the nominalised *na-ngatian* form above being preferred.

As noted previously, pronouns can be followed by quantifiers. They can also be followed by a number relative clause. Quantification of a pronoun allows the speaker to identify one, some or all of a group of entities as participants in a particular event. Pronouns can also be modified by one of the limiters *lume*, or *me*.

- (4.51) *adr i-skham* ‘one of them’
adr turien ‘some of them’
adr balian ‘all of them’
git ngatian ‘all of us, everyone’
git mokh ‘all of us’
ei lume ‘only he/him’
git me ‘only we/us’

Balian and *mokh* are rare as pronominal modifiers. *Balian* is generally a post-nominal modifier, while *mokh* is a post-verbal quantifier. In (4.52), *mokh* is illustrated as a quantifier, but it is separated from the argument that it is modifying and it is located in the structural position of a post-verbal modifier. Semantically, it is modifying the single argument of the intransitive verb *kkan* ‘eat’.

- (4.52) *Ba nati-kkan mokh lu i-suvsvu,*
when 1EX:REAL:PL-eat all PERF 3REAL:SG-be.finished
‘When we all had finished eating, ...’ [NVCV09.29: 180.747]

4.5.5. Demonstratives

Head nouns can be followed by a Demonstrative Determiner. Three post-nominal demonstrative determiners are used in Neverver. Two of the demonstratives are deictic in function, contrasting the proximal form *anjakh* ‘this’ (4.53) and the medial/distal form *anjing* ‘that’ (4.54). The third demonstrative is anaphoric in function. The demonstrative *ang* ‘the’ (4.55)

signals that an entity has been previously mentioned or is extractable from the speech situation or from shared generic-lexical knowledge.

(4.53) *Kum-bbu kubi-tn nidam anjakh kum-khan adr*
 2IRR:SG-go 2IRR:SG-roast yam this 2IRR:SG-eat 3NSG
 ‘Go and roast these yams and eat them.’ [NVKS15.36]

(4.54) *Be ne-mmang-ian anjing, nimokhmokh turien*
 but NPR-make.noise-NSF that female some
 ‘But that noise, it was some women.’ [NVKS18.05: 24.502]

(4.55) *Ale, niterikh ang ar ar-ver ‘ale’.*
 then child ANA PL 3REAL:DL-say all.right
 ‘Then the (2) children said, ‘All right.’ [NVKS18.48: 251.226]

The forms *anjakh* ‘this’ and *anjing* ‘that’ derive from the fusing of the nominal modifying particle *an* NMOD, which introduces relative clauses, and the verb stems *jakh* ‘be here’ and *jing* ‘be there’. The full relative clause constructions also occur in speech with the same meaning (see §5.2.9.), although the fused forms are more common.

As well as the common demonstrative determiner *anjakh* ‘this’, the rare form *akh* is also attested as a post-nominal modifier with the same meaning. The form *ing* occurs frequently in the corpus, but it functions as a clausal modifier with an exclamatory function (see §9.8.1.), rather than as a nominal modifier.

At present, the anaphoric demonstrative *ang* is weakening to *a*. This particularly occurs when the demonstrative determiner is the only post-nominal

modifier. Should this weakening continue, we might predict that the anaphoric demonstrative will eventually become a simple definite article, perhaps a suffix or enclitic associated with a nominal head. This diachronic process is widespread, with Lyons (1999: 116) reporting that ‘definite articles in nearly all languages that have them are descended historically from demonstratives. It is in fact usually a deictically unmarked demonstrative, or a non-proximal or non-first-person one, which provides the source of the definite article’. This observation aligns well with the Neverver data.

As noted in §4.1. above, the three demonstrative determiners can all function as pronouns and serve as NP heads. The distinction between demonstrative determiner and demonstrative pronoun is not morphologically marked. The lack of distinction between determiner and pronoun has been noted as common of Oceanic languages (Ross 2004: 179).

Ross (2004: 177) notes that a widespread pattern in Oceanic languages is for a three-way distinction to be encoded in demonstratives. This distinction may be based on person, contrasting first, second, and third person, or it may be based on distance from the speaker as the deictic centre, contrasting proximal, medial and distal. In Neverver, a three-way distance-based contrast is preserved in the set of independent demonstrative local nouns, although it has been reduced to proximal and non-proximal in the demonstrative determiners.

(4.56) Contemporary demonstrative local nouns

<i>tjakh/ tnakh</i>	‘here’
<i>tjing</i>	‘there (visible)’
<i>tang</i>	‘there (non-visible)’

4.5.6. Number

The overt signalling of the number of a head noun within the noun phrase is not obligatory; however, there are three strategies of post-nominal modification that can be employed to indicate that a nominal head is non-singular. Number modification can take the form of a general plural marker (§4.5.6.1.), or a number relative clause (§4.5.6.2.). The third strategy involves the use of a quantifier (discussed above in §4.5.4.).

4.5.6.1. The plural marker

Common nouns can take a plural marker of the form *adr~edr*. In the speech of younger people, this marker is generally realised as *ar~er*. The alternate *a-/e-* forms of this marker appear to be in free variation, with no distribution pattern identified. Human and non-human nouns take either form; either form may occur in a subject or object NP; two or three entities as well as large groups of entities take either form. The *adr* allomorph of the post-nominal plural marker has the same shape as the third person non-singular independent pronoun. *Edr* is not attested with a pronominal usage.

(4.57) *Mang* *adr* *at-uv* *at-uv* *at-uv*
man:ANA PL 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go
‘The men went on and on.’ [NVKS17.119]

(4.58) *I-trasil* *nakhavakh* *edr*
3REAL:SG-stake yam.mound PL
‘He staked the yam mounds.’ [NVKS16.55: 235.036]

4.5.6.2. Number relative clauses

Numbers are typically encoded in relative clauses. When the hearer is assumed to be unfamiliar with the referent of an expression, number marking is simply post-posed in an unmarked relative clause; when the hearer is assumed to be familiar with the referent of an expression, number is encoded in a relative clause introduced by the nominal modifying particle (NMOD) *an*.

(4.59) *nevan nani-pput ib-ru*
 fruit coconut-dry 3IRR:SG-two
 ‘two dry coconut fruit’ [NVKS12.54: 400.845]

(4.60) *nimokhmokh-tro an i-ru ang*
 female-old NMOD 3REAL:SG-two ANA
 ‘the two old women/wives’ [NVCV07.72: 656.241]

4.5.7. The limiter (*lu*)*me* ‘only, just’

The right-most NP modifier position contains the limiter (*lu*)*me* ‘only, just’. This particle can modify a range of phrase types (see §9.7.). When serving as a nominal modifier, the limiter may follow pronominal heads, human nouns and non-human nouns.

(4.61) *Bibi me i-vor i-prok*
 maternal.uncle just 3REAL:SG-sit 3REAL:SG-listen

no-ssor-ian an

NPR- speak-NSF NMOD

‘Only uncle sat and thought about the story.’ [NVKI06.36]

(4.62) *Be mang me i-lav nakhabb ang*

but man:ANA just 3REAL:SG-get fire ANA

‘But that (particular) man got the fire.’ [NVKS07.32: 201.125]

(4.63) *Nibbwas lume ar-khan*

male.pig only IMPS:REAL-eat

‘Only male pigs were eaten.’ [NVKI08.6]

4.5.8. Summary of NP modification

The following tables summarises types of post-nominal modification according to the category of NP head being modified. Common nouns take the widest range of post-nominal modifiers. Personal and local nouns are more restricted in the modifiers that they permit.

	Lexical modifier	Intensifier	Possessor	Quantifier	Demonstrative	Plural	Numeral	Relative Clause	Limiter
Personal Pronouns				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Nouns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pronominal-Nouns <i>an</i>					✓			✓	
Personal Names									
Kin terms (personal)			✓						
Pronominal-Nouns <i>vin, man</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	
Place Names/Familiar Places									
Absolute(/Deictic)									
Locative Part Nouns			✓						
Temporal nouns			✓		✓				
Pronominal-Nouns <i>kut, dran</i>					✓		✓	✓	

Table 4.4. Modifiers of personal and common nouns

4.6. Noun phrase coordination

There are a number of strategies employed in Neverver to signal that two entities are functioning as joint participants in an event. Conjunctive coordination can be signalled by the prosodic listing strategy, a prepositional construction, and the inclusory pronominal construction. Disjunctive coordination is signalled by the disjunctive coordinator.

4.6.1. Prosodic listing

The most basic means of conjoining two NPs involves a prosodic strategy, where there is a brief intonation break, marked by a comma in the examples below, between nouns. Non-terminal NPs have slightly rising intonation, while the terminal NP has falling intonation.

- (4.64) *I-khavukh maniok, i-khavukh nidaro ↗, nidam ↗,*
 3REAL:SG-plant manioc 3REAL:SG-plant taro yam
 ‘He planted manioc, he planted taro and yam...’ [NVKS05.7: 26.604]

Another example of this prosodic listing strategy can be seen in the following commemorative song. In this song, the founding members of the Lingarakh Presbyterian Women’s Union are listed by name as joint participants in the creation of their coconut plantation:

- (4.65) *Adr nevan i-jovas me,*
 3NSG fruit 3REAL:SG-nine just

Ana-Aki, Lenaus, Ela, Letang, Lerakhsil, Lerakhbel,
Lemeldan, Mary Alis, Lemelue

At-khavukh nani
 3REAL:PL-plant coconut
 ‘Just the nine of them, Ana Aki, Lenaus, Ela, Letang, Lerakhsil,
 Lerakhbel, Lemeldan, Mary Alice, and Lemelue, planted coconuts.’
 [NVE42.1-3]

4.6.2. The comitative preposition *blev*

In the speech of younger community members, the comitative preposition *blev* is now being used as a conjunction to coordinate two NPs, like *and* in English, or *mo* ‘and’ in Bislama (Crowley 2004: 70). NPs conjoined by *blev* share semantic roles, and are adjacent. When serving as the grammatical subject

of the clause, the subject/mood prefix on the verb agrees with the total number of participants, rather than just the first participant or last. This agreement suggests that for some speakers at least, *blev* can function as a simple coordinating conjunction.

- (4.66) *Ba livrav mama blev bbubbu ar-uv*
 when afternoon father with grandfather 3REAL:DL-go
mil
 again
 ‘When it was the afternoon, Dad and Granddad went again.’
 [NVKI03.60]

The form *bitev* is also attested as means of conjoining NPs. This alternative form may be a borrowing from the related Naman language, as Crowley (2006b: 97) identifies an ‘accompanitive preposition’ [ᵐbøteᵛ] as a means of coordinating NPs in this language. *Bitev* is also listed as an alternate form in Avava for [ᵐbilep], the ‘accompanitive preposition’ (Crowley 2006a: 65).

Although *blev* can be used as a nominal coordinator by some speakers, it typically introduces a non-core argument in an adjunct position to the right of the main clause. When the comitative participant is acting with the participant encoded as the subject NP (rather than object), the subject/mood prefix agrees only with the number of the subject NP, and the comitative participant is excluded. In the example below, the subject is encoded as the dual subject/mood prefix *ar*, which refers to two boys. The third participant (*tata titi-r* ‘their father’), is encoded in an optional adjunct and is not included as part of the subject number.

- (4.67) *Ar-ver* *te* *ar* *ar-lukh* *blev*
 3REAL:DL-say COMP 3NSG 3REAL:DL-live with
tata *titi-r*
 father 3PS-PL
 ‘They(2) said that they(2) lived with their father.’ [NVKS18.123:
 642.098]

An instrumental interpretation is also possible when *blev* is used as a preposition to mark a non-core argument. Although there is potential for ambiguity in the comitative/instrumental use of *blev* (just as we find in the use of ‘with’ for arguments with comitative and instrumental semantic roles in English), the semantic properties of the participants allow us to disambiguate. An example of the instrumental use of *blev* is illustrated below (see §9.1.4.5. for a full description of the prepositional uses of *blev*).

- (4.68) *Amti-vlem* *abit-vul* *na* *blev* *nevat*
 3IRR:PL-come 3IRR:PL-buy 1SG with money
 ‘They were going to come and pay for me with money.’
 [NVDL05.04]

The preposition *blev* is related to a verb stem of the same shape meaning ‘be with’. Examples of *blev* marked with a subject/mood prefix occur in the corpus. The verbal usage is rather limited, with the prepositional usage being far more common.

- (4.69) *Ati-blev mej vinang at-uv*
 3REAL:PL-be.with IMM woman:ANA 3REAL:PL-go
 ‘They went with the woman.’ [NVKI21.71: 289.889]

Irrealis constructions are also attested with the verb *blev*. When marked for irrealis, the verb stem is sometimes articulated as *bbulev*.

- (4.70) *Noah, kubi-blev niterikh t-okh an*
 Noah 2IRR:SG-be.with child PSDT-2SG NMOD
i-tl tjing kam-tuv kabit-sakh
 3REAL:SG-three there(visible) 2IRR:PL-go 2IRR:PL-go.up
 ‘Noah, you and your three children there go up together...’
 [NVCT07.14:

- (4.71) *I-vu i-bakhbakh im-bbulev me*
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-hide 3IRR:SG-be.with just
nimukhman adr lume
 male PL only
 ‘He goes and hides just with the men only.’ [NVKI02.4]

4.6.3. Inklusory pronominal constructions

The third method of signalling joint participation involves the use of inklusory constructions. Lichtenberk (2000) presents a basic typology of constructions that involve inklusory pronominals. His typology identifies a distinction between explicit and implicit marking of the inklusory construction as well as a distinction between phrasal and split NP formulations. Lichtenberk

(2000:4) defines explicit inclusory constructions as those in which ‘there is a marker of the relation between the inclusory pronominal and the included NP’ while implicit inclusory constructions are those in which there is no such overt marker. Phrasal inclusory constructions are those in which ‘the inclusory pronominal and the included NP together form a phrase’, while split inclusory constructions are those in which ‘the inclusory pronominal is typically (though not necessarily) some kind of dependent pronominal, such as an affix or a subject-marking particle’ (Lichtenberk 2000:3). Two inclusory constructions have been identified in Neverver. These are an explicit phrasal inclusory construction and an implicit split inclusory construction.

4.6.3.1. The explicit phrasal inclusory construction

In Neverver, the explicit phrasal inclusory construction is the most common type of inclusory construction. An inclusory pronominal conjoins the NPs, taking its number from the sum of entities expressed in the inclusory phrase. The pronoun carries the suffix *-ikh*. This suffix shares its form with the applicative suffix that we find attached to verb stems and is thus also glossed APPL as it signals an increase in participants. The APPL suffix also attaches to some post-verbal modifiers signalling transitivity concordance.

Participants conjoined with the inclusory pronoun must be adjacent and are thus part of a single phrase. In the example following, two conjoining strategies are used, these being the inclusory pronoun (with the inclusory NP in bold) and the prosodic listing strategy (with conjoined NPs underlined).

- (4.72) *Nemakh Nevnakh adr-ikh nemakh Viar, nemakh*
 denizen Nevnakh 3NSG-APPL denizen Viar denizen
Vorkha, nemakh Gara at-tokh Khatbol
 Vorkha denizen Gara 3:REAL:PL- exist Khatbol
 ‘The people of Nevnakh and the people of Viar, the people of Vorkha
 and the people of Gara are in Khatbol.’ [NVKI07.53]

When the referent of the first head NP is contextually available, it may be encoded only as the inclusory pronoun.

- (4.73) *Nam-ikh mama nari-vlem mil lon aiyem*
 1EX:NSG-APPL father 1EX:REAL:DL-come again LOC home
t-nam
 PSDT-1EX:NSG
 ‘My father and I came home again.’ [NVDL04.25]

In the following example, the woman is not overtly encoded in this inclusory construction; however, she is the agent of the immediately preceding clauses.

- (4.74) *Adr-ikh khavut titi ar-vus nolong ang*
 3NSG-APPL husband 3PS:SG 3REAL:DL-carry laplap ANA
 ‘She and her husband carried the laplap.’ [NVKS03.62]

4.6.3.2. The implicit split inclusory construction

In the case of implicit split constructions, there is no overt marking of inclusion. The joint participants are not contained within a single NP. Rather, we find the inclusory information encoded in the subject/mood prefix attached to the verb stem. Thus, the encoding of the inclusory participants is ‘split’ between the NP and the VP. This second type of inclusory construction in Neverver is restricted to subject arguments as only subjects are cross-referenced on the verb.

(4.75) *Lesien at-uv lon nokhos.*

Lesien 3REAL:PL-go LOC garden

‘Lesien and them went to the garden.’ [NVKS09.62]

The subject of this construction is a personal noun, identifying a girl who is one of the characters in the story being told. The subject/mood prefix in this example is marked for plural. The inclusory construction in this example indicates that the girl *Lesien* was accompanied by some other unspecified participants. Culturally, this is expected as a young woman would not go off on her own; however, the details of whoever accompanied the girl are irrelevant to the story itself and these participants remain unidentified.

The implicit split inclusory construction is rather rare in the corpus. It appears to be restricted to contexts in which some unspecified participant (or participants) takes part in an event along with a more salient and overtly expressed participant. As noted above, this construction is only possible for arguments that fill the subject position of the clause.

4.6.4. Disjunctive coordination

Disjunctive coordination between NPs is signalled with the disjunctive coordinator *si*. As well as conjoining NPs, this coordinator also conjoins clauses that stand in a disjunctive relation (see §13.5.3.).

- (4.76) *Abir-lav ibiskham abir-lik bibi*
3IRR:DL-get INDEF.PN 3:IRR:DL-pass maternal.uncle
si bbubbu
or grandfather

‘They were going to give one to their maternal uncle or grandfather.’

- (4.77) *Abr-uv abir-khit khavut-tro an Litslits*
3IRR:DL-go 3IRR:DL-see husband-old NMOD Litzlitz
si Ramav
or Ramav

‘They were going to go to see the man of Litzlitz or Ramav.’

[NVKI25.76: 464.414]

- (4.78) *Neman ang iskham nevebbun si nivigaum*
bird ANA INDEF.PN k.o.bird or k.o.bird

‘The birds, one was a green Nevebbun bird, or a yellow-headed green

Nivigaum bird (*Ptilinopus tannensis*).’ [NVKS06.98]

Chapter Five

Possession, Relativisation, and Number

Among the types of post-nominal modification discussed in the previous chapter, brief descriptions of possessive phrases, and number relative clauses were presented. Along with general relative clauses, these constructions are characterised by the presence of the nominal modifying particle [NMOD] *an*, which introduces sub-types of each construction. Among the sub-types of possession (§5.1.), associative possessive constructions take NMOD. Relative clauses (§5.2.) with definite heads, including number clauses (§5.3.) modifying definite heads, also take NMOD. The essential contrasts dealt with in this chapter are presented in examples (5.1) to (5.7). In addition, the quantifier *t/e* ‘another’ can take NMOD (§5.4.).

(5.1) Human possession

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|----|---------------|-----------|
| a. | <i>nida</i> | <i>t-na</i> | b. | <i>nevran</i> | <i>na</i> |
| | mother | PSDT-1SG | | hand | 1SG |
| | ‘my mother’ | | | ‘my hand’ | |

(5.2) Inherent possession without NMOD

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>noron</i> | <i>nani</i> | <i>adr</i> |
| leaf | coconut | PL |
| ‘coconut leaves’ | | |

(5.3) Associative possession with NMOD

wido an nakhmal ang

window NMOD house ANA

‘the window of the house’ [NVCV05.33: 1428.143]

(5.4) Relative clause without NMOD

Ar-lav nibbuang i-skham ar-ver

IMPS:REAL-get swamp.taro 3REAL:SG-one IMPS:REAL-say

nibrar

k.o.taro.

‘They got a kind of swamp taro called Nibrar.’ [NVKI03.35]

(5.5) Relative clause with NMOD

I-rrik nisib an i-vrok ang

3REAL:SG-throw knife NMOD 3REAL:SG-hold ANA

‘She threw down the knife that she held.’ [NVCV02.77: 490.638]

(5.6) Number relative clause without NMOD

niterikh-mukhman lele i-ru

child-male small 3REAL:SG-two

‘two small boys’

(5.7) Number relative clause with NMOD

nimokhmokh-tro an i-ru ang

female-old NMOD 3REAL:SG-two ANA

‘the two old women/wives’

5.1. Describing possession

The domain of possession is biocultural (Seiler 1999:277). In describing possession in Fijian, Schütz (1985:226) observes that ‘there are a number of different relationships that may hold between the referents of the possessor and the possessed... the meaning of this construction is broader than just legal ownership’. The same can be said of possession in Neverver. A wide range of relations hold between the possessor and possessum. Some are more prototypical, involving inherent human possession and ownership; some are less prototypical, involving for example the relation between an object and its material of composition, or a text and its content area.

Possessive systems in Oceanic languages are generally organized in terms of the semantic parameter of alienability, where alienability is a feature of the relationship between a possessor and the item that is possessed. This relationship frequently determines the formal structure of the possessive construction. Inalienable relations are typically encoded in a direct construction comprising (i) the possessum and (ii) the possessor (either in the form of a possessor suffix or a possessor noun phrase or pronoun). In contrast, alienable relations are typically encoded in an indirect construction comprising (i) the possessum, (ii) the possessor and (iii) a classifier which may identify the possessum as being an item of food, an item of drink, or a general item

belonging to the possessor. (cf. Lichtenberk 1985; Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002)

The distribution of possessive systems organized on the basis of alienability is wide spread in Oceanic languages, with Lichtenberk (1985:103) commenting that ‘the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession is crucial for the understanding of the use of the possessive construction in most Oceanic languages’. After nearly two decades of further research, this understanding has become firmly established in the literature of Oceanic languages, with Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002:40) commenting in their typological survey of Oceanic languages that ‘the semantic distinction between alienability and inalienability lies at the core of the main structural differences in all systems’. Based on the widely distributed features of possessive systems outlined here, we might expect to find a suffix system for inalienable possessive relations in Neverver. We might also expect to find some kind of contrasting construction for alienable possessors.

Among Neverver’s relatives on Malakula, there is some divergence from the typical Oceanic pattern of possession. Classifiers of alienable possession have been lost in Avava, Naman and Neve’ei (Crowley 2006b:74-75). Not only that, there is some question as to how well alienability serves as the primary organising parameter. For instance, Crowley (2002b:643) notes that in Vinmavis/Neve’ei, the possessive form *nen*, which is neither possessor suffix nor classifier, ‘expresses a semantic relationship that can be viewed in general terms as a part-whole or a purposive relationship’. The part-whole relationship in particular is one that is typically treated as semantically inalienable (cf. Lichtenberk 1985, Chappell & McGregor 1995, Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002), yet in Neve’ei it is expressed through a kind of prepositional construction. The

prepositional construction with the form [Possessed + Preposition + Possessor] occurs widely in Oceanic languages; however, it tends to be associated with alienable rather than inalienable possession (Lichtenberk 1985).

A set of singular possessor suffixes associated with inalienable possession has been reconstructed for Proto-Oceanic. Cognates are attested in Neve’ei, Avava and Naman as well as in the Neverver corpus.

	1sg	2sg	3sg
Proto Oceanic (Lichtenberk 1985:124)	*-ŋku	*-mu	*-na/*-ña
(Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:76)	*-gu	*-mu	*-ña
Neve’ei (Musgrave 2007:34)	-(u/i)ŋ	-(u/i)m	-n
Avava (Crowley 2006a:46)	-ŋ	-m	-n
Naman (Crowley 2006b:70)	- ^h g	-m	-n
Neverver	- ^h g	-m	-n

Table 5.1. Reflexes of the Proto Oceanic singular possessor suffixes

The possessive suffixes exhibited by Malakula languages are clearly related to the suffix system reconstructed for Proto Oceanic. In Neverver, however, although these forms are attested in the corpus, the distribution of the suffixes is highly restricted. All instances occur in hymns translated from English and Bislama into Neverver²². Text recordings of speech provide no evidence for these suffixes being a part of the possessive system of Neverver. While younger language consultants indicate an understanding of the meanings of nouns carrying these endings, it is unclear whether the forms are genuinely (and intentionally) archaic or borrowed from other Malakula languages. They are not used in speech. Contemporary Neverver then, does not have a productive suffixing system encoding inalienable possession.

²² See §1.4.1. for a discussion of the Neverver hymn corpus.

An examination of possessive constructions in Neverver reveals that the formation of possessive constructions is sensitive to three parameters. The first parameter concerns the sentience of the possessor, where different constructions are used for human and non-human possessors. The second parameter concerns the phonological realisation of the possessum. When a possessum is n-final, its possessor is encoded in one way; when the possessum is non-n-final, its possessor is encoded differently. The interaction between constructions with human possessors and the n-final parameter is considered in §5.1.1. Non-human possessors are considered in §5.1.2.

The third parameter concerns alienability – the type of relationship that holds between possessum and possessor. This parameter, central in the possessive systems of many other Oceanic languages, is relevant insofar as we can observe that many n-final nouns are inalienably possessed. We argue that this is a result of an historical fusing of the third person singular POc possessor suffix *-na (or *-ña), which is reduced to *-n in Malakula languages, with many inalienably possessed nouns. This type of possession is described as Inherent Possession and is considered in §5.1.2.1. Most nouns that are not n-final are alienably possessed and occur in a construction called Associative Possession, considered in §5.1.2.2.

5.1.1. Human possessors

When a possessor is human or sentient, it is encoded with a possessive determiner. The category of sentient beings extends to include anthropomorphised creatures; however, animals are prototypically classified as non-human. In Neverver, human possessors may inherently possess items, such as their body parts, names, and kin; they may own items, such as their tools and

animals; or they may display an intimate association with items, such as their clothing or bedding. Human possessors are most commonly encoded as possessive determiners in a construction of the following shape:

$\text{NP}_{\text{POSSESSUM}} + \text{Determiner}_{\text{POSSESSOR}} + (\text{Personal Noun}_{\text{POSSESSOR}})$

When the referent of a third person singular possessive determiner is extractable from context, the possessor is not named overtly; when the referent cannot be extracted, the possessor is named and the possessive determiner remains, cross-referencing the person and number of the possessor.

As described in §3.1.2., the series of possessive determiners is morphologically related to the series of independent pronouns. First and second person possessive determiners are regularly formed from the bare independent pronouns and the prefix *t*. Each possessive determiner exhibits two allomorphs, one beginning with *t-*, and the other being a bare form. The third person possessive determiners involve a suppletive form *titi* in the singular and *titi-dr* in the non-singular. The irregular third person forms alternate between the suppletive *t*-initial forms and the expected independent pronouns (*ei* ‘3SG’, *adr* ‘3NSG’) which function as bare possessive determiners. The distribution of the two series of allomorphs is complementary, determined by the phonological parameter introduced in the previous section. Bare possessive determiners occur after *n*-final nouns; *t*-possessive determiners occur elsewhere.

Returning to the issue of alienability briefly, one might expect the allomorphs of the possessive determiners to be distributed on the basis of alienability. Synchronically, the final *-n* that is attested in numerous common nouns is an inseparable part of the noun stem. In possessive constructions, the final *-n* does

not alternate with other endings when person and number vary. Final *-n* occurs in a range of constructions other than the possessive construction, and the citation form of these nouns is n-final. Diachronically however, the final *-n* is likely to derive from the Proto Oceanic third person singular possessive suffix. Reflexes of this suffix are evident in the three central Vanuatu languages listed in Table 5.1. above.

A small number of noun-verb compounds in the corpus support the hypothesis that final *-n* was once separable from noun stems. The nouns lose final *-n* when a verb stem is attached. The following compounds are highly lexicalised and this compounding process does not appear to be productive today.

- (5.8) *nebat-kher* ‘a stubborn person’ from *nebatn* ‘head’; *kher* ‘be strong’
nekhel-vas ‘four-legged creature’ from *nakhlen* ‘leg’; *vas* ‘four’
nidling-mut ‘marked ear’ from *nidlingan* ‘ear’; *mut* ‘?short’

In contemporary Neveveve, the parameter of alienability is no longer relevant to the formulation of human possessive constructions. All of the n-final nouns listed in the first column of data set (5.9) following are semantically inalienable; however, the same comment applies to several of the nouns in the second column that are not n-final, including one’s mother and one’s breast. Alienability does not explain the difference in the form of the possessive determiners that occur with these nouns. Phonology alone accounts for the distribution of bare possessive determiners and t-possessive determiners.

(5.9)	Items taking the bare possessive determiner	Items taking the t-possessive determiner
	<i>nevran</i> ‘hand’	<i>nasus</i> ‘breast’
	<i>neman</i> ‘brother, cousin’	<i>nida</i> ‘mother’
	<i>nimkhudan</i> ‘family’	<i>bibi</i> ‘maternal uncle’
	<i>nisidan</i> ‘belonging’	<i>nibarbar</i> ‘pig’
	<i>nikhijan</i> ‘name’	<i>nakhatkhat</i> ‘basket’
	<i>nilivkhan</i> ‘body’	<i>nesal</i> ‘friend’

Examples of first person singular possessor constructions are presented in (5.10) and (5.11) displaying the contrast between the bare possessive form and the t-form.

(5.10) *Nikhijan na Miriam*
 name 1SG Miriam
 ‘My name is Miriam.’ [NVCT06.1: 0.0]

(5.11) *Nida t-na i-vlem ij*
 mother PSDT-1SG 3REAL:SG-come ANT
 ‘My mother has already come.’ [NVKS01.25]

When a possessor is encoded by a personal noun, the possessive determiner is followed by the personal noun. If the possessive determiner is removed, a different meaning is produced or the construction is semantically odd.

(5.12) *Nabit-bel noto titi Pierre *noto Pierre*
 1EX:IRR:PL-chase chook 3PS:SG Pierre
 ‘We were going to chase Pierre’s chook.’ [NVCV02.58: 359.458]

(5.13) *nida titi Limel* versus *nida Limel*
 mother 3PS-SG Limel mother Limel
 ‘Limel’s mother’ ‘Aunty Limel’

Layered human possessive constructions are displayed in (5.14). The head noun of the first larger construction is *mama* ‘father’; the head of the second larger construction is *nimdali* ‘door’. In each case the head of the possessor phrase *khavut* ‘husband’ also serves as the possessum of *tna* ‘my’.

(5.14) *Mama titi khavut t-na i-vlem*
 father 3PS:SG husband PSDT-1:SG 3REAL:SG-come
lon nimdali titikhavut t-na
 LOC door 3PS:SG husband PSDT-1SG
 ‘My husband’s father came to my husband’s door.’ NVDL004.18

A human possessor may be copied to the front of the noun phrase. When the possessor is encoded only with a possessive determiner, it is copied as an independent pronoun. When the possessor is encoded with a personal noun, the personal noun is fronted and the possessive determiner may be omitted.

Pronoun _(POSSESSOR) + NP _{POSSESSUM} + Determiner _{POSSESSOR}

Personal Noun _(POSSESSOR) + NP _{POSSESSUM} + (Determiner _{POSSESSOR})

- (5.15) *i-na nikhijan na*
PSNPR-1:SG name 1SG
'my name' [NVKS31.1]
- (5.16) *i-na nida t-na*
PSNPR-1:SG mother PSDT-1SG
'my mother' [NVKS02.23]
- (5.17) *Joseph Bak nimokhmokh titi*
Joseph Bak female 3PS:SG
'Joseph Bak's wife' [NVCV05:24]
- (5.18) *nida tokhtokh nibatn*
mother huge head
'auntie's head' [NVCV06.1]
- (5.19) *nida titi nimdan*
mother 3PS:SG eye
'her mother's eye' [NVKS18.118]

- (5.20) *nimkhut nomngon*
 man mouth
 ‘a man’s mouth’ [NVKI03.35]

When a possessum carries other post-nominal modification, the position of the possessive determiner is dependent on the structure of the noun phrase. Possessors precede certain post-nominal modifiers and follow others. When the possessive determiner follows a modifier, the phonology of the modifier determines the form of the possessive pronoun, with n-final modifiers taking the bare possessor, while other items take the t-possessor. Again, this shows that alienability is not relevant to the formation of human possessive constructions.

- (5.21) N-final head noun with bare possessive determiner
nibatn okh
 head 2SG
 ‘your head’ [NVKS04.43]

- (5.22) Non-n-final modifier with t-possessive determiner
nibbulun lele titi
 seed small 3PS:SG
 ‘his small seeds’ [NVKS15.38]

Quantifying expressions follow the possessor. In example (5.23), the quantifying phrase *adr turien* refers back to the possessed entity *salan*; it is not logically possible for the phrase to modify the possessor *okh* ‘you (sg.)’.

- (5.23) *Kubi-kke-kh* *salan* *okh* *adr* *turien*
 2IRR:SG-call-APPL friend 2SG 3NSG some
 ‘Call some friends of yours.’ [NVDL010.13]

The anaphoric demonstrative *ang* also follows the possessor, rather than being attached to the possessed noun itself.

- (5.24) *Nida* *titi* *ang* *nemat* *tokhtokh* *ing*
 mother 3PS:SG ANA snake huge EXCL
 ‘Her (previously mentioned) mother was a huge snake!’
 [NVKS02.29]

5.1.1.1. Exceptions

The distribution of bare and t-possessors is predictable for most possessed nouns. There are some exceptions when head nouns or noun phrases are n-final, and t-possessors occur rather than the predicted bare possessors. In almost all the exceptions, we find that the final *-n* does not derive from the third person singular possessor suffix, but has a different source.

As described in §3.7., almost all nominalisations end with the nominalising suffix *-ian*. Although this suffix is n-final, we find that nominalisations consistently take t-possessors rather than bare possessors.

- (5.25) *ni-ver-ian* *t-na* ‘my work’
 ni-kkan-ian *t-okh* ‘your food’

ni-rvikh-ian *titi nida* ‘mother’s goodness’

ni-sisien-ian *titi* ‘his idea’

N-final borrowed nouns also take the t-possessor.

(5.26) *plan titi* ‘his plan’

pen t-na ‘my pen’

The noun *nivis-bratn* ‘traditional bow’, with its stative verb modifier that happens to be n-final, takes the t-possessor.

(5.27) *nivis-bratn titi* ‘his bow’

Finally, some n-final nouns are attested with both the t-possessive and the bare possessive. Contextual factors cannot explain the alternation between forms.

(5.28) *nokhoren titi~ei* ‘its tail’

nimdan titi~ei ‘his/her/its eye’

5.1.1.2. Human possession and definiteness

The relationship between definiteness and human possession in Neverver is rather complex. Possessive determiners occur in a separate slot to both the definite demonstrative determiners and also relative clauses. In the relative clause position, we often find the numeral ‘one’, which can be used to express

indefiniteness. This means that the following constructions are possible, and attested in the corpus:

head noun + possessor	+ <i>ang</i>	referring definite
	+ <i>i-skham</i> (3REAL.SG-one)	referring indefinite
	+ zero	non-referring indefinite
		referring definite

Table 5.2. Human possessors and definiteness of the possessum

A possessive construction which is unmarked for definiteness is potentially ambiguous. It could be an instance of zero-modification used to encode an entity perceived to be non-referring and indefinite; equally it could be an instance of zero-modification used to encode an entity perceived to be referring and definite. The following example constructions contrast the four possible interpretations listed above.

(5.29) Referring definite expression

nesal titi ang

friend 3PS:SG ANA

‘his friend (previously mentioned)’

(5.30) Referring indefinite expression

niterikh mokhmokh t-nam i-skham

child female PSDT-1:EX:NSG 3REAL:SG-one

‘a girl of ours’

(5.31) Non-referring indefinite or referring definite expression

nesal titi

friend 3PS:SG

‘his friend’ (he has many, it could be any one of them OR his previously mentioned friend)

(5.32) Referring definite expression

khavut t-na

husband PSDT-1SG

‘my husband’ (there is only one possible referent)

In order to resolve the ambiguity of (5.31), the hearer must make use of contextual information. The phrase in (5.32) is less problematic as cultural knowledge today dictates that a woman will have one and only one husband.

5.1.2. Non-human possessors

The encoding of non-human possession is distinct from that of human possession. Two non-human constructions are attested. In the inherent construction, a possessum is directly followed by a non-human possessor noun. In the associative construction, the relationship between possessum and non-human possessor is marked the nominal modifying particle *an*.

5.1.2.1. Inherent possession

A common noun possessum can be directly followed by an inherent possessor. Inherent possession is associated with a variety of naturally occurring part-whole relations and can be described as encoding an inalienable relation

between a non-human possessor and a possessum. Inherent possessive constructions differ from noun-noun compounds. In inherent possession, both possessum and possessor retain their common noun marker; in a noun-noun compound, the second compounded noun loses its common noun marker.

Looking at the following examples of inherent possession, we can observe that each common noun possessum is n-final. We can hypothesise once again that the final *-n* derives from the third person singular possessive suffix reconstructed for Proto Oceanic. Reflexes of the suffix are evident in neighbouring Malakula languages; in Neverver, the suffix has fused with the noun.

(5.33)	Naman	<i>mete-n</i>	<i>nenge</i>	‘new shoots of native almond’
	(Crowley 2006b:223)			
	Neve’ei	<i>nebat-n</i>	<i>nemwat</i>	‘head of the snake’
	(Musgrave 2007:34)			
	Avava	<i>bas-n</i>	<i>bala</i>	‘tusk of pig’
	(Crowley 2006a:48)			
	Neverver	<i>nebatn</i>	<i>neman</i>	‘head of bird’

Examples of different semantic sub-types of inherent possessive constructions are presented below. In each case, a part-whole type of relation can be understood.

(5.34) Flora

<i>niviskhon</i>	<i>nidam</i>	‘flesh of yam’
<i>nilivkhan</i>	<i>nakha</i>	‘trunk (body of a tree)’
<i>nivin</i>	<i>nakha</i>	‘bark (skin of a tree)’
<i>nukhutn</i>	<i>nani</i>	‘trunk of a Coconut’
<i>netavran</i>	<i>kakao</i>	‘branch of Cacao’
<i>nivin</i>	<i>nani</i>	‘husk of coconut’

(5.35) Fauna

<i>nulvun</i>	<i>nibarbar</i>	‘tusk (tooth of pig)’
<i>niviskhon</i>	<i>nibbwas</i>	‘pork (meat of boar)’
<i>natn</i>	<i>nibarbar</i>	‘piglet (child of pig)’
<i>natn</i>	<i>buluk</i>	‘calf (child of cow)’
<i>nigovin</i>	<i>noto</i>	‘egg of chook’

(5.36) Human body parts and products

<i>nemrusn</i>	<i>nimdan</i>	‘lash of eye’
<i>noron</i>	<i>nevran</i>	‘palm of hand’
<i>noron</i>	<i>nakhlen</i>	‘sole of foot’
<i>niesn</i>	<i>nimdan</i>	‘tears (fluid of eye)’
<i>nustn</i>	<i>nakhlen</i>	‘heel (end of leg)’
<i>norgon</i>	<i>nevran</i>	‘fingers (toes/digits of hand)’

(5.37) Parts of natural/traditionally constructed entities

<i>nijiglen nemlang</i>	‘side of deep pool (in a river)’
<i>nibokhtan nevanu</i>	‘back wall of house’
<i>nimilngan nokhos</i>	‘area of garden’
<i>nimdan nolong</i>	‘eye (centre) of laplap’
<i>nitabatn nasal tnam ang</i>	‘the beginning of our friendship’
<i>nomngostn nossorian</i>	‘end of the story’

(5.38) Object – material of composition

<i>nievin niat</i>	‘ashes of thatch’
<i>nievin nibbua titi-r</i>	‘ashes of their grandmother’
<i>nevlan nakha</i>	‘charcoal of wood’

5.1.2.2. Associative possession

The term ‘associative possession’ is used to describe a range of possessive relations that are encoded with the nominal modifying particle [NMOD] *an*. *An* functions as a connective between possessum and possessor but it does not encode a single semantic type of possessive relation. Relationships between possessum and possessor that are encoded in the associative construction include the relation between a location and its name, local spatial or positional relations, and temporal relations. In many of these cases, the relationship between possessor and possessum is established by NMOD. It is not a naturally occurring relationship, but rather one that is constructed and this is reflected in the presence of an overt connective. There are also examples of associative constructions where the possessor is non-specific, and the expression encoded in the possessor NP refers to a class of objects rather than an individual entity. At

the same time, there are examples of associative constructions where the possessor is specific and referring.

Prototypically, n-final possessums occur in the inherent construction described in §5.1.2.1., while other possessums occur in the associative construction. The term ‘associative’ is a useful way of classifying these constructions as they formally resemble associative constructions introduced by *ni* in Oceanic languages such as Longgu (Hill & Goddard 1997) and Fijian (Schütz 1985) and marked by *-(n)i* or *-gi* in the Vanuatu language Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001).

Examples of the associative possessive construction are presented below.

(5.39) Locations and their names

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>nevanu</i> | <i>an Vanuatu</i> | ‘the country of Vanuatu’ |
| <i>lokhavre</i> | <i>an Limav</i> | ‘the village of Limav’ |
| <i>aiyem</i> | <i>an Lavni</i> | ‘the dwelling of Lavni’ |

(5.40) Spatial associations

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <i>vere</i> | <i>an Lavni</i> | ‘outside Lavni’ |
| <i>lile</i> | <i>an Nioblikh</i> | ‘near Nioblikh’ |

(5.41) Temporal associations

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| <i>nida</i> | <i>an tue</i> | ‘mother(s) of the past’ |
| <i>mama</i> | <i>an tue</i> | ‘father(s) of the past’ |
| <i>nibbwas</i> | <i>an tue</i> | ‘boars of the past’ |
| <i>aiyem</i> | <i>an tue</i> | ‘dwellings of the past’ |

We can compare examples of object-material of composition in the inherent construction, with those in the associative construction. In the inherent construction, we find that ashes and charcoal are treated as inherently belonging to the entity that has been burned. In the associative construction, we find that objects such as houses, laplap and cloth may be composed of a range of different materials. Abstract nouns such as stories and songs are also ‘composed of’ or ‘about’ different content.

(5.42) Object - material of composition

<i>nakhmal</i>	<i>an nuvudumni</i>	‘grass house’
<i>nolong</i>	<i>an navuj</i>	‘laplap made of banana’
<i>nolong</i>	<i>an nidam mial</i>	‘laplap made of red yam’
<i>nakha</i>	<i>an nivinbbu</i>	‘bamboo stick’
<i>nitval</i>	<i>an nedram</i>	‘Pandanas cloth’
<i>nemkhat</i>	<i>an nedram</i>	‘Pandanas wrap’
<i>nossorian</i>	<i>an Lemanvukh</i>	‘story of Lemanvukh’
<i>nossorian</i>	<i>an noto</i>	‘story of chooks’
<i>nimitl</i>	<i>an nibisbokh</i>	‘story of the rat and kingfisher’
	<i>adrikh nasikh</i>	

Part-whole relations in borrowed items or recently developed items are encoded with associative possession rather than inherent possession. Traditionally, houses didn’t have windows and doors, and floors were earth rather than concrete or wood.

(5.43)	<i>fored</i>	<i>an trak ang</i>	‘front of the truck’
	<i>wido</i>	<i>an nakhmal ang</i>	‘window of the house’
	<i>tael</i>	<i>an nakhmal ang</i>	‘tiles of the house’
	<i>nimdali</i>	<i>an nakhmal ang</i>	‘door of the house’
	<i>nimdali</i>	<i>an nuag</i>	‘door of ship’
	<i>nakhajang</i>	<i>an nakhmal ang</i>	‘floor of the house’
	<i>niar</i>	<i>an nokhos</i>	‘fence of garden’

Certain associative constructions appear to encode an inalienable relationship between possessor and possessum. In fact, these relationships are normally implied by speakers rather than explicitly expressed. The word *nilatlat* refers to a stake used to prop up large and bushy yam plants. *Niat* means both the sago palm tree, and roofing thatch made from the leaves of this tree. *Nakhalmas* ‘shin’ can only belong to a leg. It is possible that in each case, the speaker has used an associative construction both to explain the meaning of the head noun and to draw attention to a normally unstated relationship for benefit of the audience, in my case, the culturally naïve linguist. The possessor NP in these constructions can be interpreted as encoding a non-specific entity, rather than a specific possessor.

(5.44)	<i>nilatlat</i>	<i>an nidam edr</i>	‘yams stakes’
	<i>nakhas</i>	<i>an nidam ang</i>	‘yam marker’
	<i>niat</i>	<i>an nakhmal</i>	‘house thatch’
	<i>nidongdong</i>	<i>an nebang</i>	‘banyan glue (sap)’
	<i>nibelbel</i>	<i>an neman</i>	‘bird rope/leash’

<i>nibial</i>	<i>an nimitvin nibisbokh</i>	‘rat excrement hole (anus)’
<i>nibarbar</i>	<i>an nilivtev</i>	‘pig with Nilivtev tusks’
<i>nakhalmas</i>	<i>an nekhlen okh</i>	‘the shin of your (a person’s) leg’

The informative function of the associative construction is occasionally employed to highlight or establish a relationship between a human possessor and possessum; however, such examples are rare in the corpus. Importantly, the examples in (5.45), which express inalienable relationships, demonstrate that the parameter of alienability is no longer the primary parameter by which possessive constructions are organized. Also in (5.45), the possessor NPs encode specific and referring entities, as in each case the human possessor is a previously introduced character in a text.

(5.45)	<i>nimkhut</i>	<i>an nimokhmokh</i>	‘son of the woman’
	<i>nimokhmokh tro</i>	<i>an natn</i>	‘mother of the child’

The associative construction is used to express non-prototypical possessive relations. This includes inalienable possessions that become alienable. In one traditional story, a snake sheds its skin. Having been abandoned by the snake in the ocean, the skin is expressed with the associative construction. This contrasts with an inalienably possessed ‘skin’ in the inherent construction’.

(5.46)	<i>nimilun</i>	<i>an nemat</i>	‘(shed) snake skin’
	<i>nimilun</i>	<i>nemat</i>	‘snake skin (on a snake)’

In another traditional story, a rat and fruitbat are two protagonists. They regularly plunder a garden. The gardener, a minor participant in the story, is encoded as a possessum, and the garden as an associated possessor.

Prototypically, we would expect the human to be the possessor.

(5.47) *nimkhut* *an nokhos* ‘man of the garden’

Other non-prototypical possessive relations involve a borrowed possessor or possessum, or an introduced rather than indigenous concept. The associative construction is used to establish the relationship between these entities.

(5.48)

<i>nivulian</i>	<i>an meresin</i>	‘cost/price of medicine’
<i>kas</i>	<i>an mani</i>	‘money box’
<i>nesal</i>	<i>an nemaurian</i>	‘way of life’
<i>nidre</i>	<i>an Yesu</i>	‘the blood of Christ’
<i>nesal</i>	<i>an norongrokian</i>	‘way of love’
<i>kastom stori</i>	<i>an Malakula</i>	‘traditional story of Makakula’
<i>mining</i>	<i>an stori lele anjing</i>	‘the meaning of that short story’
<i>nobo</i>	<i>an kastom</i>	‘traditional song (song of tradition)’

Nominalisations, which are typically n-final, were identified in §5.1.1.1. above as forming a group of exceptions when possessed by human possessors. They also occur in the associative (rather than inalienable) construction with non-human possessors.

- (5.49) *nemaurian* *an tue* ‘life of the past’
 nivtakhian *an nilangrav* ‘after the hurricane’
 nivuvamian *an nisin* ‘first of all (first of thing)’

5.1.3. Semantic irregularities

Semantic irregularities occur in the corpus. One construction which is semantically irregular as well as being formally unexpected involves the possessed noun *niar* which can mean ‘fence’. In the following examples, it refers to the generation which one belongs to, to one’s ‘siblings’. This form is irregular because it involves both NMOD and a possessive determiner. The first three examples come from texts produced by the oldest community member. The final example, which follows the predicted pattern for human pronominal possessors with non-n-final possessed nouns, was produced by a much younger speaker and probably represents a simplification of this older irregular construction.

- (5.50) *niar* *an mam* ‘our(excl) siblings’
 niar *an git* ‘our(incl) siblings’
 niar *an okh adr* ‘your(sg) siblings’
 niar *tgam* ‘your(pl) siblings’

A different type of exception concerns the word *nolog* ‘laplap’. This word is not n-final, yet it attested in both the inherent and associative construction. The contrast appears to relate to the way in which the laplap is perceived. When it is under construction, the associative construction is used, highlighting the material of composition. When it has been cooked, or is being consumed, the inherent

construction is used, referring to the resulting type of laplap. In both cases, we might consider that the material of construction has generic rather than specific reference.

- (5.51) *nolog an navuj* ‘laplap made of banana’
 nolog an nidam ‘laplap made of yam’
 nolog an nidam mial ‘laplap made of red yam’
- nolog navuj* ‘banana laplap’
 nolog nibarbar ‘pork laplap’

5.2. Relative clauses

Common nouns and pronominal-nouns may be modified by a relative clause. There is no structural distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses in Neverver, and attempts to elicit non-restrictive constructions met with some confusion. As such, the focus of this section is on restrictive relative clauses. Andrews (2007) provides a useful definition: ‘a relative clause (RC) is a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the RC’ (Andrews 2007:206).

Relative clause constructions are governed by a basic semantic condition: ‘A relative clause codes a state or event one of whose participants is *co-referent* with the head noun modified by the clause’ (Givón 2001b:176). From a typological perspective, a relative clause can be described as being either external-headed, where the head noun is located outside the relative clause, or

more rarely internal-headed, where the head noun is located inside the relative clause. The relative clause itself can be described as being prenominal or postnominal according to its position in relation to the head noun (Song 2001:212).

Like other nominal modifiers in Neverver, relative clauses are post-nominal. The external head of the relative clause is always the first constituent of the noun phrase. When the head noun is definite, a subsequent relative clause is introduced by the invariant particle *an* 'NMOD'. This morpheme appears in the left-most position of the relative clause, and serves to signal the beginning of the relative clause. Relative clauses that modify indefinite nouns do not require NMOD (see §5.2.11. and §5.3.1.1.).

When the head noun is definite, the terminal boundary of the relative clause is generally marked by the anaphoric demonstrative *ang* or its reduced form *a*. Additionally, when a relative clause modifies a definite noun phrase that plays the grammatical role of subject, *ang* functions to separate the entire modified noun phrase from the remainder of the main clause. When the relative clause is clause-final, *ang* is optional. If the modified noun phrase is indefinite, and/or the relative clause is marked for irrealis mood, *ang* does not occur.

The co-referential noun phrase in the relative clauses is deleted. The verb in the relative clause is the primary means of understanding the semantic role of the deleted argument. Neverver does, however, make use of two strategies that allow the grammatical role of the deleted argument to be recovered, and that assists with the identification of the semantic relation of that argument.

Keenan and Comrie (1977), in their cross-linguistic study of relative clause constructions, have found that languages make use of a Primary Relativisation Strategy, which applies to the relativisation of the subject position of the relative

clause. The primary relativisation strategy may also apply to the relativisation of other positions; however, this is thought to be determined by the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy – the strategy must apply to consecutive positions from the left on the Hierarchy. At the point where the primary relativisation strategy ceases to apply, other strategies may be used to allow relativisation, or relativisation may not be permitted.

ACCESSIBILITY HIERARCHY

Subject → Direct Object → Indirect Object → Oblique → Genitive →
Object of Comparison.

(after Keenan & Comrie 1977:66)

In Neverver, it is possible to relativise all positions on the Accessibility Hierarchy with the exception of object of comparison, as Neverver does not have a morphological comparative. The primary relativisation strategy is gapping²³ and this strategy applies to noun phrases in all relativisable positions on the hierarchy. In the case of one subcategory of obliques, we find that the second relativisation strategy applies. This is the resumptive pronoun strategy, described in §5.2.4.

5.2.1. Relativising the subject position

In constructions where the co-referential argument is the subject of the relative clause, the relativisation strategy involves a combination of gapping and subject-verb agreement. NMOD introduces the relative clause. In the subject

²³ Song (2001:217) refers to this as the 'obliteration strategy'; Andrews (2007:222) describes the same strategy as 'omission'.

position within the relative clause, there is a gap. In the verb phrase within the relative clause, the person and number of the co-referential argument remains marked by the obligatory subject/mood prefix on verb.

(5.52) Subject of main; subject of relative

[Niterikh [an im-ngar nakh]_{RC}]_{NP} i-tokh
 child NMOD 3IRR:SG- cry here 3REAL:SG- exist
si
 NEG

‘There is no child who is crying here.’ [NVKS8:16]

(5.53) Object of main; subject of relative

Nim-somda [nimkhut [an i-ve nokhos
 1IRR:SG-discover man NMOD 3REAL:SG-make garden
nakha]_{RC} ang]_{NP}
 wood ANA

‘I will discover the person who made the garden stakes.’

[NVKS10.40]

(5.54) Nominalised object of main; subject of relative

Nat-khan me [ni-kkan-ian [an i-mrekh]_{RC}]_{NP}
 1EX:REAL:PL-eat just NPR-eat-NSF NMOD 3REAL:SG-ST:raw

‘we just ate food that was raw.’ [NVKS07.4: 22.154]

5.2.2. Relativising the object position

When the co-referential argument functions as the object of the relative clause, we find NMOD marking the beginning of the relative clause. The primary relativisation strategy of gapping also applies; however, there is no verbal morphology marking the object. Properties of the verb, namely the number and type of obligatory arguments, must be used to recover the semantic role of the gapped object.

(5.55) Subject of main; object of relative

[Niterikh [an adr at-lem duvakh
 child NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL-give.birth first
ang]_{RC}]_{NP} i-vu
 ANA 3REAL:SG- go

‘The child that they bore first went’ [NVCT02.33: 161.509]

(5.56) Object of main; object of relative

Ar-khil [nevas [an nam nabit-lem]_{RC}]_{NP}
 3REAL:DL-dig.up wild.yam NMOD 1EX:NSG 1EX:IRR:PL-carry

‘They(2) dug up the wild yam that we were going to carry home.’

[NVCV02.23:116.382]

(5.57) Prepositional object (oblique) of main; object of relative

Ku-rongil kum-bbue nakhavakh ibi-skham
 2REAL:SG-can 2IRR:SG-make yam.mound 3IRR:SG-one

lon nokhos an ku-sil ij
 LOC garden NMOD 2REAL:SG-burn ANT

‘You can make a yam mound in the garden that you’ve burned clear.’

[NVDL08.31-32]

(5.58) Object of main; object of sentential complement in relative

Mang i-lav [nimokhmokh an
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-get female NMOD
i-na ni-ver [nib-lav ang]_{COMP}RC_{NP}
 PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-want 1IRR:SG-get ANA

‘The man married the woman who I wanted to marry.’ [NVE14.4]

5.2.3. Relativising the second object position

The gapping strategy also applies to co-referential arguments that function as second objects in the relative clause. In example (5.59), the common argument *nokho* is the object and patient of the main clause, but in the relative clause, it has the semantic role of instrument role, realised as the second object, and marked by the suffix *-ikh*. The patient semantic role of the action *ga* ‘tie something’, is realized as the direct object *nakhmal*. Thus, we have an example of the co-referential argument relativising the second object position.

(5.59) *Ni-vu ni-vev lakha, ni-te*
 1REAL:SG-go 1REAL:SG-go to bush 1REAL:SG-cut

[*nokho* [*an* *nim-gak-ikh* *nakhmal*]_{RC} *ang*]_{NP}

vine NMOD 1IRR:SG-tie.up-APPL house ANA

‘I went to the bush and cut the vines that I was going to bind the house with.’ [NVDL06.21]

5.2.4. Relativising the oblique – objects of prepositions

When the co-referential argument functions as the object of a preposition, the noun is gapped, but the preposition itself remains as a marker of the oblique position and an indicator of the semantic role of the gapped noun. In the following examples, the head nouns are gapped in the relative clause, but their prepositions remain stranded in the right-most position.

(5.60) *I-trokh* *si* [*nibial* [*an* *ei* *im-bbu*
 3REAL:SG-see NEG hole NMOD 3:SG 3IRR:SG-go
im-bakhbakh *aran*]_{RC}]_{NP}
 3IRR:SG-hide LOC.on

‘He didn't see a hole that he could go and hide in.’ [NVCT01.20:106.531]

(5.61) *Ni-malu* *ni-sibrik* [*nakhabb* [*an* *nida*
 1REAL:SG-go.out 1REAL:SG-let.go fire NMOD mother
i-ti-tn-ikh *na* *lon*]_{RC}]_{NP}
 3REAL:SG-DUP-cook-APPL 1SG LOC

‘I left the fire that my mother cooked for me on.’ [NVKI003.21]

- (5.62) *I-ve* *[nebelkha* *titi* *[an* *i-jik*
 3REAL:SG-make yam.platform 3PS:SG NMOD 3REAL:SG-put
nidam *titi* *aran]_{RC}_{NP}
 yam 3PS:SG LOC.on
 ‘He made his yam platform that he put his yams on.’ [NVKI006.102]*

5.2.5. Relativising the genitive – possessors

Clauses in which a noun phrase playing a genitive or possessive role is relativised are rather rare in the corpus. The gapping strategy is used in place of the co-referential argument.

- (5.63) *I-te* *[nibbwas* *[an* *nulvun* *i-kkel]_{RC}_{NP}
 3REAL:SG-hit male.pig NMOD front.tooth 3REAL:SG-curved
 ‘He killed a pig whose tusks curled around.’ [NVKS12.29: 205.343]*

5.2.6. Relativisation and pronominal-nouns

Independent pronouns may not occur as the head of a noun phrase which is modified by a relative clause. Instead, we find pronominal-nouns functioning as highly referring pronominal heads of relative clauses. In fact, these pronominal-nouns appear almost exclusively with either a relative clause or a demonstrative determiner, which appears to derive from a relative construction.

5.2.6.1. Relative clauses with *an* as the head

The pronominal-noun *an* serves as an anaphor to human and non-human referents, as well as to situations. In the following examples, previously introduced entities and situations are encoded with *an*.

(5.64) *[An [an i-vtakh]_{RC} ang]_{NP} mej i-vu.*
 DEMSPN NMOD 3REAL:SG-last ANA IMM 3REAL:SG-go
 ‘Next, the one who was last born went.’ [NVCT2.34: 167.899]

(5.65) *[An [an i-skhen avev tnakh]_{RC}]_{NP}*
 DEMSPN NMOD 3REAL:SG-not.exist seaward here
be [an [an akhus]_{RC}]_{NP}
 but DEMSPN NMOD inland
 ‘The one which is not down here but the one which is inland (of a
 certain bamboo plant).’ [NVCV06.6: 465.123]

(5.66) *I-vu i-sber an an*
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-reach DEMSPN NMOD
im-sil nokhos ang.
 3IRR:SG-burn garden ANA
 ‘It(time) went on until the occasion that he was going to burn the
 garden (of a gardening phase).’ [NVKS11.012]

5.2.6.2. Relative clauses with *kut* as the head

When a previously mentioned place is modified by a relative clause, the anaphoric pronominal-noun *kut* appears in the main clause. Location relative clauses with *kut* as the head differ from other relative clauses in that the co-referential noun phrase is encoded in the resumptive pronoun (*y*)*e* inside the relative clause, in the position where the local noun occurs in a simple sentence. This resumptive pronoun is restricted to relative clauses with *kut* as the head

noun. It only occurs in clauses where *kut* refers to the location of an event and not relative clauses that provide the name of a location, as in (5.68).

- (5.67) *Ar-uv ari-sber kut an ar-ver*
 3REAL:DL-go 3REAL:DL-reach LOCPN NMOD 3REAL:DL-want
abir-rakh ye, ar-rakh.
 3IRR:DL-clear.ground RSPN 3REAL:DL-clear.ground
 ‘They went all the way to the place where they wanted to clear the ground, and they cleared it.’ [NVCT001.07: 31.615]

- (5.68) *I-vu i-vev lon nokhos titi*
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-go to LOC garden 3PS:SG
kut an ar-ver Arakhalav.
 LOCPN NMOD IMPS:REAL-say Place.of.clay
 ‘He went to his garden, the place they call Arakhalav.’ [NVKS02.50]

5.2.6.3. Relative clauses with *dran* as the head

The third relativisable pronominal head is *dran*. It functions to specify the temporal location of an event.

- (5.69) *At-lukh-lukh-lukh i-sber dran an*
 3REAL:PL- DUP-DUP-stay 3REAL:SG-reach TMPPN NMOD

nidam i-yaj

yam 3REAL:SG-ripe

‘They waited until the time when the yams were ready.’ [NVKS12.7:
34.578]

The temporal pronominal-noun commonly occurs with a relative clause that is marked for irrealis mood. In such constructions, a conditional relationship is expressed between the temporal expression and the main clause (see also §13.3.4.).

(5.70) *Dran an i-okh kubi-tbbukh nokhos,*

TMPPN NMOD PSNPR-2:SG 2IRR:SG-have garden

kum-khavukh nidam

2IRR:SG- plant yam

‘If you had a garden, you'd plant yams.’ [NVKI04.43]

(5.71) *Dran an na nibi-tbbukh nitvilam, ni-rongil*

TMPPN NMOD 1SG 1IRR:SG-have mat 1REAL:SG-can

me nib-lav nitvilam ang nib-lik i-okh

just 1IRR:SG-get mat ANA 1IRR:SG-pass PSNPR-2SG

‘So, if I had a mat, I could just give the mat to you.’ [NVKI04.45]

5.2.7. Relative clauses with demonstrative predicates

Relative clause constructions with demonstrative predicates provide a means of determining head nouns. In such constructions, the verbal predicate expresses demonstrative meaning. In the corpus, the co-referential noun only ever

functions as the subject of the relative clause. This is in keeping with the intransitive nature of the demonstrative predicates. The verb in the relative clause construction has obligatory realis mood, in agreement with the definiteness of demonstratives, and carries third person singular subject morphology. Demonstrative relative clauses do not terminate with the anaphoric demonstrative *ang* as they already encode demonstrative meaning.

- (5.72) *Nida an i-jing at-ve*
 mother NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there 3REAL:PL-COP
nimokhmokh ttis
 female holy/sacred
 ‘The mothers that are there/those mothers are sacred women.’
 [NVKI06.213]

Both common and local nouns are able to be determined by a demonstrative relative clause.

- (5.73) *Niterikh-mokhmokh i-skham i-malu*
 child-female 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-go.out
lokhavre an i-jing
 village NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there
 ‘A young girl came from the village that was there/that village.’
 [NVKS14.05]

The demonstrative relative clause construction appears occasionally in the speech of older community member; however, for most speakers today, NMOD

and the demonstrative verb have fused, producing the simplified form *anjing* meaning ‘that/those’. The property which marks *jing* as verbal – taking an obligatory subject prefix – has been lost. The following locative clause displays the use of the simple demonstrative determiner.

- (5.74) *kut an ne-mmang-ian anjing i-vu*
 LOCPN NMOD NPR-make.noise-NSF that 3REAL:SG-go
ye i-vlem.
 RSPN REAL:SG-come
 ‘the place where that noise came from’ [NVKS18.08: 37.637]

There is a tendency for the voiced affricate to be pronounced as a voiceless fricative also, so the form [ansiŋ] is a common articulation of this construction.

While *anjing* is the most common fused demonstrative, we also find occurrences of *anjakh* [anjax ~ ansax] meaning ‘this/these’. Like *anjing*, the demonstrative may modify a noun:

- (5.75) *Nias anjakh i-tur nomngon*
 Tahitian.chestnut this 3REAL:SG-stand mouth
nakhmal t-mam aiyem
 house PSDT-1EX:NSG home
 ‘This chestnut stands at the front of our house at home.’
 [NVKS14.34]

5.2.8. Pronominal-nouns and demonstrative predicates

The spatial pronominal-noun *kut*, and the temporal pronominal-noun *dran* can also be determined by a demonstrative relative clause, or a simple demonstrative modifier.

- (5.76) *Kut an i-jing, ni-te nibbwas*
 LOCPN NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there 1REAL:SG-hit male.pig
tang
 there
 ‘At that place, I killed a pig there.’ [NVKI03.29]

- (5.77) *Ba i-vu i-vev kut anjing*
 when 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-go to LOCPN that
i-khitrokh niviturtur i-skham.
 3REAL:SG-see adolescent.girl 3REAL:SG-one
 ‘When he went to the place there, he saw a young woman.’
 [NVKS02.08]

- (5.78) *Dran anjing, at-ve mokh nimkhut*
 TMPPN that 3REAL:PL-COP all man
 ‘At that time, they were all men.’ [NVKS11.68]

While the corpus contains examples of *dran anjing* ‘at that time, that time then’, there are no examples of *dran anjakh* ‘at this time, this time here’. This is most likely to be because this meaning is encoded in a separate lexical item

barnakh meaning ‘now, today’, which functions as the head of a temporal adverbial phrase.

Although there are examples of *kut* and *dran* being modified by demonstrative relative clauses and the fused demonstrative determiners, there are no examples of the pronominal-noun *an* being modified in this way. Instead, we find only *anjing* and *anjakh* standing alone as NP heads. It is perhaps the case that the sequences **an anjing* and **an anjakh* have simplified, with the pronominal-noun being suppressed.

5.2.9. Relative clauses and indefinite heads

As noted in §5.2. above, when the head of a relative clause is indefinite, the relative clause is not introduced by NMOD. Number clauses that modify indefinite heads also do not take NMOD (see §5.3.1.1.). In addition, when the head noun is indefinite, relative clauses cannot end with the anaphoric demonstrative *ang*.

- (5.79) *Barnakh* *nim-ta* *ni-divdiv-ian* *mil* *aran*
 now 1IRR:SG-show NPR-measure-NSF again LOC.on
nimokhmokh-tro *i-skham* *i-mas*
 female-old 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-dead
 ‘Now, I’ll give an example again about an old woman who is dead.’
 [NVKI26.36:193.192]

- (5.80) *Ni-khit* *nisid* *i-skham* *mo* *si*
 1REAL:SG-see thing:INDEF 3REAL:SG-one CONT NEG

ibi-rvikh *ar* *nevanu*

3IRR:SG-good LOC.on region

‘I no longer see a single thing that is good in this place/on earth.’

[NVCT07.13: 52.231]

5.3. Number

The form of a noun does not vary to indicate number in Neverver. The number of a subject noun phrase is encoded in the obligatory subject/mood prefix in the verb phrase. Nouns that are used in a collective, mass, or generic sense are almost always cross-referenced to a third person singular subject/mood prefix on the verb.

(5.81) Plural subject noun phrase marked for plural

Niterikh *ang* *at-lukh* *i-gang*

child ANA 3REAL:PL-live 3REAL:SG-like.so

‘The children lived like that.’ [NVKS03.14]

(5.82) Mass noun phrase marked for singular

Ni-leb *nani* *ang* *i-vu*

1REAL:SG-carry coconut ANA 3REAL:SG-go

lon *nebelkha*

LOC copra.burner

‘I carry the coconut onto the copra burner’ [NVDL02.11]

Number marking on all arguments can be optionally signaled by post-nominal modifiers. In the previous chapter, general markers of quantity were described (§4.5.4.). A post-nominal plural marker of the shape *adr ~ edr* was illustrated (§4.5.6.1.), along with the use of a post-nominal numeral clauses (§4.5.6.2.). Details of numeral clauses will be presented in the following subsections, including a contrast between numerals introduced by NMOD, and those that simply follow the head noun.

5.3.1. Cardinal numbers

Numerals appear inside the NP as post-nominal modifiers, in the same position as other relative clauses.

5.3.1.1. Cardinal numbers one to nine

Lexemes referring to the numbers one to nine are encoded as verbs. They carry a subject/mood prefix, although the prefix is exclusively marked for third person singular. Numerals can take either realis or irrealis mood marking, depending on the mood characteristics and polarity of the main clause.

The numerals one to nine follow a quinary pattern. The numbers six to nine comprise the morpheme *jo-* and one of the stems one to four. We can observe that the allomorph of *vas* [βas] ‘four’ is *bbwas* [^mB^was] following the irrealis *m-*.

(5.83)	Realis	Irrealis	
	<i>i-skham</i>	<i>ibi-skham</i>	‘one’
	<i>i-ru</i>	<i>ib-ru</i>	‘two’
	<i>i-tl</i>	<i>ibi-tl</i>	‘three’

<i>i-vas</i>	<i>im-bbwas</i>	‘four’
<i>i-lim</i>	<i>ib-lim</i>	‘five’
<i>i-jo-s</i>	<i>im-jo-s</i>	‘six’
<i>i-jo-ru</i>	<i>im-jo-ru</i>	‘seven’
<i>i-jo-tl</i>	<i>im-jo-tl</i>	‘eight’
<i>i-jo-vas</i>	<i>im-jo-vas</i>	‘nine’

Number relative clauses follow lexical modifiers, possessives and demonstratives, and can be followed by a further relative clause.

	HEAD	LEXICAL	POSSESSIVE
(5.84)	<i>Ari-rkhov</i>	<i>nivis-bratn</i>	<i>lele titi-dr</i>
	3REAL:DL-hold	bow-real	small 3PS-PL
	NUMBER		
	<i>i-ru</i>		
	3REAL:SG-two		
	‘They held two small bows of theirs’ [NVKS01.56]		

A key distinction is made in Neverver in the encoding of number with definite and indefinite NP heads. Recall that definiteness is associated with a speaker’s belief about a hearer’s ability to establish the referent of a given expression (see Table 4.2.). The referents of definite NP heads have number marking that is introduced by NMOD; indefinite NP heads have number marking that simply follows the head noun (and any associated modifiers). In (5.84), the head noun *nivis-bratn* ‘bow’ is mentioned for the first time by the speaker. This contrasts

with (5.85), where the head noun *nevan nani* ‘coconut fruits’ is a previously mentioned entity.

- (5.85) *Nemat at-bel nevan nani an*
 snake 3EAL:PL-chase fruit coconut NMOD
i-ru ang
 3REAL:SG-two ANA
 ‘The snakes chased the two coconut fruit’. [NVKS12.69: 524.904]

5.3.1.2. Cardinal numbers ten and over

Higher numbers (including ten) take the shape of nouns rather than verbs and carry the common noun prefix. The system is now decimal.

- (5.86) 10 x 1 *nangavul* ‘ten’
 10 x 10 *nangat* ‘hundred’
 10 x 100 *netar* ‘thousand’
 10 x 1000 *namul* ‘ten thousand’ also ‘citrus fruit’

Nominal numerals occur as post-nominal modifiers in the same number position as the verbal numerals. Unmarked relative clauses occur with indefinite heads (5.87); NMOD constructions occur with definite heads (5.90).

- (5.87) *Ib-lav nibarbar nangavul ib-lik nesal*
 3IRR:SG-get pig ten 3IRR:SG-pass friend

titi

3PS:SG

‘He’ll give ten pigs to his friend.’ [NVKI05.64

Precise numbers above ten are expressed in a complex number phrase that contains the expression *nangavul nidruman*. *Nidruman* is attested elsewhere with the meaning of ‘body’ but most commonly it appears in the expression of higher numerals.

(5.88)	<i>nangavul nidruman i-skham</i>	‘eleven’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-ru</i>	‘twelve’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-tl</i>	‘thirteen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-vas</i>	‘fourteen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-lim</i>	‘fifteen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-jo-s</i>	‘sixteen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-jo-ru</i>	‘seventeen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-jo-tl</i>	‘eighteen’			
	<i>nangavul nidruman i-jo-vas</i>	‘nineteen’			
	<i>nangavul i-ru</i>	‘twenty’			
	<i>nangavul i-ru ni-druman i-skham</i>	‘twenty one’			
	<i>nangat i-skham nangavul i-ru nidruman i-vas</i>	‘one hundred and twenty four’			
(5.89)	<i>Bor</i>	<i>nisikha</i>	<i>t-na</i>	<i>im-bbue</i>	<i>nisikha</i>
	maybe	age	PSDT-1SG	3IRR:SG-COP	age

nangavul nidruman ib-ru si ibi-skham
 ten body 3IRR:SG-two or 3IRR:SG-one
 ‘Maybe my age was twelve or eleven years.’ [NVKI03.08]

In (5.89), the irrealis marking on the numeral agrees with the marker of epistemic modality *bor* ‘maybe’, as does the copular verb which is also marked for irrealis mood, despite its past-time reference.

The indigenous numeral system has been replaced to a large extent by the use of the English-based counting system. The largest complex indigenous number attested in the spoken corpus is ‘fifteen’.

(5.90) *Ba i-sber nabbung an nangavul*
 when 3REAL:SG-reach day NMOD ten
nidruman i-lim ang
 body 3REAL:SG-five ANA
 ‘When it reached the fifteenth day...’ [NVKI03.90]

Chief Jacob of Lingarakh village provided written constructions for much larger numbers. In these constructions, he uses the phrase *i-tur aran* which literally means ‘it stands on (it)’. In the expression of number, this phrase can be interpreted as meaning ‘more’. Chief Jacob’s construction for the figure ‘2,105’ is as follows:

(5.91) *netar i-ru, nangat i-skham,*
 thousand 3REAL:SG-two hundred 3REAL:SG-one

i-lim *i-tur* *aran*
 3REAL:SG-five 3REAL:SG-stand LOC.on
 ‘two thousand, one hundred and five’ [NVE60.01]

5.3.2. Ordinal numbers

Two strategies have been identified for the expression of ordinal meanings. The most common of these allows a contrast between ‘first’ and ‘last, after’ to be expressed. These meanings are expressed through verb forms. Like numbers, these ordinal verbs are only attested with the third person singular subject prefix. The verb forms for ‘first’ and ‘last’ are unrelated to the number morphemes.

In the following construction, the cardinal number ‘two’ contrasts with the ordinals ‘first’ and ‘last.

(5.92) *Niterikh* *ang* *i-ru* *ar-yang.* *Niterikh*
 child ANA 3REAL:SG-two 3REAL:DL-be.born child

mokhmokh *i-vuvam,* *niterikh* *mukhman*
 female 3REAL:SG-first child male

i-vtakh
 3REAL:SG-last
 ‘Two children were born. The girl was first; the boy was last.’
 [NVKS02.97-98]

The second strategy for expressing ordinal meanings is found in the speech of older community members; among younger Neverver speakers, the construction is not productively employed. An uninflected numeral stem is

followed by NMOD (with an apparently associative function). The ordinal appears to fill the same post-nominal position as the cardinal numbers illustrated above. A similar means of expressing ordinals has been observed in Naman by Crowley (2006b:84) for the ordinal numbers from three to ten.

- (5.93) *Ale ni-malu lon nakhabb t-na*
 then 1REAL:SG-go.out LOC fire PSDT-1:SG
ru an, sori tl an
 two NMOD sorry three NMOD
 ‘Then, I left my second fire (of the series), sorry, the third (of the series).’ [NVKI03.27]

5.3.3. Indefinite referring expressions

The use of the numeral ‘one’ is widespread as a marker of indefiniteness²⁴. In Neverver, the numeral *i-skham* ‘one’ is frequently used as an indefinite referring expression. As with other indefinite expressions, *i-skham* is not introduced by NMOD. *I-skham* signals that the speaker has in mind a particular entity but that the hearer is not expected to be aware of it.

Givón (2001a:455–458) notes that marked referring indefinite noun phrases are associated with pragmatic information. In particular, we find that indefinite reference markers are associated with entities that display cataphoric topicality²⁵.

²⁴ Lyons (1999:95) lists German, Albanian, Turkish, Basque and Tagalog among others as languages that employ this device; Givón (2001a:451) adds Mandarin Chinese, Hebrew, Sherpa and Creole languages to this list of languages exhibiting the numeral ‘one’ as a marker of indefiniteness. Harlow (pers. comm.) has commented that this also occurs Polynesian languages.

²⁵ The notion of topicality in this work follows that proposed by Givón (1992:12). Topicality is said to involve two aspects: referential accessibility or the availability of a referent in broader context in which an entity is mentioned; and thematic importance or the mention of the entity in

That is, when the indefinite marking occurs, it signals the importance of the indefinite noun phrase in the subsequent discourse. This means when the specific referential identity of an entity matters, a Neverver speaker can encode the entity with *i-skham* to signal that the entity will be topical and will feature in subsequent text.

In Neverver texts, we find nouns marked with *i-skham* in the opening lines of narratives, when the narrative context (including time, place and person) is established.

- (5.94) *Dran i-skham, niterikh mukhman i-skham,*
 TMPPN 3REAL:SG-one child male 3REAL:SG-one
i-malu lokhavre i-skham.
 3REAL:SG-go.out village 3REAL:SG-one
 ‘One time, a young man came from a village’ [NVKS02.01]

- (5.95) *I-lav nakha i-skham, blang*
 3REAL:SG-get wood 3REAL:SG-one timber.plank
i-skham
 3REAL:SG-one
 ‘He got a piece of wood, a plank.’ [NVCV01.16: 401.761]

subsequent discourse. These two notions have been quantified in new work on Centering Theory (c.f. Walker, Joshi & Prince 1998).

5.4. NMOD and the quantifier *tle* ‘another’

As well as introducing associative possessors, relative clauses with definite heads, and definite number clauses, NMOD post-modifies the quantifier *tle*. This construction allows the speaker to refer to an additional member of the group of entities (or type) that is specified by the head noun. The following examples contrast the use of *tle* as a simple quantifier with its use as a contrastive marker.

- (5.96) *nimkhut tle* ‘another man’ from man + another
nimkhut tle an ‘another of the men’ from man + another +
 NMOD
nimkhut tle an mil ‘another of the men again ~ the next one of the
 men’ from man + another + NMOD + again

We find similar meanings expressed in noun phrases that appear to have two contrasting heads. The final construction in the following series appears to be more emphatically contrastive than the first example.

- (5.97) *nabbung tle* ‘another day’ from day + another
nabbung tle an mil ‘the next day’ from day + another +
 NMOD + again
[nabbung ang] [tle an] ‘the day, another of (it) ~ a different day’
 from day + ANA + another + NMOD

Further examples of the same contrastive construction are attested in the corpus; each identifies an individual entity that is similar in characteristics to one previously described.

- (5.98) *[nakhabb ang] [tle an]* ‘a different fire (from the first one I was talking about)’
- [nakhmal ang] [tle an]* ‘a different house (from the ones women use)’
- [nibarbar ang] [tle mil]* ‘the next different pig (from the one just described)’
- [nossorian ang] [tle an mil]* ‘the next different story (of the ones I am telling)’
- [niterikh ang] [tle an ang]* ‘the next child of them (of the group involved in a ceremony that I am describing)’

The final example in this chapter comes from a conversational text. We can observe the multiple functions of NMOD in this sequence, alongside the demonstrative determiner *an*, which has the same phonological form. Complex referencing techniques are used to tell a story without naming the participants involved. The larger NPs are marked by square brackets.

- (5.99) *Ba* *[an* *an* *tle* *an* *ang]*
- when DEMSPN NMOD another NMOD ANA
- i-rodrok* *[an* *an* *kav* *ang]*
- 3REAL:SG- hear DEMSPN NMOD iron ANA
- i-tokh* *i-mmang* *bbukhut]*
- REAL:SG- PROG 3REAL:SG- make.noise inside

i-vlem *i-sukh* *lakhlakh* *mil*
 3REAL:SG- come 3REAL:SG- lift.up quiet again
wido, *ga* [*an* *an* *i-tokh*
 window then DEMSPN NMOD 3REAL:SG- PROG
i-mmang *bbukhut* *tang]* *i-jam*
 3REAL:SG- make.noise inside there 3REAL:SG- jump
i-das *vere.*
 3REAL:SG- go.down outside

‘When the other one (the person) heard how (the situation) the iron was making noise inside, he came and lifted up the window quietly again and then the one (the person) who was making noise inside jumped outside.’ [NVCV05.44: 1483.854]

Chapter Six

Verbs

Members of the class of verbs can be identified by a single morphological criterion. All independent verbs are able to carry a subject/mood prefix (§6.1.). Certain verbs alternate in form depending on the morphological content of the subject/mood prefix (§6.2.). Verbs can be subcategorized according to the number of obligatory arguments that they take (§6.3.). Morphological processes apply to alter the basic argument structure of verbs. The applicative suffix *-ikh* adds an additional argument to a verb; reduplication (discussed in detail in chapter eight) can serve a detransitivising function. Homonymy is found throughout the sub-classes of verbs (§6.4.).

6.1. The subject/mood prefix

Verbs carry an obligatory subject/mood prefix. This prefix encodes distinctions in person, number and mood. First, second and third person are contrasted, and in the first person non-singular, a contrast is made between inclusive and exclusive reference. The subject/mood prefixes display a three-way contrast between singular, dual, and plural number. A contrast is also made between realis and irrealis mood.

The subject/mood prefix is composed of four positional slots, each containing morphology that signals a specific type of information. The four slots are:

- Person, contrasting 1st/2nd/3rd person;
- Number (1), contrasting singular/non-singular number, and inclusive/exclusive;
- Mood, contrasting realis/irrealis;
- Number (2), contrasting singular/dual/plural.

Number is expressed in two different ways. In the first number position, there is a simple contrast between singular and non-singular, as well as an inclusive/exclusive distinction made in the first person. In the second number position, finer number contrasts are made between singular, dual, and plural. In total, there are twenty-two logically possible semantic combinations for the subject/mood prefix, all of which are attested in the corpus. The morphology associated with each position in the subject/mood prefix is presented in Table 6.1.

1		2		3		4	
Person		Number (1)		Mood		Number (2)	
		Inclusive/Exclusive					
<i>n</i>	1	<i>i</i>	singular 1st, 3rd or inclusive	\emptyset	realis	\emptyset	singular
<i>k</i>	2	<i>u</i>	singular 2nd	<i>m</i>	irrealis	<i>r</i>	dual
\emptyset	3	<i>a</i>	non-singular; exclusive			<i>t</i>	plural

Table 6.1. Morphology of the subject/mood prefix

The dual and plural number morphemes in the second number position are related to the numeral stems *ru* ‘two’ and *tl* ‘three’.

Tables 6.2. and 6.3. display the combinations of the underlying morphemes in the subject/mood prefixes.

		First person											
		Inclusive					Exclusive						
		Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)	Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)	Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)
Singular	Realis					<i>ni</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	\emptyset	\emptyset			
	Irrealis					<i>nim</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>m</i>	\emptyset			
Dual	Realis	<i>nir</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	\emptyset	<i>r</i>	<i>nar</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>r</i>		
	Irrealis	<i>nimr</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>namr</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>r</i>		
Plural	Realis	<i>nit</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	\emptyset	<i>t</i>	<i>nat</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>t</i>		
	Irrealis	<i>nimt</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>namt</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>t</i>		

Table 6.2. Underlying forms of the subject/mood prefix – first person

		Second person					Third person						
		Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)	Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)	Person	Number(1)	Mood	Number(2)
Singular	Realis	<i>ku</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>u</i>	\emptyset	\emptyset	<i>i</i>	\emptyset	<i>i</i>	\emptyset	\emptyset		
	Irrealis	<i>kum</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>m</i>	\emptyset	<i>im</i>	\emptyset	<i>i</i>	<i>m</i>	\emptyset		
Dual	Realis	<i>kar</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>r</i>	<i>ar</i>	\emptyset	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>r</i>		
	Irrealis	<i>kamr</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>amr</i>	\emptyset	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>r</i>		
Plural	Realis	<i>kat</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>t</i>	<i>at</i>	\emptyset	<i>a</i>	\emptyset	<i>t</i>		
	Irrealis	<i>kamt</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>amt</i>	\emptyset	<i>a</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>t</i>		

Table 6.3. Underlying forms of the subject/mood prefix – second and third person

6.1.1. Accounting for regular allomorphy in the subject/mood prefix

The form of the subject/mood prefix varies. Although there are twenty-two possible semantic realisations of the subject/mood prefix, there is considerable allomorphy with fifty-two phonetic realisations of the subject/mood prefix attested in the corpus. These realisations are presented in Table 6.4.

		First person		Second Person	Third Person
Singular	Realis	<i>ni</i>		<i>ku</i>	<i>i</i>
	Irrealis	<i>nim ~ nib(i)</i>		<i>kum ~ kub(i)</i>	<i>im ~ ib(i)</i>
		Inclusive	Exclusive		
Dual	Realis	<i>nir(i)</i>	<i>nar(i)</i>	<i>kar(i)</i>	<i>ar(i)</i>
	Irrealis	<i>nibir ~ nibr(i)</i>	<i>nabir ~ nabr(i)</i>	<i>kabir ~ kabr(i)</i>	<i>abir ~ abr(i)</i>
Plural	Realis	<i>nit(i)</i>	<i>nat(i)</i>	<i>kat(i)</i>	<i>at(i)</i>
	Irrealis	<i>nibit ~ nimt(i)</i>	<i>nabit ~ namt(i)</i>	<i>kabit ~ kamt(i)</i>	<i>abit ~ amt(i)</i>

Table 6.4. Realisations of the subject/mood prefix

The allomorphy in the irrealis morpheme *m-* can be explained by a simple rule. When the irrealis morpheme *m-* is followed by a segment with greater sonority, it dissimilates to plosive articulation. Thus, when the irrealis morpheme is followed by a vowel, a liquid or an approximant, it is realised as the prenasalised bilabial plosive.

Irrealis *m-* : ^mb- / ___ < sonority

This rule does not apply to all instances of the phoneme /m/, but it applies consistently to the irrealis morpheme which happens to have the shape /m/.

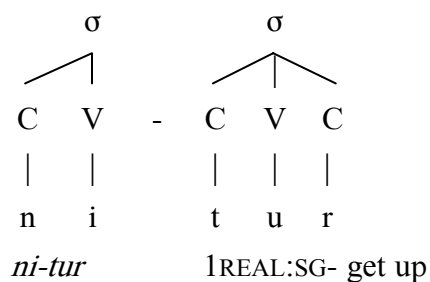
The presence or absence of the prefix-final vowel *i-* is determined by the general phonotactic constraint in Neverver which governs syllable structure. This constraint prohibits consonant clusters within syllables by requiring all syllables to conform to a (C)V(C) structure. A simple three-step process accounts for the syllabification of most inflected verbs. Vowels are assigned to syllable nodes first, then onset consonants are associated. Coda consonants are associated last. When there is only one C candidate for the single coda consonant position, this C is associated with the preceding V. When more than one C remains to be assigned, special rules apply to ensure that the syllable constraint is adhered to.

Syllabification rules for inflected verbs Neverver

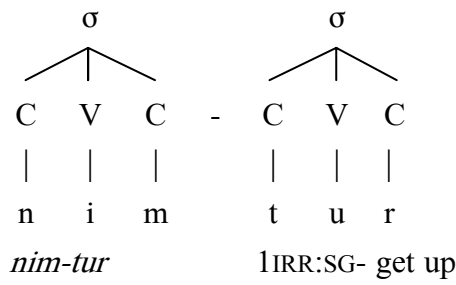
- i. Peak formation
Assign each V to a syllable node.
- ii. Onset formation:
Associate one C with each right-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).
- iii. Coda formation
Associate any single remaining C with a left-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).
- iv. Outstanding CC sequences
Insert medial epenthetic *i* to serve as syllable peak; syllabify according to steps i. to iii.
- v. Outstanding CCC sequences
Treat as a single C, followed by a CC sequence and syllabify according to steps i. to iv.

Examples are given below to illustrate the basic inflection and syllabification processes. The first verb, *tur* ‘stand, get up’, has a single initial consonant (a CV stem).

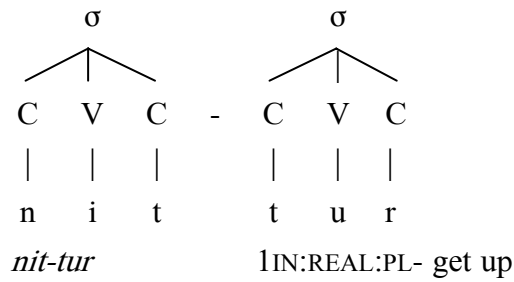
(6.1) CV stem: singular realis prefix



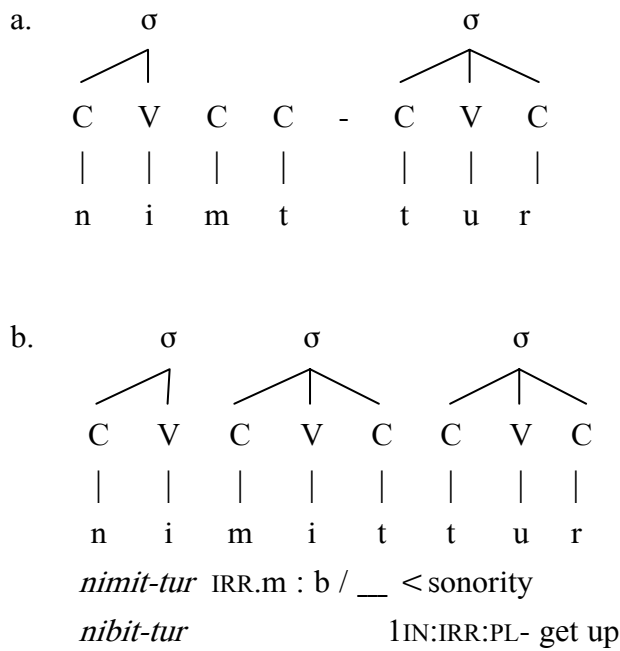
(6.2) CV stem: singular irrealis prefix



(6.3) CV stem: non-singular realis prefix

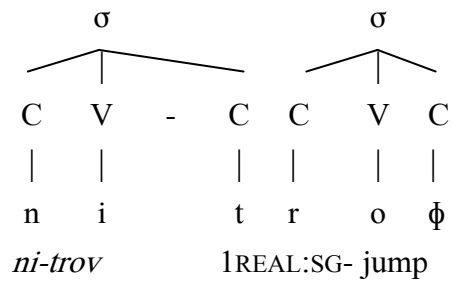


(6.4) CV stem: non-singular irrealis prefix

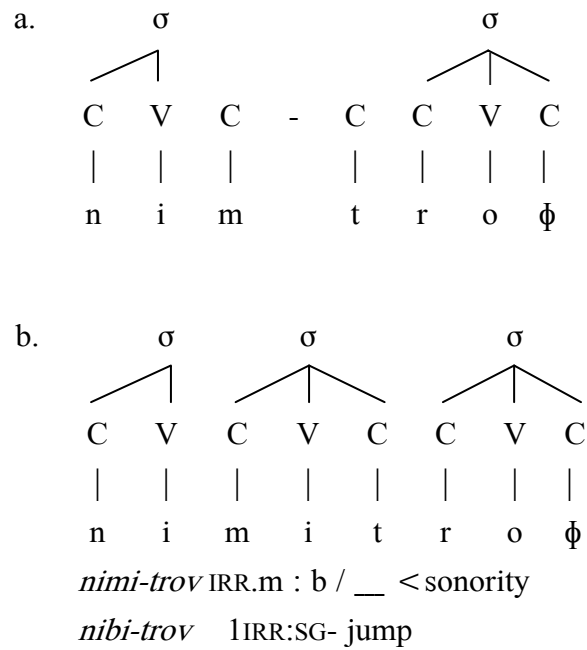


The second verb, *trov* ‘jump’, has an initial heterogeneous consonant sequence (a CCV stem).

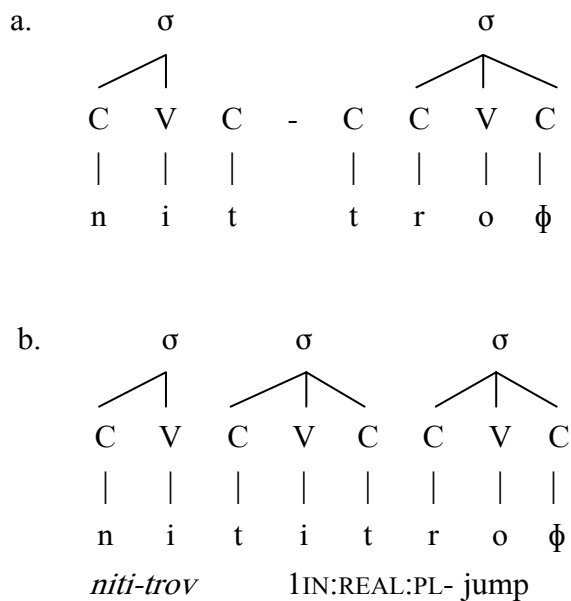
(6.5) CCV stem (heterogeneous): singular realis prefix



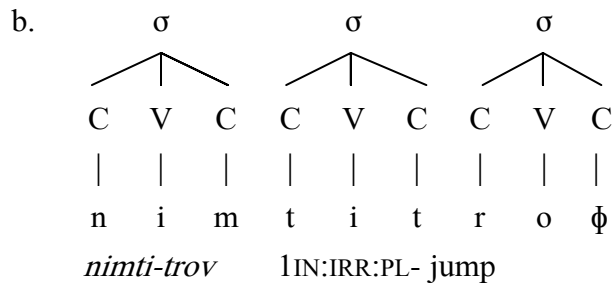
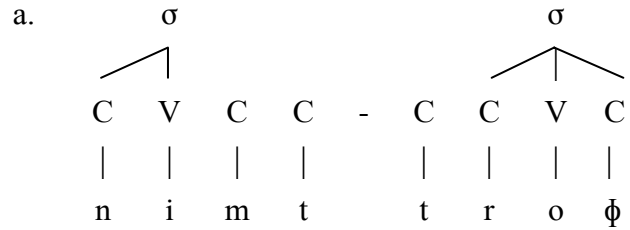
(6.6) CCV stem (heterogeneous): singular irrealis prefix



(6.7) CCV stem (heterogeneous): non-singular realis prefix

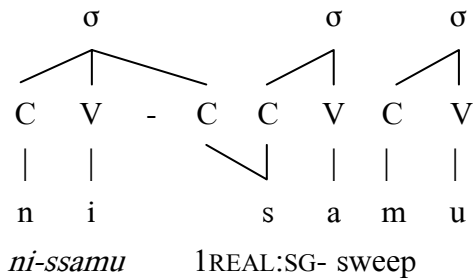


(6.8) CCV stem (heterogeneous): non-singular irrealis prefix

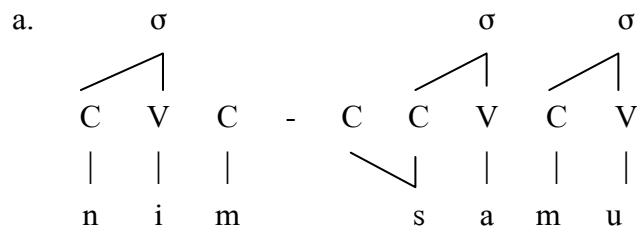


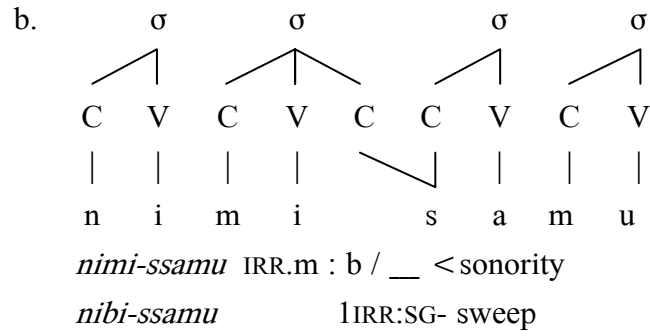
The third verb, *ssamu* ‘sweep’ has an initial geminate consonant sequence (also a CCV stem). We can observe that heterogeneous and geminate consonant sequences are treated in the same way in syllabification.

(6.9) CCV stem (geminate): singular realis prefix

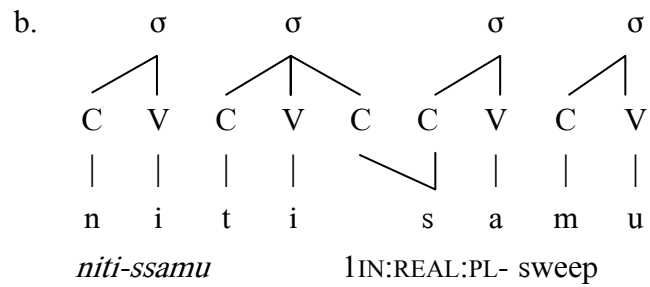
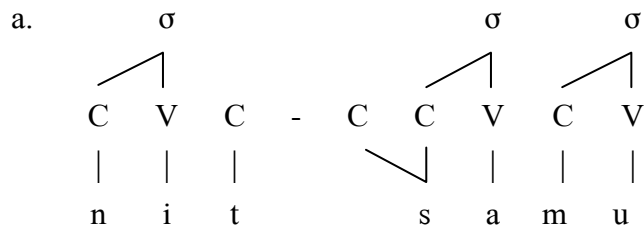


(6.10) CCV stem (geminate): singular irrealis prefix

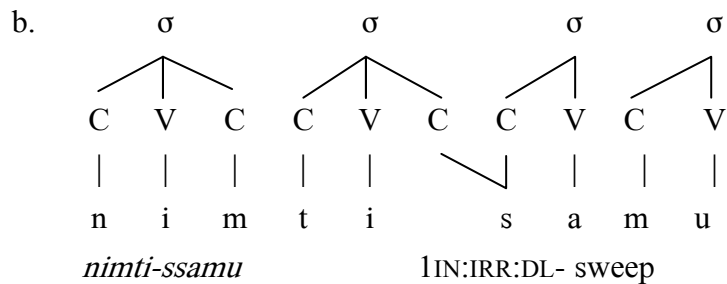
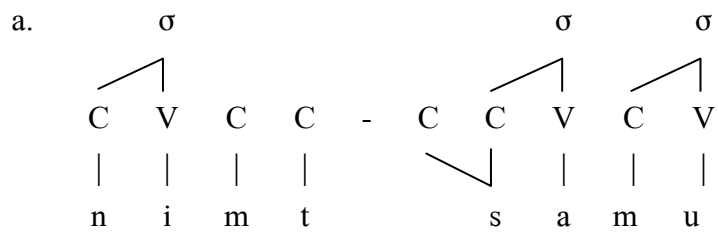




(6.11) CCV stem (geminate): non-singular realis prefix



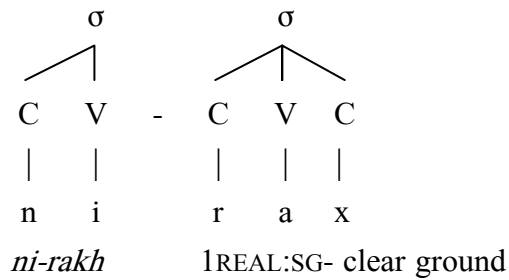
(6.12) CCV stem (geminate): non-singular irrealis prefix



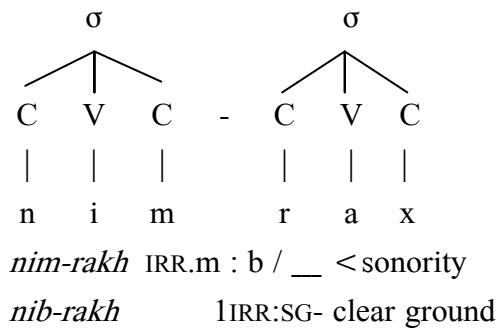
The next example *rakh* ‘clear ground’ is a CV stem with an initial liquid.

This segment requires the irrealis nasal to dissimilate when the two are contiguous in (6.14). The irrealis nasal also dissimilates in (6.16) when followed by the epenthetic vowel *i*.

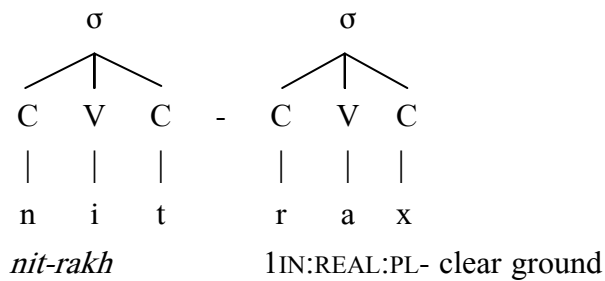
(6.13) CV stem: singular realis prefix



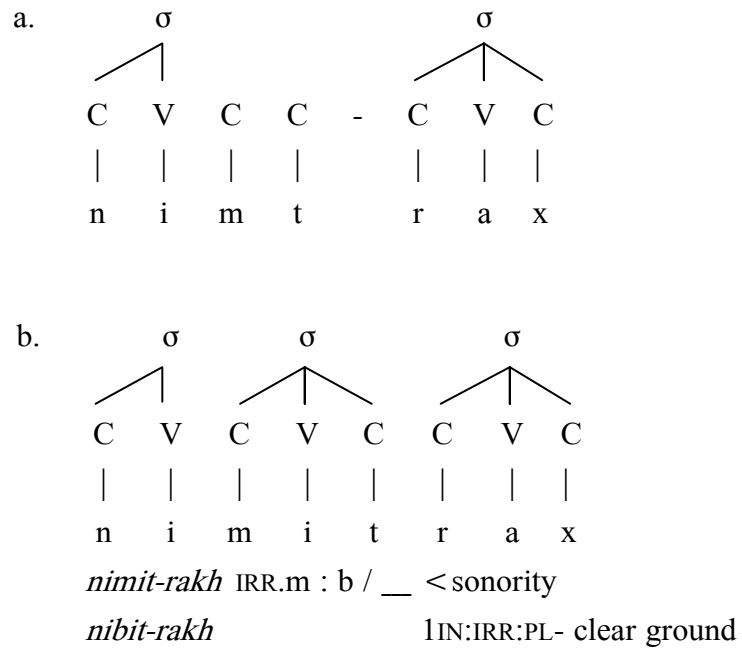
(6.14) CV stem: singular irrealis prefix



(6.15) CV stem: non-singular realis prefix

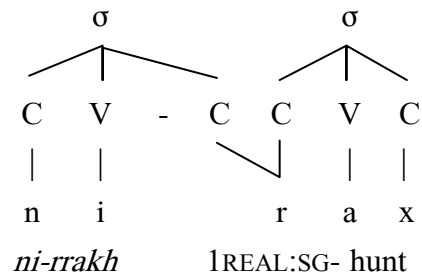


(6.16) CV stem: non-singular irrealis prefix

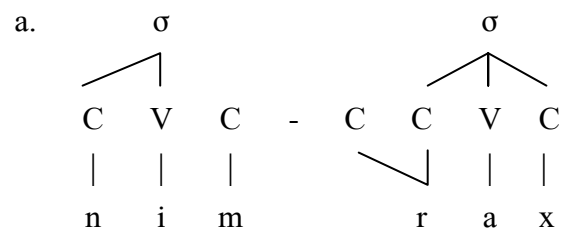


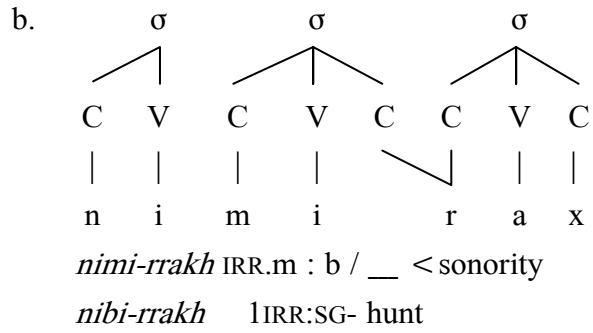
The verb *rakh* ‘hunt (in fresh water)’, with an initial geminate sequence, inflects and syllabifies differently from *rakh* ‘clear ground’ with an initial singleton consonant.

(6.17) CCV stem (geminate): singular realis prefix

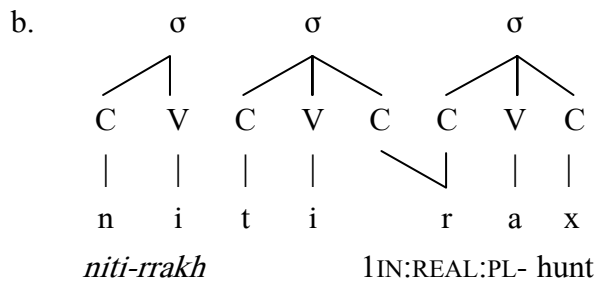
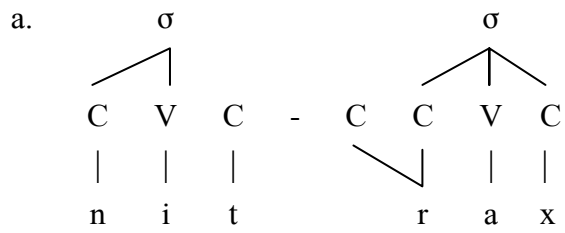


(6.18) CCV stem (geminate): singular irrealis prefix

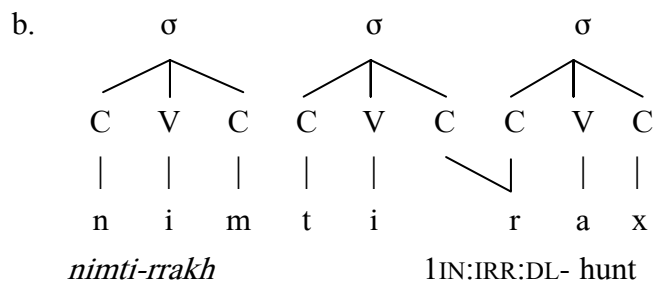
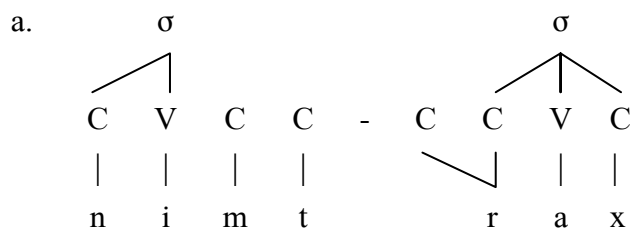




(6.19) CCV stem (geminate): non-singular realis prefix



(6.20) CCV stem (geminate): non-singular irrealis prefix



6.1.2. The impersonal subject/mood prefix

As well as the subject/mood prefixes presented above, there is an impersonal prefix which has separate realis and irrealis forms. The realis form is a homophone of the third person dual prefix, but the irrealis form is distinct. The impersonal construction is discussed in §9.5.

(6.21)	Impersonal prefix	
	Realis	<i>ar(i)</i>
	Irrealis	<i>am ~ ab(i)</i>

Allomorphs of the impersonal subject/mood prefix form according to the syllabification process outlined in §6.1.1.

6.1.3. Representing the subject/mood prefix

In this work, the subject/mood prefix is presented in its surface realisation rather than in the underlying form. Each subject/mood prefix is glossed as a combination of person, mood and number marking, in that order, to reflect the sequence of underlying morphemes. The underlying Number (1) morpheme is only glossed when an inclusive/exclusive distinction is relevant. Thus, inflected verbs are glossed as follows:

(6.22)	<i>ni- yal</i>	1REAL:SG- fly
	<i>nib- yal</i>	1IRR:SG- fly
	<i>nibir- yal</i>	1IN:IRR:DL- fly

6.2. Predictable morphophonemic stem alternations

Verb stems beginning with the bilabial fricative alternate in form when they carry an irrealis mood morpheme of the form *m-*. The combination of irrealis *m-* and stem-initial *v-* /β/ produces an allomorph of the verb root beginning with the voiced bilabial trill [ᵐB]:

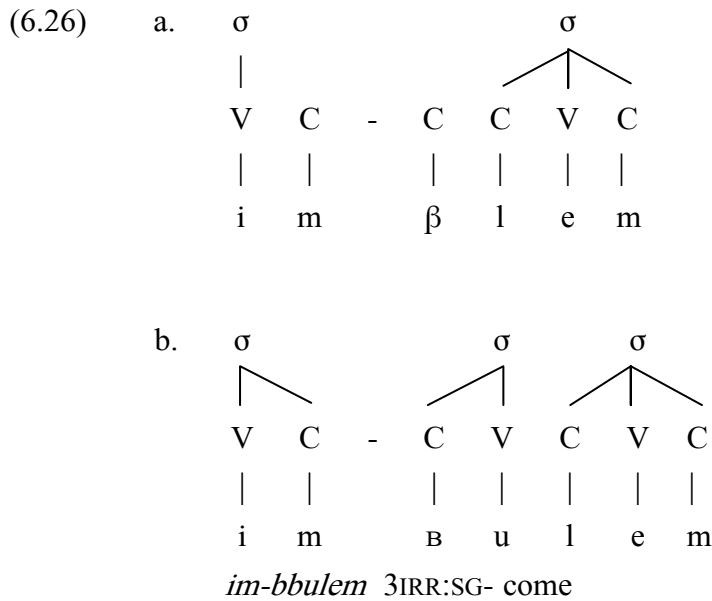
- (6.23) *i-vu* [iβu] 3REAL:SG- go
im-bbu [imBu] 3IRR:GO- go

In cases where the verb stem has the underlying structure /βV/, and /V/ is any vowel other than /u/, a natural process of labialization occurs in the transition from trill-to-vowel articulation.

- (6.24) *i-vavu* /iβaβu/ [iβaβu] 3REAL:SG- walk
im-bbuavu /imBaβu/ [imB^waβu] 3IRR:GO- walk

In cases where the verb stem has the underlying structure /βC/, and is inflected for irrealis mood, we would expect an epenthetic vowel to appear in the inflected verb, to separate outstanding CC sequences. Instead, an epenthetic vowel /u/ is inserted inside the verb stem, rather than in the prefix.

- (6.25)
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| σ | | σ |
| | - | |
| V | | C |
| | | |
| i | | β |
| | | |
| V | C | C |
| | | |
| e | l | m |
- i-~~v~~em* 3REAL:SG- come



The alternation between [βC] and [buC] occurs before consonant association, overriding the process of epenthesis and subsequent syllabification described in §6.1.1., that would produce the predicted but unacceptable form [*i^mbiβlem].

6.2.1 Allomorphy in the irregular verb *vu* ‘go’

The verb *vu* ‘go’ is irregular. The initial voiced bilabial fricative appears when the verb stem combines with vowel-final singular realis subject/mood prefixes. It becomes the voiced bilabial trill when combined with irrealis mood allomorph *m-*, as illustrated in (6.23) above. Elsewhere, the phonological units in the verb stem undergo metathesis, with the /βu/ sequence becoming /uβ/. Thus, the verb takes the surface form *uv* in a particular set of environments. The stem ‘go’ is the only verb in the corpus to alternate in this way.

The allomorphs and conditioning environments for *vu* ‘to go’ can be expressed as follows:

<i>vu</i> → <i>vu</i> / V-__ → <i>bbu</i> / IRR. <i>m</i> -__ → <i>uv</i> / other consonants __

		First person	Second person		Third person
Singular	Realis	[ni- βu]		[ku- βu]	[i- βu]
	Irrealis	[nim- βu]		[kum- βu]	[im- βu]
		Inclusive	Exclusive		
Dual	Realis	[nir- uφ]	[nar- uφ]	[kar- uφ]	[ar- uφ]
	Irrealis	[nibr- uφ]	[nabr- uφ]	[kabr- uφ]	[abr- uφ]
Plural	Realis	[nit- uφ]	[nat- uφ]	[kat- uφ]	[at- uφ]
	Irrealis	[nimt- uφ]	[namt- uφ]	[kamt- uφ]	[amt- uφ]

Table 6.5. Phonetic realisations of the inflected verb *vu* ‘go’

6.3. Verb classes

Having described the subject/mood prefix in some detail, we now consider verb classes in Neverver. In classifying verbs, the most important characteristic is their inherent valency. Evans (2003) in her study on valency in Proto Oceanic observes that:

The valency of clauses and their predicates is usually defined in terms of the number of core arguments required within the clause. Thus, intransitive predicates and clauses have a single core argument and transitive predicates and clauses have two core arguments. (Evans 2003:11)

Evans (2003:12) goes on to comment that ‘the majority of verbs in most Oceanic languages are unmarked when used intransitively and marked by a valency-changing device and/or object marker when used transitively’. Neverver

differs somewhat from this general pattern in that verb stems can be described as being either inherently intransitive (having a single core argument) or inherently transitive (having two core arguments). In a small number of cases, we find distinct lexical items encoding transitive and intransitive versions of the same event. The examples in (6.27) below display a contrast in the initial consonant, with the intransitive form taking a geminate /k/ while the transitive form takes the velar fricative /ɣ/.²⁶

(6.27)	Intransitive	Transitive	
	<i>kkan</i>	<i>khan</i>	‘eat s.t.’
	<i>kkil</i>	<i>khil</i>	‘dig s.t.’

Also in a small number of cases, the same stem can be used as both transitive and intransitive without additional morphology. These ambi-transitive verbs are able to take either one or two arguments. The verbs *min* ‘drink’ and *gris* ‘splash’ have the same argument serving as the subject whether intransitive or transitive. The verb *khalkhal* means ‘be closed’ when intransitive and ‘close s.t.’ when transitive.

Generally, a verb denoting a state, event, or action inherently belongs to either the transitive or intransitive verb class. A verb’s inherent valency can be changed by morphological processes which apply to increase or decrease the number of core arguments that a verb has. More rarely, the same processes can alter the semantic roles of core arguments, with or without changing valency.

²⁶ Historically, the geminate /k/ might have arisen through reduplication of an earlier k-initial verb stem, as in Proto Oceanic **kani-* ‘eat s.t.’ (Ross 1998:25). An analysis of reduplication in this context fits with the more general analysis of reduplication as marking low or reduced transitivity in Neverver (see chapter eight).

In presenting the details of verb classes, a descriptive framework is employed that makes use of Andrews's (2007) notion of a 'primary transitive verb' and Van Valin's (2001) distinctions between verb-specific semantic roles, thematic relations, and semantic macro-roles. A primary or prototypical transitive verb has two core arguments, one of which has the semantic role of agent, and the other of which has the semantic role of patient (Andrews 2007). Agent arguments of primary transitive verbs have the grammatical function A and are coded distinctly from patient arguments which have the grammatical function P. There is also the single core argument of an intransitive verb with the grammatical function S (Andrews 2007). In Neverver, A and S are associated with the grammatical relation of subject, while P is associated with the grammatical relation of object. The coding properties of the three grammatical functions are explored in chapter nine.

Not all transitive verbs are prototypical or primary. In Neverver for example, the transitive verb *khitrokh* 'see' has an argument with the grammatical function A but it does not have the semantic role of agent. It also has an argument with the grammatical function P but this argument does not have a patient semantic role. Van Valin (2001) makes a distinction between verb-specific semantic roles, more general thematic relations (which are simply referred to as 'semantic roles' in this work), and semantic macroroles. The A argument of 'see' (the 'see-er') has the semantic role of experiencer, while the P argument (the entity 'seen') has the semantic role of stimulus. Because A arguments are only prototypically agents, and P arguments are only prototypically patients, Van Valin's (2001:31) semantic macroroles 'actor' and 'undergoer' are useful to

characterise the sets of arguments associated with A and P respectively.²⁷ The single S argument of an intransitive verb may display one of a range of semantic relations. When considering sub-classes of verbs, and the effects of valency change, the semantic roles of obligatory arguments are important.

6.3.1. Inherently transitive stems

In Neverver, inherently transitive verbs have two obligatory arguments with the grammatical functions A and P. The arguments of prototypical transitive verbs play the semantic roles of agent/actor and patient/undergoer. The argument structure of most prototypical transitive verbs can change. The applicative suffix *-ikh* ‘APPL’ adds a third argument. The applicative suffix in Neverver is likely to derive from Proto Oceanic **akin[i]*, which is described by Evans (2003: 235) as having ‘a participant role marking function, denoting different types of participants with different classes of verbs’. The third argument that is added to an inherently transitive stem is almost exclusively instrumental but in some cases, an associative or benefactive argument may be added. When the applicative suffix is attached to the verb stem, the basic meaning of the verb stem does not undergo significant change.

Examples in (6.28) illustrate prototypical transitive verbs and display their related ditransitive forms with an additional instrumental argument. (The order of arguments is considered in chapter nine.)

²⁷ A list of the semantic roles employed in this description is presented in Appendix V. Many of the roles used follow Van Valin’s (2001:31) thematic relations (Andrews’s semantic roles). A few additional semantic roles have been added to describe other participants. The additional terms largely follow Givón (2001a:chapter three).

(6.28)	[A, P]	[A, P, Instrument]
	<i>ppon</i> ‘cover s.t.’	<i>ppon-ikh</i> ‘cover s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>rebreb</i> ‘make s.t. level/ smooth’	<i>rebreb-ikh</i> ‘make s.t. level/ smooth with s.t.’
	<i>khil</i> ‘dig s.t.’	<i>khil-ikh</i> ‘dig s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>khros</i> ‘butcher s.t.’	<i>khros-ikh</i> ‘butcher s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>yel</i> ‘shell out s.t.’	<i>yel-ikh</i> ‘shell out s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>yes</i> ‘scoop up (liquid)’	<i>yes-ikh</i> ‘scoop up (liquid) with s.t.’

When verb stems end with a vowel, an epenthetic [k] is typically inserted between the verb-final vowel and the suffix vowel.

(6.29)	[A,P]	[A, P, Instrument]
	<i>ga</i> ‘tie s.t.’	<i>ga-k-ikh</i> ‘tie s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>te</i> ‘hit/cut s.t.’	<i>te-k-ikh</i> ‘hit/cut s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>ve</i> ‘make s.t.’	<i>ve-k-ikh</i> ‘make s.t. with s.t.’

Some transitive stems in the corpus display the same morphological properties as prototypical transitive verbs, but are somewhat less prototypical in their semantics. *Sisir* ‘discuss s.t.’ has a theme P rather than a patient, and takes an additional experiencer argument when suffixed.

(6.30)	[A,P]	[A, P, Experiencer]
	<i>sisir</i> ‘discuss s.t.’	<i>sisir-ikh</i> ‘discuss s.t. with s.o.’

The verb *ver* ‘say’, another less proto-typical transitive verb, does not increase its valence when suffixed; rather, the semantic role of the P argument changes. *Ver* ‘say s.t.’ has a theme P when bare, and an experiencer P when suffixed. These two forms combine in a serial construction to express the meaning ‘say s.t. to s.o.’ (see chapter eleven).

(6.31)	[A,P(theme)]		[A, P(Experiencer)]
	<i>ver</i>	‘say s.t.’	<i>ver-ikh</i> ‘tell s.o.’

6.3.1.1. Non-prototypical transitive stems

Many transitive stems do not permit valency change. These transitive verbs are non-prototypical. One semantic sub-category includes verbs that have a non-prototypical experiencer/actor (rather than an agent). The verb stems have in common an initial *ro-* sequence; however, this sequence is not attested independently and it cannot productively attach to stems. The verbs in this subclass are all complement-taking predicates (see chapter twelve), though some permit nominal as well as sentential objects.

(6.32)	<i>rokamsukh</i>	‘believe s.t.’
	<i>*rokamsukh-ikh</i>	
	<i>rongrong</i>	‘want s.t. (generally)’
	<i>*rongrong-ikh; *rong</i>	
	<i>rongrokh</i>	‘want to possess s.t.’
	<i>*rongrokh-ikh</i>	
	<i>rosikh</i>	‘not want s.t.’

**rosikh-ikh*

rot ‘feel/hear s.t.’

**rot-ikh*

A small number of other verb stems are also not attested with suffixed counterparts. Attempts to elicit suffixed forms have not met with success.

(6.33) *didi* ‘dip s.t. (of laplap in coconut milk)’

**didi-kh*

lav ‘take/get s.t.’

**lav-ikh*

rus ‘open s.t.; to put on/wear s.t.’

**rus-ikh*

ssir ‘light (of fire, from an existing flame)’

**ssir-ikh*

Other non-prototypical transitive stems have fused suffixes. The suffix has been reanalyzed as a part of the verb stem and now is inseparable from it. Where phonologically-related bare forms occur, there is no obvious relationship between the meaning of the suffixed verb and the meaning of the plain stem.

(6.34) *bel* ‘chase s.t.’

belikh ‘weave (of bamboo)’

yer ‘sing s.t.’

yerikh ‘foster (a child)’

<i>kkon</i>	‘taste bad’
<i>kkonikh</i>	‘burn s.t. up’
<i>kkar</i>	‘be abundant’
<i>kkarikh</i>	‘dig lateral hole (for yam)’
<i>*sol</i>	
<i>solikh</i>	‘hide s.t.’

6.3.1.2. Detransitive morphology

Transitive verb stems can be detransitivised through reduplication of the verb stem. Detransitivisation results in the loss of the P argument. We can distinguish between unspecified object deletion, and inherent object constructions. In unspecified object deletion, the semantic content of the suppressed P argument is deemed irrelevant to the discourse and as such, overt expression of the suppressed argument is considered unnecessary.

In inherent object deletion, the suppressed P argument is specific and there is only one possible referent type. Overt expression of the object argument is disallowed and considered unnecessary, with language consultants indicating that reduplication is sufficient to specify the referent in inherent object constructions.

Because transitive stems can also carry the applicative suffix, there are four logical possibilities for the forms of each verb, and four contrasting argument structures. The forms and argument structures are presented in Table 6.6. Some of the verb stems occur in all four forms in the corpus; most however, are only attested in two or three different forms.

	Valence	Prototypical Semantic (macro)roles
V (bare stem)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agent/actor • patient/undergoer
V-APPL (suffixed form)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agent/actor • patient/undergoer • instrument
DUP-V (reduplicated form)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agent/actor
[[DUP-V]-APPL] (reduplicated & suffixed)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agent/actor • instrument

Table 6.6. Logical forms of prototypical/primary transitive stems

- (6.35) *tuv* ‘cast (a round object) at s.t.’
tuv-ikh ‘cast (a specified round object) at s.t.’
tuvtuv ‘cast (round objects)’
tuvtuv-ikh ‘cast (specified round objects)’
- (6.36) *vus* ‘carry s.t.’
**vus-ikh*
vusvus ‘carry a load’
vusvus-ikh ‘squeeze coconut milk on s.t.’
- (6.37) *tn* ‘roast s.t.’
**tn-ikh*
titn ‘cook a meal’
titn-ikh ‘cook a meal for s.o.’
- (6.38) *vul* ‘buy s.t.’
vul-ikh ‘buy s.t. with s.t.’

- vulvul* 'go shopping'
- vulvul-ikh* '1. sell s.t.; 2. be a buyer (wholesaler) of s.t.'
- (6.39) *leb* 'carry s.t.'
- leb-ikh* 'carry s.t. in s.t.'
- lebleb* 'carry a load of garden produce'
- lebleb-ikh* 'carry a load of garden produce for s.o.'
- (6.40) *yel* 'shell out s.t., to scoop out the insides of something'
- *yel-ikh*
- yelyel* 'shell out coconuts (for copra production)'
- yelyel-ikh* 'shell out coconuts (for copra production) with s.t.'
- (6.41) *rakh* 'clear ground'
- rakh-ikh* 'clear ground with s.t.'
- rakhrakh* 'pull weeds'
- rakhrakh-ikh* 'pull weeds with s.t.'
- (6.42) *rukh* 'pick up s.t.'
- *ruk-ikh*
- rukhrukh* 'gather coconuts'
- rukhrukh-ikh* 'gather coconuts with s.t.'
- (6.43) *leb* 'give birth to s.o (an infant).'
- *leb-ikh*

lebleb ‘give birth to lots of babies, to give birth to a large
 litter’

**lebleb-ikh*

The ambi-transitive verb *min* ‘drink’ never occurs with the applicative suffix; however, it can be reduplicated. The result is an intransitive verb with a single agent/actor argument. The inherent object ‘kava, alcohol’ is implied.

- (6.44) *min* ‘drink (s.t.)’
 **min-ikh*
 minmin ‘drink kava, alcohol’
 **minmin-ikh*

6.3.2. Inherently intransitive stems

Intransitive verbs require a single argument. This argument has the grammatical function S. Like transitive stems, many intransitive stems can increase in valence with the addition of the applicative suffix *-ikh*. The suffix generally adds a core argument of lower agency than that of the subject argument. The new argument is typically not a patient/undergoer, but rather a theme, stimulus, or experiencer (refer to Appendix V for a complete list of the semantic roles discussed in this work).

The semantic role of the new argument is the main semantic distinction between transitive verbs derived from intransitive stems and prototypical transitive stems. By definition, the second argument of a prototypical transitive stem is a patient.

(6.45)	[S (Agent)]	[A (Agent), P (Theme, Stimulus)]
	<i>jadr</i> ‘pass’	<i>jadr-ikh</i> ‘pass s.o., to beat s.o.’
	<i>kke</i> ‘call out’	<i>kke-kh</i> ‘call s.o.; to name s.t.’
	<i>riv</i> ‘run away’	<i>riv-ikh</i> ‘run away from s.t.’
	<i>rrav</i> ‘laugh’	<i>rrav-ikh</i> ‘laugh at s.t.’
	<i>rrakh</i> ‘hunt (in fresh water)’	<i>rrakh-ikh</i> ‘hunt s.t. (in fresh water)’
	<i>ver</i> ‘work’	<i>ver-ikh</i> ‘work on s.t.’
(6.46)	[S (Experiencer)]	[A (Experiencer), P (Stimulus)]
	<i>jal</i> ‘be sick’	<i>jal-ikh</i> ‘be sick with/from s.t.’
	<i>lis</i> ‘be afraid’	<i>lis-ikh</i> ‘be afraid of s.t.’
	<i>mjakh</i> ‘have fever’	<i>mjakh-ikh</i> ‘have fever with/from s.t.’
	<i>sian</i> ‘be pregnant’	<i>sian-ikh</i> ‘be pregnant to s.o./with s.o.’
	<i>vang</i> ‘be fascinated’	<i>vang-ikh</i> ‘be fascinated with s.t.’
	<i>khab</i> ‘be full’	<i>khab-ikh</i> ‘be full of s.t.’

In some cases, when an intransitive verb increases in valency, the intransitive S argument becomes the P argument, and the new argument, an agent, functions as A.

(6.47)	[S (Theme, Experiencer, Patient)]	[A (Agent), P (Patient, Theme)]
	<i>sar</i> ‘hang’	<i>sar-ikh</i> ‘hang s.t.’
	<i>matmat</i> ‘be careful’	<i>matmat-ikh</i> ‘look after s.o.’
	<i>(suv)suv</i> ‘be finished’	<i>suvsvuv-ikh</i> ‘finish something’

A small set of intransitive verbs that encode human actions may undergo reduplication to become stative in meaning. Like other intransitive verbs, the reduplicated forms may also be suffixed to increase valency. When suffixation occurs, a regular change to the semantics of the verb stem, and the semantic roles of the obligatory participants can be observed:

- (6.48) *tur* ‘stand up’
 turtur ‘stand’
 tur-ikh ‘stand s.t. up’
 turtur-ikh ‘stand waiting for s.o.’
- (6.49) *vor* ‘sit down’
 vorvor ‘sit’
 vor-ikh ‘sit s.t. down’
 vorvor-ikh ‘sit waiting for s.o.’
- (6.50) *lukh* ‘stay/live (of humans)’
 lukhlukh ‘stay (of humans)’
 **lukh-ikh*
 lukhlukh-ikh ‘stay/be waiting for s.o.’

6.3.2.1. Bare intransitive stems

Certain intransitive verb stems are not permitted to take the applicative suffix *-ikh* in either a simplex or reduplicated form. The verbs in this category are predominantly stative, but some events and actions are also restricted to the bare form.

Stative intransitive stems have single undergoer-type arguments. The members of this subclass of intransitive verbs (exemplified in (6.51)) can occur independently, and can also serve as post-nominal modifiers, or as the second verb in a nuclear serial construction (see chapter ten). There is no morphological encoding of a contrast between stative and inchoative verb meanings in Neverver; however, in certain contexts, an inchoative interpretation can be made.

(6.51)	<i>(ber)ber</i>	‘be long, tall’
	<i>kkon</i>	‘taste bad’
	<i>lab</i>	‘be plentiful’
	<i>lablab</i>	‘be big, fat’
	<i>lele</i>	‘be small’
	<i>lolngo</i>	‘be open (of eyes)’
	<i>masik</i>	‘be tired’
	<i>mav</i>	‘be flat’
	<i>meser</i>	‘be torn’
	<i>met</i>	‘be dark; darken’
	<i>mial</i>	‘be red’
	<i>ngot</i>	‘be broken; to break’
	<i>ras</i>	‘be tough (of cooked root crops)’
	<i>salgar</i>	‘be glad’
	<i>si(k)ki</i>	‘be lost’
	<i>siasu</i>	‘be holy’
	<i>tis</i>	‘be sacred’

<i>tro</i>	‘be old’, ‘be ripe (of nuts)’
<i>vakhvakh</i>	‘be short; shorten’
<i>vlavul</i>	‘sparkle’
<i>vratn</i>	‘be true’ (adj. form <i>bratn</i>)

Among the category of stative verbs is evidence of an archaic stative prefix *m-*. Related prefixes appear in other Oceanic languages (cf. Evans 2003: 267-8). Pawley (1970:352) reconstructs **mA* as a stative prefix in Proto Samoic Outlier based on evidence from languages that exhibit stativising prefixes of the form *ma(a)- ~ mA-*. The prefix varies in productivity, being semi-productive in Bauan Fijian, and a fossilized relic in Maori (Pawley 1970). Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002:82) reconstruct an earlier prefix **ma-* in Proto Oceanic, which ‘formed neutral O-verbs from transitives’. Evans (2003: 268) observes that the Proto Oceanic prefix ‘is reflected in modern Oceanic languages in two ways: a) as a semi-productive valency-decreasing prefix; and b) as a fossilised prefix occurring as the initial segment of Undergoer subject verbs denoting properties.’ In Neverver, *m-* is not a productive detransitive affix as we do not find related unprefixated (transitive) verbs; however, it does appear with stems of stative-type meaning that describe the attributes of entities. Examples are presented in (6.52).

(6.52)	<i>m-be</i>	‘be senile’
	<i>m-da</i>	‘be wet’
	<i>m-ler</i>	‘be clear, transparent’
	<i>m-les</i>	‘be weak’

<i>m-limlan</i>	‘be clear, simple’
<i>m-ma</i>	‘be domesticated’
<i>m-mang</i>	‘be noisy’
<i>m-mas</i>	‘be dry’
<i>m-mav</i>	‘be heavy’
<i>m-mel</i>	‘be sour’
<i>m-mial</i>	‘be red; redden’
<i>m-rasal</i>	‘be easy’
<i>m-rekh</i>	‘be raw’

A number of stative stems that carry the prefix *m-* display reduplication.

These are presented in (6.53). In most cases the reduplication is fossilised, with no simplex form attested in the corpus. In a small number of cases, however, we can identify a related simplex form. The simplex forms show that the verbs can (or at least could) be separated from the stative prefix.

- (6.53) *m-rasras* ‘be light (ant. heavy)’; also *?rasras* ‘sing (of cicadas)’
- m-roro* ‘be withered’
- m-sirsir* ‘be frilled (of leaves, petals, dresses)’; also *?sir*
‘follow’
- m-turtur* ‘be spotted’; also *vakh-dur* ‘smear ashes on one’s face
(CAUSATIVE-spotted)’²⁸
- m-kherkher* ‘be difficult’ from *kher* ‘hard, difficult’

²⁸ The verb *vakh-dur* ‘smear ashes on one’s face’ displays a causative prefix *vakh* which is also found in *vakh-sus* ‘breastfeed’. This prefix, derived from POc **pa[ka]* (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:83), is no longer productive and the complement-taking predicate *ve* ‘make, do’ has replaced it as a means of expressing the causative (see §12.3.3).

<i>m-khiskhis</i>	‘be shattered, be sure’
<i>m-yevyev</i>	‘be soft’
<i>m-yolyol</i>	‘be baggy, loose’
<i>m-yovyov</i>	‘be plain’ from <i>yovyov</i> ‘white, light’

A small number of bare intransitive stems, listed in (6.54), encode events rather than states. Some license a non-human, inanimate argument, although the stem *don* ‘sink, drown’ may license either an inanimate or animate argument.

(6.54)	<i>dan</i>	‘set’
	<i>don</i>	‘sink, drown’
	<i>rus</i>	‘grow’
	<i>ssol</i>	‘flower (of coconuts)’
	<i>tar</i>	‘creak’
	<i>khab</i>	‘explode’

Some of the intransitive verbs encoding events license a human or animate argument. These action verbs, listed in (6.55), are either movement verbs, or encode physical actions that can only be undertaken by animate beings.

(6.55)	<i>das</i>	‘descend’
	<i>javi</i>	‘sneeze’
	<i>jov</i>	‘cough’
	<i>mlili</i>	‘turn back’
	<i>mul</i>	‘change, shed’

<i>rriv</i>	‘fart’
<i>sa(k)ka</i>	‘climb up (a tree, a stick)’
<i>sakh</i>	‘ascend (a hill)’
<i>susus</i>	‘suckle, nurse (of babies)’
<i>vlem</i>	‘come’
<i>vu</i>	‘go’

One interesting intransitive stem is *bal* ‘be beaten’. This stem takes a patient/undergoer as its single argument. It can increase in valency with the applicative suffix, adding an instrument argument. The verb *bal* can be described as a lexical passive (cf. Payne 1997:204) because of its basic intransitivity and single patient/undergoer argument. The argument structure of the verb cannot involve an agent, even though an agent is implied. In the examples below, the transitive stem *te* ‘hit, cut’ contrasts with the intransitive verb *bal* ‘be beaten’.

(6.56) *Ku-rot* *nim-te* *okh?*
 2REAL:SG-want 1IRR:SG-hit 2SG
 ‘Do you want me to hit you?’ [NVE017.03]

(6.57) *I-okh* *ku-rot* *kum-bal* *ing?*
 PERS.PFX-2SG 2REAL:SG-want 2IRR:SG-be.beaten EXCL
 ‘Do you want to be beaten?’ [NVE017.01]

(6.58) *Ar-bal-ikh* *naglat*
 3REAL:DL-be.beaten-APPL devil.nettle
 ‘They were beaten with nettles.’ [NVKI03.38]

In (6.56), the verb *te* ‘hit’ encoded a prototypical two-argument proposition, with an agent/actor and a patient/undergoer. Examples (6.57 – 58) have no overt agent/actor. Instead, the patient occupies the single argument position in (6.57) and in (6.58) when the applicative suffix is attached, the second argument is instrumental.

Table 6.7. displays a summary of the main sub-categories of intransitive stems in Neverver, and valency change or rearrangement that may occur.

	Valence	Prototypical semantic (macro)roles	
V (bare stem)	1	• Agent/Actor	• Undergoer
V-APPL (suffixed form)	2	• Agent/Actor • Theme/Stimulus/ Experiencer	• Agent/Actor • Theme/Experiencer/ Patient/Instrument
DUP-V (reduplicated form)	1		• Undergoer
m-(DUP)-V (stative form)	1		• Undergoer

Table 6.7. Summary of intransitive stems

6.4. Homonymy

An noteworthy characteristic of the class of verbs in Neverver is homonymy. Multiple and apparently unrelated meanings can be associated with a single phonological sequence. Additionally, as illustrated in the examples above, forms that are candidates for analysis as reduplication may actually bear no identifiable semantic relationship to any simplex verb stem in the contemporary corpus. This is particularly the case with CV(C) stems, which are subject to full reduplication. Further examples of homonymy, along with apparent reduplications are illustrated in (6.59) to (6.62) below.

(6.59) Meanings associated with the phonological sequence /rus/

- rus* 'grow strongly, produce new growth'
- rus* 'open (of doors, windows) TRANSITIVE'
- rus* 'wear (of clothing)'

(6.60) Meanings associated with the phonological sequence /ras/

- ras* 1. 'be overripe (of root crops)', 2. 'be tough (despite being cooked for a long time, of root crops)'
- ras* 'scoop up (with hands)'
- ras* 'be weak, tired (of eyes)'
- rasras* 'become dark'

(6.61) Meanings associated with the phonological sequence /gar/

- gar* 'scale (a fish)'
- gar* 1. 'swim', 2. 'paddle'

gargar 'clean (a laplap grater)'

gargar-ikh 'covet'

(6.62) Meanings associated with the phonological sequence /bar/

bar 'be blind'

bar 'slap'

barbar 'cheat on s.o.'

Chapter Seven

Mood and the expression of temporal and aspectual meanings

Clauses can be said to express temporal, modal and aspectual meaning. Of these three categories, only mood is obligatory in Neverver, and one of the two mood markers is realised as zero. It is therefore possible for a clause to have no overt encoding of tense, mood, or aspect. Alternatively, each meaning type may be overtly encoded. In this grammatical description, the clause is analysed as having a layered structure, following Foley and Van Valin (1984), Foley and Olsen (1985), and Van Valin (1993; 2001). In the layered clause structure, there is a nucleus, a core, and a periphery. The nucleus of the clause contains the predicate; the core of the clause contains the predicate and its core arguments; and the periphery contains non-core arguments. Van Valin (2001) models the layered structure of the clause as follows:

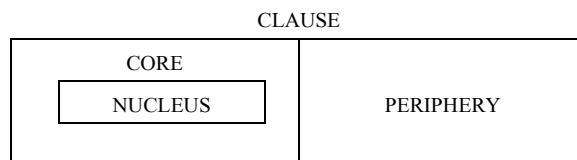


Figure 7.1. Layered structure of the clause (Van Valin 2001:206 Figure 6.34)

In Neverver, clausal elements follow a strict linear sequence:

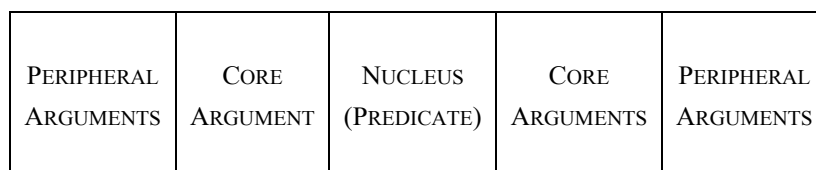


Figure 7.2. Ordering of the clausal elements in Neverver

With respect to the expression of temporal, modal and aspectual meanings in Neverver, we find that there is some separation between the different grammatical categories. Temporal meanings are largely restricted to temporal nouns or temporal subordinate clauses which are encoded in the periphery of the clause, although there is also a post-verbal tense/aspect position. The realis/irrealis contrast is realised through the subject/mood prefix attached to the left hand of the nucleus²⁹. Aspectual meanings cluster around the verb, with the reduplicative affix (which can express aspect) preceding the verb, and aspectual serial verbs following the main verb. Other aspectual meanings are encoded in post-verbal markers.

The location of temporal, aspectual and modal meanings in Neverver can be summarised as follows:

²⁹ In some analyses (cf. Bresnan and Mchombo 1987; Thieberger 2004), pronominal affixes encoding information about core arguments in the nucleus are treated as instantiations of the core arguments themselves. For example, in Thieberger's analysis of South Efate (2004:267), the subject argument is obligatorily encoded as a proclitic while the object argument may be encoded either as an object suffix or as a lexical object. In the case of the subject, the obligatory proclitic is treated as a core argument and any independent nominal is analysed as co-indexing this argument. In the case of the object, the object suffix or the independent nominal (whichever appears) is treated as a core argument. In Neverver, only subject arguments are encoded as verbal affixes; object arguments are encoded as independent nominals, independent pronouns or zero. The lack of object affixes suggests that there is less of a case for the affix-as-core analysis in Neverver than in the other languages where this analysis is proposed.

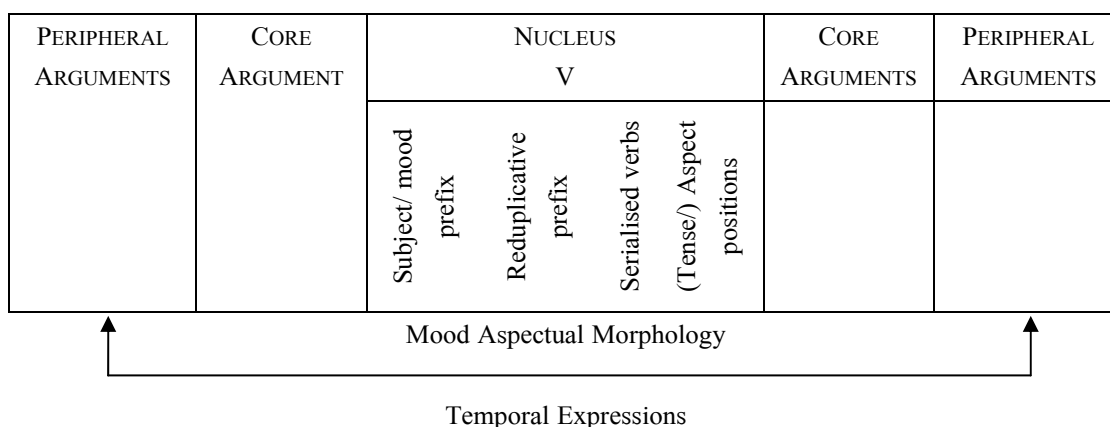


Figure 7.3. The distribution of temporal, aspectual and modal meanings in the clause

In the following sections, a detailed discussion of mood is presented in §7.1.; (tense)/aspect marking is described in §7.2. Aspectual morphology is described by structural position, covering external tense/aspect markers in §7.2.1., intermediate markers of quantificational aspect in §7.2.2., and internal aspectual markers in §7.2.3. In §7.2.4. phasal aspect is described. Within each structural position, individual (tense)/aspect markers are presented by function.

7.1. Mood

While most temporal meanings are encoded in lexical items in Neverver, mood is highly grammaticalised. Following Bhat (1999), Neverver can be described as a Mood-Prominent language, with mood marking grammaticalised in a pre-verbal morpheme obligatorily attached to each independent verb stem. The parameter that speakers use to establish mood marking in Neverver appears to be that of ‘the actuality of an event’ (Bhat 1999:63). This parameter involves an epistemic or knowledge-based judgement made by the speaker about the event that is being encoded (cf. Bhat 1999; Givón 2001a). In Neverver, judgements about event actuality are grammaticalised in the binary distinction

between REALIS and IRREALIS mood. Realis mood is marked by zero, while irrealis mood is overtly encoded.

- (7.1) Realis mood \emptyset -
 Irrealis mood *m*- [m-, ^mb-] (see §6.1.1.)

In the assignment of mood, a speaker judges a situation to have (or have not) taken place by a particular moment in time. The term ‘situation’ is used to include states, events and actions (cf. Comrie 1985:5). The speaker’s judgement is made in relation to a reference time [RT]. Givón (2001a) describes the default reference time as the time of speech [ST], but notes that the reference time may be either prior to or following the time of speech. For example, the point that events in a narrative have reached may serve as the assigned temporal centre. Realis mood is strongly associated with events that are judged to have (or not have) taken place prior to or at the reference time. Irrealis mood is strongly associated with events that are judged likely (or unlikely) to follow the reference time. We can summarise the relationship between clauses marked for realis or irrealis mood and reference time as follows:

Realis Mood	Situations prior to reference time (+ ve and –ve)	Irrealis Mood	Situations following reference time (+ ve and –ve)
	Situations concurrent with reference time (+ ve)		
	Habitual situations with no specified reference time (+ ve and –ve)		

Table 7.1. Mood marking and reference time

With the exception of habitual situations, which do not have a specified temporal location, realis mood is associated with time up to and including the ST. Realis mood cannot be used for situations that follow the ST, even if the RT is past. In contrast, irrealis mood can encode hypothetical situations either preceding or following the ST, provided these situations follow the RT. The temporal distribution of realis and irrealis mood is displayed in Figure 7.4.

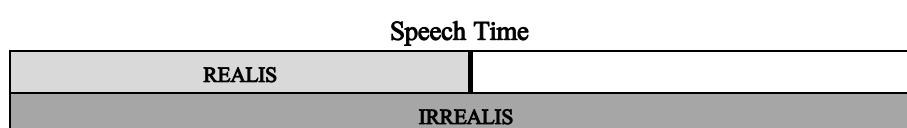


Figure 7.4. Temporal distribution of realis and irrealis mood marking

Realis mood then is strongly associated with relative past time reference while irrealis mood is strongly associated with relative non-past time reference. We find realis mood in habitual constructions and irrealis mood in imperatives. Elsewhere in this work, mood marking is identified as central in the formation of multi-verb constructions, including serial verb constructions (chapters ten and eleven), sentential complements (chapter twelve), and the expression of inter-propositional semantic relations (chapter thirteen).

7.1.1. Basic functions of realis mood

7.1.1.1. Events which happened (or did not happen) prior to the reference time

Events prior to the reference time are always coded with realis mood. They may be marked lexically for absolute past time (7.2), or have relative past time reference because they are associated with a previously introduced past time frame. Example (7.3) displays a negative construction with relative past time reference from a narrative text.

(7.2) RT = ST

Julie, abbast nat-uv Tavali Aut

Julie yesterday 1EX:REAL:PL-go Tavali Aut

‘Julie, yesterday we went to Tavali Aut.’ [NVCV01.1: 373.423]

(7.3) RT ≠ ST (RT is prior to ST)

Be at-te bburvur si.

but 3REAL:PL- hit completely NEG

‘But they hadn't killed him.’ [NVCT4.9:45.429]

7.1.1.2. Events which are happening at the reference time

In the case of events happening at the reference time, realis mood combines with progressive aspect, signalled by the serialised verb *tokh* which can also be used as an existential/locational verb.

(7.4) *Nida adr-ikh mama ar-tokh ar-khil*

mother 3NSG-APPL father 3REAL:DL-PROG 3REAL:DL-dig.up

nidam

yam

‘Mother and father were digging yams.’ [NVKS12.10: 56.397]

(7.5) *Ei i-tokh i-kkan.*

3SG 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-eat

‘He is eating (now).’ [NVE1.18]

- (7.6) *Vinang i-tokh i-tev-tev*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-DUP-begin.to.grow
nivanbev.
 Chinese yam
 ‘The woman was cultivating Chinese yams.’ [NVKS02.12]

When a clause is marked for negative polarity, as in the negative response to a polar interrogative, the clause is typically not marked for progressive aspect. Language consultants did accept the combination of negative polarity and progressive aspect, but they did not produce such constructions themselves.

- (7.7) Translation equivalent produced by language consultants
Julie i-tokh i-kkan ing?
 Julie 3REAL:SG- PROG 3REAL:SG- eat EXCL
No, Julie i-kkan si, i-tokh
 no Julie 3REAL:SG- eat NEG 3REAL:SG- PROG
i-ver
 3REAL:SG- work
 ‘Is Julie eating now? No, she doesn’t eat, she is working.’
 [NVKW09.01]

- (7.8) Construction produced by linguist and accepted by language consultants
No, Julie i-tokh i-kkan si,
 no Julie 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-eat NEG

i-tokh *i-ver*
 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-work
 ‘No, Julie isn't eating; she's working.’ [NVKW09.02]

7.1.1.3. States that existed (or did not exist) prior to or at the reference time

(7.9) RT is point that narrative has reached, prior to ST

Nidam ang ar-lele we ar-lele
 yam ANA 3REAL:DL-small AUGCO 3REAL:DL-small
 ‘The two yams were really small.’ [NVKS15.37]

(7.10) RT is prior to ST

Tue nimjal i-tokh si
 before meat 3REAL:SG-exist NEG
 ‘Before there was no meat.’ [NVKS2.171]

(7.11) RT is character’s ST

Na ni-maur man(d) ing.
 1SG 1REAL:SG-live EMPH EXCL
 ‘I'm alive!’ [NVKS15.69]

7.1.1.4. Habitual events, such as those described in familiar processes

Habitual events are encoded in the same way as events with non-future time reference. There is no distinct habitual morphology, although when an habitual process is being described, the description generally begins with a statement such as ‘Whenever I want to make a garden...’ or ‘Whenever I decide to build a

house...’. Such statements are devoid of a specific past or future time reference.

The examples below come from gardening and house-making descriptions.

- (7.12) *Las turien nat-rev me noron nani*
occasion:INDEF some 1EX:REAL:PL-pull just leaf coconut
nati-rrik i-vu lon nokhos ang
1EX:REAL:PL-throw 3REAL:SG-go LOC garden ANA
‘Sometimes we just pull coconut fronds and throw them on the
garden.’ [NVDL07.7]

- (7.13) *Ni-te neppar, ni-vos tata*
1REAL:SG-cut crossbeams 1REAL:SG-place.on.top tight
ar nibalbal ang edr
LOC.on house.post ANA PL
‘I cut the crossbeams and place them firmly on the house posts.’
[NVDL06.7]

Actions which are habitually NOT carried out are marked in the same way,
with realis mood.

- (7.14) *Ni-jik si adr i-bitev an*
1REAL:SG-put NEG 3NSG 3REAL:SG-accompany DEMSPN

an *ni-lav-lu* *il* *nim-khavukh* *adr*
 NMOD 1REAL:SG-get-COMPL PURPOSE 1IRR:SG-plant 3NSG
 ‘I don't put them with the ones that I take out in order to plant.’
 [NVDL08.8]

In example (7.14), irrealis mood marking on the verb *khavukh* ‘plant’ is triggered by the purpose subordinator *il*.

7.1.1.5. Prohibitive constructions

While irrealis mood may be used to express prohibition (see also §7.1.2.3.; §9.5.1.), prohibitive constructions are frequently expressed using the impersonal subject marker in the realis mood. The impersonal subject marker is accompanied by reduplication of the verb stem and the negative particle.

(7.15) *No, ar-ver-ver* *si.*
 no IMPS:REAL-DUP-say NEG
 ‘No, don't say that!’ (lit. ‘One doesn’t say that.’) [NVCV05.9:
 1327.521]

7.1.2. Functions of irrealis mood

7.1.2.1. Events which are unrealised at the reference time

Irrealis mood most generally encodes events which are unrealised at the reference time but which may (or may not) be realised following the reference time. Such events may be imminent.

(7.16) *Barnakh nim-gav nokhos t-na*
 now 1IRR:SG-rake garden PSDT-1SG
 ‘Now I’m going to rake my garden.’ [NVKS16.8: 43.437]

(7.17) *Na nim-bbu nim-das lon nokhos,*
 1SG 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go.down LOC garden
nibi-llang ni-kkan-ian lon nokhos.
 1IRR:SG-look.for.s.t. 1REAL:SG-eat-NSF LOC garden
 ‘I’ll go down to the garden and I’ll look for food in the garden.’
 [NVKS20.11:55.822]

They may also be predicted to happen in the more distant future.

(7.18) *Ei im-bbulem lon nidam an im-bbulem ang*
 3SG 3IRR:SG-come LOC year NMOD 3IRR:SG-come ANA
 ‘He will come next year.’ [NVE02.10]

Events which are predicted NOT to happen in the future are also marked for irrealis mood.

(7.19) *Ave! na nida t-na im-bbulem si aiyem*
 No! 1SG mother PSDT-1SG 3IRR:SG-come NEG home
 ‘No, my mother won’t come home.’ [NVKS01.17]

When a past time frame has been established, events encoded with irrealis mood have a future-in-the-past interpretation. In connected text, future-in-the-

past events are commonly followed by a proposition marked for realis mood encoding the actual realisation of the event.

- (7.20) *Nim-tuv nibit-vor bbukhut mil nit-uv*
 1IN:IRR:PL-go 1IN:IRR:PL-sit inside again 1IN:REAL:PL-go
nit-vor
 1IN:REAL:PL-sit
 ‘We were going to go and sit inside again; we went and sat (down).’
 [NVKI28.38-39:133.069-135.035]

7.1.2.2. Imperative constructions

There is no distinct imperative morphology in Neverver. Imperative constructions are simply marked for the second person (singular, dual or plural) and irrealis mood (cf. the impersonal prefix used for prohibition above).

- (7.21) *Okh kum-khan be kum-khankhan bbutakh si*
 2SG 2IRR:SG-eat but 2IRR:SG-DUP-eat too.much NEG
 ‘Eat but don't eat too much!’ [NVKS4.12: 82.022]

- (7.22) *Kabri-tn nibet t-gam lon*
 2IRR:DL-roast breadfruit PSDT-2NSG LOC
 ‘Roast your breadfruit on it!’ [NVKS7.17: 114.002]

Like the general imperative construction, instructional texts that teach sequences of actions are encoded with irrealis mood. This pattern has been observed in a number of ‘how to’ texts about processes such as laplap-making

and kava-making. When these texts were recorded, I was the audience. As a non-community member, it was assumed that I did not have any experience of these processes and as such I was instructed in the irrealis mood. Instructional irrealis differs from the habitual realis described above which is used when speakers are simply describing a process without the intention of teaching (see §7.1.1.4 above).

(7.23) *Kum-jik nolong lon nakhabb*

2IRR:SG-put laplap LOC fire

‘Put the laplap on the fire.’ [NVDL11.10]

(7.24) *Kub-ras niblokhlokh ang im-bbu lon*

2IRR:SG-scoop.up Kava.plant ANA 3IRR:SG-go LOC

besen ang

bowl ANA

‘Scoop up the kava into the bowl.’ [NVE36.2]

7.1.2.3. Prohibitive constructions

Along with the impersonal prohibitive construction (§7.1.1.5.) which carries realis mood, it is possible for the prohibitive construction to be formed with irrealis mood. Typically, for prohibitives, we find the verb in a reduplicated form followed by the negative particle *si* (see also (7.21)).

(7.25) *Kum-se-sber si na*
 2IRR:SG-DUP-touch NEG 1SG
 ‘Don't touch me!’ [NVKS10.66]

7.1.2.4. Events marked by *suppakh* or *lile* ‘nearly, soon’

When an event is marked by *suppakh* or *lile* ‘nearly, soon’, irrealis mood is obligatory. Events with *suppakh* or *lile* are about to occur at the reference time and thus have relative future time reference. This pattern is also attested in Avava (Crowley 2006a:74).

(7.26) *Nial suppakh im-dan*
 sun nearly 3IRR:SG-set
 ‘The sun nearly set.’ [NVKS16.78: 336.137]

(7.27) *Ar-uv gaga-gaga ba suppakh*
 3REAL:DL-go DUP-on.and.on when nearly
me abir-sakh aut
 just 3IRR:DL-go.up ashore
 ‘They went on and on and on and when they were nearly going ashore...’ [NVKS4.39: 190.663]

7.2. The encoding of aspectual and temporal meanings

Mood marking interacts in specific ways with tense/aspect markers in Neverver. Tense/aspect markers typically appear in the nucleus of clauses, but some aspectual meanings are expressed at the level of the core.

We can distinguish three positions for the marking of tense/aspect that are associated with the nucleus of the clause. Any arguments encoded as grammatical objects follow these aspectual markers in the right-hand core position and the subject/mood marker precedes the reduplicative prefix. Firstly, there is an external post-verbal position where tense/aspect markers can appear. These tense/aspect markers exhibit either perfective or imperfective meanings, and encode the temporal contrasts of remote past, past and immediate. Secondly, there is an intermediate aspectual position closer to the verb stem. In this position, distributive aspect (event number) and the plurality of arguments (participant number) is encoded. Thirdly, there is a verb-internal position. Reduplicative affixes with aspectual functions can attach to the beginning of the verb stem, and serial verbs with aspectual functions can attach to the end of the verb in a nuclear layer juncture. The types of aspectual meanings expressed through nuclear layer juncture generally involve quantificational aspect as it pertains to a single temporal location. Plurality of arguments can also be expressed in this position.

In addition to the aspectual markers associated with the nucleus, a fourth position for aspectual marking is associated with the core. Verbs expressing phasal aspect appear in the core. Such aspectual verbs carry a subject/mood prefix. This is a point of contrast with aspectual markers in the nucleus. In the nucleus, only the main verb carries mood marking; serialised verbs, including those with aspectual functions, do not carry mood marking.

7.2.1. External tense/aspect markers

The external position for post-verbal tense/aspect marking accommodates a paradigm of five particles. The set of markers discussed in this section are described as external because they are the outer-most markers and the final elements of the nucleus. Any object arguments are encoded in the core position, following these markers.

A number of temporal and aspectual meanings combine in the definition of the external markers:

- Perfective versus imperfective: situation viewed as bounded whole versus situation viewed as unbounded with a focus on its internal temporal structure
 - Anteriority: situation occurs prior to RT
 - Absolute past: situation occurs prior to ST
 - Immediacy: situation immediately before/after RT
- (cf. especially Bhat 1999; but also Bybee 1985; Bybee, Perkins & Pagluica 1994; Comrie 1976; 1985; and Dahl 1985)

The external tense/aspect markers are also sensitive to mood. Some of the markers only occur with realis mood; others display contrasts in meaning when a situation is marked for either realis or irrealis mood. Further, the external tense/aspect markers tend to be associated with non-narrative rather than narrative events.

7.2.1.1. Anterior *ij*

Realis verb forms can be marked for anteriority with *ij* to emphasise the speaker's assertion that a situation has occurred prior to the RT.³⁰ Example (7.28) illustrates a clause marked for *ij* encoding a non-narrative event. In this case, *ij* is associated with counter-sequentiality as the death of the woman by fire precedes the discovery of her body by her daughter. In example (7.29), from a conversational text, one speaker tells another how earlier she saw the two participants under discussion pass by with their bags, in preparation for a crabbing excursion.

(7.28) *I-khit nida titi nakhabb i-khan ij*
 3REAL:SG-see mother 3PS:SG fire 3REAL:SG-eat ANT
 'She saw her mother, fire had consumed her.' [NVKS01.51]

(7.29) *O! Ar ar-das ij tang,*
 Oh 3NSG 3REAL:DL-go.down ANT there

³⁰ Crowley (2006a:101) identifies items in Avava which are cognate with Tense/Aspect forms in Neverver. He labels *iih/iis* and *meh* (see *mej* 'Immediate' in §7.3.1.3 below) 'perfective', and glosses the example sentences in the English perfect. On two occasions, he includes 'already' in the translations, which suggests the completion of an event prior to the reference time. All of the Avava examples display the 'perfective' morphemes with verbs marked for realis mood; it is not clear whether these perfective morphemes are disallowed with irrealis mood, or simply unattested in Crowley's corpus. Crowley (2006b:128-129) also identifies an item in Naman which is cognate with the Neverver anterior marker. This is the post-verbal marker /əns/ which Crowley labels 'completive'. In Naman, this form may appear with verbs marked for either realis or irrealis mood, and the English perfect is used to translate most constructions. In Avava and Naman, Crowley notes that the perfective or completive forms are also attested as modifiers of non-verbal items such as noun phrases. When these morphemes appear in non-verbal constructions, they are glossed as 'already'.

ar-lem *ij* *bak* *ar-das* *tang*
 3REAL:DL-carry ANT bag 3REAL:DL-go.down there

‘Oh! They’ve gone down there already, they’ve got their bags and gone down there.’ [NVCV02.67: 428.869]

7.2.1.2. Remote anterior *ma ij*

The morpheme *ma* can be attached to *ij* to add the meaning of remoteness to the anterior marker. The construction is rather rare in the corpus and serves to encode an event as taking place a significant length of time prior to the reference time. The sequence *ma ij* is inseparable, but there is no indication of a phonological fusing as *ma ij* is pronounced as two syllables. *Ma* is not attested independently in the corpus. Again, it is non-narrative events that are marked for the remote anterior.

(7.30) Remote anterior: temporal function

Vin-ang *i-ver* *te* ‘*Ni-ver-ikh* *ma*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-say COMP 1REAL:sg-say-APPL RMT
ij *i-okh*’
 ANT PSNPR-2SG

‘The woman said ‘I told you ages ago’’ [NVKS02.71]

Remoteness cannot be quantified in terms of hours, days or other temporal spans in Neverver. The speaker’s assertion that an event was remote from the reference time is more important than the physical length of time that may have passed between the event and the reference time.

The remoteness marker can also serve a metaphorically related function. As well as marking an event as temporally distant, the remoteness marker can mark an event as being more ‘real’. This is a kind of emphatic function.

(7.31) Remote anterior: emphatic function

Nesal ang ni-khitrokh ma ij i-ta-ttaj
road ANA 1REAL:SG-see RMT ANT 3REAL:SG-DUP-bare
we i-ta-ttaj.
AUGCo 3REAL:SG-DUP-bare

‘The road, I actually saw it; it was completely bare.’ [NVCV09.17: 105.747]

(7.32) *Ga Seki i-salem ma ij buluk ang*
then Seki 3REAL:SG-sell RMT ANT cow ANA
i-gang.

3REAL:SG- like.so

‘Then Seki actually sold the cow like that (of a small but overpriced beast).’ [NVCV07.41]

7.2.1.3. Immediate aspect *mej* ‘just’

Immediate aspect can be associated with either realis or irrealis mood marking. The combination of immediate aspect and realis mood yields past time reference, with *mej* signalling that a situation is considered to be real (i.e. to have taken place) by the reference time. The focus is on the immediacy of the situation to the reference time. Unlike *ij* and *ma ij*, we find the combination of realis mood and *mej* associated with narrative events.

When marked for irrealis mood, *mej* signals that a situation is imminent and will immediately follow the reference time. Thus, the combination of immediate aspect and irrealis mood yields a non-past time reference. Again, the focus is on the immediacy of the situation to the reference time.

The form *mej* may represent a phonological fusing of the limiter *me* ‘just, only’ and the anterior morpheme *ij*. Sequences of *me mej* or *me ij* are disallowed.

In the example below, three narrative events are encoded. Each is marked for realis mood. The first is *vu* ‘go’, also marked for immediate aspect. It is followed by two unmarked narrative events *lav-lu* ‘get/take out’ and *leb* ‘carry’. These three events are presented in chronological order in the text.

- (7.33) *Baga mokhmokh-tro ang i-vu mej*
 then married.woman ANA 3REAL:SG-go IMM
 i-lav-lu i-leb
 3REAL:SG-get-COMPL 3REAL:SG-carry
 ‘After that, the old woman went right away and she got him out and carried him.’ [NVKS06.50]

The next two examples display a pair of constructions from a single text. In the first construction in (7.34), the action *yal* ‘fly’ is unmarked for aspect, and is simply marked for irrealis mood. The second construction (7.35), several clauses later in the text, is marked for immediate aspect, when the same action *yal* ‘fly’ is imminent.

(7.34) *Ga i-okh me i-na nib-yal, i-okh*
 and PSNPR-2SG just PSNPR-1SG 1IRR:SG-fly PSNPR-2SG
kum-bbu abi?
 2IRR:SG-go where
 ‘And as for you, I’ll fly but where will you go?’ [NVKS04.13:
 91.802]

(7.35) *Na nib-yal mej ing nim-bbu*
 1SG 1IRR:SG-fly IMM EXCL 1IRR:SG-go
 ‘I’m going to fly away right now!’ [NVKS04.17]

We also find text examples of situations encoded with *mej*, first marked for irrealis mood, signalling the imminence of the event, and then marked for realis mood, signalling that the event has just occurred.

(7.36) *Nib-lav mej vivin na ing. Ga i-lav mej.*
 1IRR:SG-get IMM sister 1SG EXCL and 3REAL:SG-get IMM
 ‘I’ll marry my sister right now!’ And he married her right then.’
 [NVKS09.83-84]

(7.37) *I-gam kam-tuv mej. Ale at-uv mej.*
 PSNPR-2NSG 2IRR:PL-go IMM so 3REAL:PL-go IMM
 ‘You go now.’ So they went right then.’ [NVKI12.22:23]

One interesting characteristic of the immediate aspect marker is its capacity to occur outside the external post-verbal position, when the speaker wishes to

signals increased immediacy of an action. *Mej* is attested at the end of a subject noun phrase as well as after temporal local nouns located in the left periphery. It can not follow an object noun phrase however.

- (7.38) *I-na mej nim-bbu, nim-bbu nim-bev*
 PSNPR-1SG IMM 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go to
Arakhalav
 Arakhalav
 ‘I’m off to Arakhalav.’ [NVKS02.48]

- (7.39) *Gam mej kamti-vlem kamt-uv kabit-lav nivri*
 2NSG IMM 2IRR:PL-come 2IRR:PL-go 2IRR:PL-get crab
 ‘You come right away and go get crabs.’ [NVCV02.83: 539.825]

- (7.40) *Khavut-tro mej i-vor blev niterikh-mokhmokh*
 husband-old IMM 3REAL:SG-sit with child-female
 ‘Right then, the man sat with the girl... (as they listen to a conch shell horn being blown to announce her bride price)’ [NVKI06.57]

- (7.41) *Abbung mej i-git nir-te noron*
 yesterday IMM PSNPR-1IN:NSG 1IN:REAL:DL-cut leaf
nani ang
 coconut ANA
 ‘It was just yesterday when we cut the coconut leaves.’
 [NVCV09.01: 22.460]

7.2.1.4. Discourse perfect *lu*

There is a separate marker of perfect aspect in Neverver. This is the post-verbal marker *lu*. *Lu* does not co-occur with any of the other external tense/aspect markers. We find it when a number of sequential events are being described with each event leading into the next. This morpheme functions to indicate that the completion of one event is relevant to the occurrence of the next, fitting with Comrie's (1976:52) broad definition of perfect aspect as indicating 'the continuing present relevance of a past situation'.

Lu is labelled a discourse perfect because it is typically attached not to a verb encoding a narrative event itself, but to the second encoding of the event. It signals the completion of the already-introduced event prior to the mention of the next significant narrative event in the sequence. The extract in (7.42) below comes from an instructional text about making laplap. In this text, and elsewhere also, the use of the discourse perfect is associated with the discourse pattern of tail-head linkage (see §13.4.).

- (7.42) *Ba kum-khil maniok, kum-bbulem kum-bbuavkhal,*
 when 2IRR:SG-dig.up manioc 2IRR:SG-come 2IRR:SG-grate
kum-bbuavkhal lu, ale, kum-tuv nakhabb,
 2IRR:SG-grate PERF then 2IRR:SG-light fire
kum-tuv lu nakhabb ale, kum-kho nani...
 2IRR:SG-light PERF fire then 2IRR:SG-scrape.out coconut
 'When you dig up the maniok, come and grate it; after grating, light
 the fire; after lighting the fire, scrape out the coconut...' [NVDL10.4]

The next example displays the perfect marker *lu* in a narrative sequence. The narrative event of the octopus baking the girl's mother is reported two clauses prior to the example construction displayed below.

- (7.43) *Nokhowit ang, ba i-yas lu nida*
 octopus ANA when 3REAL:SG-bake.on.fire PERF mother
titi niterikh-mokhmokh lele ang lon nolong ang,
 3PS:SG child-female small ANA LOC laplap ANA
i-das mil
 3REAL:SG-go.down again
 'The octopus, when it had baked the little girl's mother on the fire, it
 went down again...' [NVKS20.49.233: 444]

The third example, also from a narrative, displays the perfect marker *lu* signalling a future perfect meaning, with the irrealis marker attached to the verb *sil* 'burn'. The burning of tree trunks is one stage of the process of clearing ground for gardening. This stage has been mentioned at previous points in the story and the identification of a tree trunk implies that it must be burned.

- (7.44) *Barnakh nukhutn nakha i-skham me i-tokh*
 now base tree 3REAL:SG-one just 3REAL:SG-exist
man; nim-sil lu ga nim-bbulat
 EMPH 1IRR:SG-burn PERF then 1IRR:SG-go.to.pers
 'Now there is just one tree trunk! After burning it, I'll come to you.
 [NVKS24.17-18: 68.582-71.938]

7.2.1.5. Continuative aspect *deb(b)/mo*

The marker of continuative aspect stands in contrast to the series of markers described above all of which express perfectivity. The continuative marker encodes imperfective aspect as part of its meaning and is most commonly realised in the post-verbal marker *deb(b)*. It is variously pronounced with a final bilabial plosive or a final bilabial trill. When post-posed to a verb that encodes an event, it indicates that the event has not yet come to an end or that the agent keeps on doing it. It is not an iterative marker, as the focus is on the continuation of a single event over time rather than the repetition of an event.

- (7.45) *Be niterikh-mokhmokh ang i-vu deb*
 but child-female ANA 3REAL:SG-go CONT
lakha titi-r
 bush 3PS-PL
 ‘But the girl was still away in their bush.’ [NVKS18.117: 611.791]

- (7.46) *Khavut-tro, nollon i-sien deb niterikh titi*
 husband-old heart 3REAL:SG-think CONT child 3PS:SG
 ‘The old man, his heart still thought of his child.’ [NVKS12.41:
 295.554]

When post-posed to a verb that encodes a state, continuative aspect emphasises the duration of the state. Additionally, *deb(b)* appears to express the meaning of contra-expectation when associated with states. In the first example below, a very old man, possibly the oldest community member, is described as being ‘still alive’ although he suffers from poor health. In the second example, a

song composed about a fight between two groups is described as ‘still existing’ although most people no longer recall the incident. In each case below, there is some surprise that the state has continued.

(7.47) *Ei i-maur man debb*

3SG 3REAL:SG-live EMPH CONT

‘He is actually still alive.’ (of a very old man) [NVKI03.62]

(7.48) *Nobo ang i-tokh debb ing*

song ANA 3REAL:SG-exist CONT EXCL

‘The song still exists now!’ (of a traditional song that is not sung any longer [NVKI13.41.129.987])

The post-verbal marker *mo* is also used to express continuative aspect³¹. Its distribution in the corpus is rather limited and it is only attested with a small set of verbs comprising *(lukh)lukh* ‘stay’, *(tokh)tokh* ‘exist’, *vorvor* ‘sit’ and *vu* ‘go’. There is a contrastive function expressed by *mo*. It appears in contexts where there are at least two actors. One of the actors is presented as remaining in a particular state or doing a particular thing, while another actor undertakes some other action.

In the first example below from a traditional narrative about winged women, the woman’s friends all put on their wings and fly away while the woman herself is forced to stay behind because someone has stolen her wings.

³¹ The form *mo* commonly appears in the corpus with the negative marker *si* (*mo-si* or *si-mo*) meaning ‘no longer’ (see §9.2.1.).

(7.49) *Vin-ang i-lukhlukh mo tang i-ngar*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-wait CONT there 3REAL:SG-cry
 ‘The woman stayed on there and cried.’ [NVKS18.26: 128.591]

In the second example, also from a traditional narrative, a mother tells her daughter to wait at home while she goes to the garden.

(7.50) *I-okh kum-lukhlukh mo blev nimjal*
 PSNPR-2SG 2IRR:SG-wait CONT with meat
t-git tnakh, i-na nim-bbu tetes
 PSDT-1:IN:NSG here PSNPR-1SG 1IRR:SG-go quick
me, nim-bbu nim-te nulkha.
 just 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-cut laplap.leaf
 ‘You wait here with our meat here; I’ll just go quickly, I’ll go and cut
 laplap leaves.’ [NVKS20.29: 148.224]

In (7.51), a father who is trying to abandon his daughter tells her to wait while he goes on. In this case, both clauses are marked for continuative aspect.

(7.51) *O! kum-bbuorvor mo tang, na nim-bbu*
 Oh 2IRR:SG-sit CONT there 1SG 1IRR:SG-go
mo tnakh
 CONT here
 ‘Her father said, ‘You sit down and stay there, I’ll go on here.’’
 [NVKS17.32]

7.2.1.6. Summary of external tense/aspect markers

The combinations of temporal and aspectual meanings that occur in the external tense/aspect markers are summarised in Table 7.2. below. Values are assigned to each temporal and aspectual component. The anterior and remote anterior are distinguished primarily by degree of remoteness from the reference point, a contrast which is not captured in this table.

The types of mood marking that occur with each tense/aspect marker are also presented in the table.

	Anterior <i>ij</i>	Remote anterior <i>ma-ij</i>	Immediate <i>mej</i>	Discourse perfect <i>lu</i>	Continuative <i>deb(b)/mo</i>	
Perfectivity	+	+	+	+	-	
Anteriority (situation occurs prior to RT)	+	+	+	-	+	-
Deferred or lingering relevance (including temporal closeness)	+	+	+	-	+	-
Past (restricted to temporal locations prior to ST)	+	+	+	-	-	-
Marks narrative events	-	-	+	-	-	-
Mood Marking	REALIS	REALIS	REALIS	IRREALIS	REALIS/ IRREALIS	REALIS/ IRREALIS

Table 7.2. External tense/aspect markers

7.2.2. Intermediate quantificational aspect

Bhat (1999), in his typological work on major aspectual categories, identifies perfectivity (considered in §7.2.1. above), phasal aspect (described in §7.2.4. below), and quantificational aspect. Among the sub-types of quantificational aspect, Bhat (1999) includes iterative, frequentative, and habitual. He also notes that ‘aspectual markers may denote plurality of arguments such as the agent,

patient, experiencer, location etc., in addition to (or instead of) the plurality of actions in some of their usages' (Bhat 1999:56-7). In Neverver, we find that the intermediate post-verbal position can be occupied by aspectual markers signalling iterative and frequentative, as well as plurality of arguments. Quantificational aspect is also marked in the internal position and there is some overlap in the types of meaning expressed in the intermediate and internal positions.

In the intermediate position, there are just two aspect markers. *Sakhsakh* encodes either frequentative or iterative aspect. The quantifier *mokh* 'all' also appears in this position, signalling argument plurality. The two intermediate aspectual markers co-occur with semantically appropriate external aspectual markers described in §7.2.1.

7.2.2.1. Frequentative aspect *sakhsakh*

Frequentative aspect is signalled by the post-verbal marker *sakhsakh* which displays inherent or fossilised reduplication. Although *sakh* is attested in the corpus, it is a verb meaning 'go up, go inland', and there is no associated post-verb marker with the simplex form *sakh*. *Sakhsakh* typically encodes frequentative aspect, where an event occurs on a number of temporally distinct occasions. More rarely, it encodes iterative aspect, marking an event as occurring over and over on a single occasion. The interpretation of *sakhsakh* as a marker of iteration or frequency is dependent on the semantics of the verb that it modifies.

As a post-verbal modifier, *sakhsakh* encodes actions that have occurred prior to the reference time. It is exclusively associated with realis mood marking. Frequentative aspect is distinguished from habitual in that it is used when events

have taken place on specific occasions in the past while habitual events are independent of temporal reference. Frequentative functions of *sakhsakh* are illustrated in (7.52) and (7.53) below.

- (7.52) *Ei i-vlem sakhsakh i-khit na*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-come FREQ 3REAL:SG-see 1SG
nari-ssor
 1EX:REAL:DL-speak
 ‘He came frequently and saw me and we talked.’ [NVDL04.2]

- (7.53) *I-rot ne-mmang-ian i-tokh sakhsakh*
 3REAL:SG-hear NPR-make.noise-NSF 3REAL:SG-exist FREQ
mej, mitabbukh, livrav
 IMM morning afternoon
 ‘He heard there was noise frequently, in the morning and afternoon.’
 [NVKS18.3-4:11.859-21.158]

As example (7.53) shows, *sakhsakh* is compatible with the marker of immediate aspect. It also occurs with the markers of anteriority but is semantically incompatible with the continuative aspect markers.

Examples of the iterative use of *sakhsakh* are displayed in (7.54) and (7.55) below. These are translated most naturally as ‘a lot’ although the meaning is iterative rather than emphatic.

(7.54) *Limel i-ngar sakhsakh*
Limel 3REAL:SG-cry 3REAL:SG-cry 3REAL:SG-cry
‘Limel cried a lot.’ [NVCV09.8: 58.506]

(7.55) *I-mmang sakhsakh.*
3REAL:SG-make.noise 3REAL:SG-make.noise 3REAL:SG-make.noise
‘He made a lot of noise (crashing around all over the place).’
[NVCV05.38:1462.203]

Sakhsakh also functions independently as a temporal local noun meaning ‘all the time’, and as nominal modifier meaning ‘every’ in expressions such as *mitabbukh sakhsakh* ‘every morning’.

7.2.2.2. Argument quantifier *mokh*

The argument quantifier *mokh* ‘all’ signals the plurality of arguments belonging to the verb that it modifies. *Mokh* is most commonly attested as a post-verbal modifier; however, it can also function as a post-nominal modifier, modifying nominal heads (e.g. ‘all the men’) and pronominal heads (e.g. ‘all of them’).

Mokh is distinct from the frequentative aspect marker *sakhsakh* because it quantifies the participants in an event rather than quantifying the event itself. When modifying intransitive verbs, *mokh* signals that there are multiple participants with the S function. When modifying transitive verbs, *mokh* appears to signal there are multiple participants with the P function. This is suggestive of ergative patterning, which is also found where reduplication is used to signal argument plurality (§7.2.3.7).

- (7.56) Intransitive verb *das* ‘go down’
- Nitavran nakha at-das mokh bistn*
- branch tree 3REAL:PL-go.down all downward
- ‘The branches of the trees all fell down to the ground.’ [NVDL01.26]

- (7.57) Transitive verb *sar-ikh* ‘hang s.t.’
- Ni-sar-ikh mokh nivunbbu ang*
- 1REAL:SG-hang-APPL all bamboo ANA
- ‘I hang all the bamboo.’ [NVDL06.12]

- (7.58) Transitive verb *khan* ‘eat’
- Buluk at-khan mokh mej nidaro t-na*
- cow 3REAL:PL-eat all IMM taro PSDT-1SG
- ‘The cows just ate all my taro.’ [NVCV02.20: 101.35]

7.2.3. Internal aspectual markers

The third position where aspectual distinctions may be marked in Neverver is the verb stem itself. Internal aspectual markers can be verbal, forming complex verbs which encode a situation, along with aspectual information about that situation in a nuclear-layer serialisation. Following Foley and Olsen (1985:37), a complex verb (or complex nucleus) can be defined as containing ‘two or more verbs joined together. This complex nucleus forms a single unit at the innermost layer, a nuclear juncture, and any nuclear layer operator must have the whole nucleus, all the individual verbs, within its scope’. Nuclear layer juncture in Neverver is marked by the occurrence of (typically) two verb stems with just one mood marker. In addition to aspectual verb stems, internal aspectual markers

also include reduplicated verbs, where a reduplicative affix that is attached to the beginning of the verb signals aspectual information (see chapter eight on reduplication).

In two other Malakula languages, Crowley (2006a, 2006b) also identifies the use of reduplication and nuclear layer juncture to signal aspectual meanings. Bybee, Perkins and Pagluica (1994:167), in their survey of tense, aspect and modality in the world's languages, make the connection between reduplication and aspectual meaning, noting that 'iterative is the meaning we found commonly associated with reduplication'.

Like the intermediate position, the kinds of meanings that we find expressed in the internal aspectual position relate to quantificational aspect. While quantificational aspect is commonly illustrated in terms of the number of times a situation occurs (cf. Bhat's (1999) descriptions of semelfactive, iterative and frequentative categories of quantitative aspect), in Neverver, the focus can be on how much of an event or action has occurred, whether it be a partial and incomplete occurrence, a complete occurrence, a repetitive occurrence, or an habitual situation. In terms of states, the focus can be on whether the state is enduring or temporary.

The items that form nuclear layer juncture in Neverver and that express quantificational aspect are listed in Table 7.3. below, along with the aspectual functions of reduplication.

Internal Aspectual Marker	Independent Verb	Aspectual Meaning	Transitivity Concordance	Corpus Status
<i>lu</i>	‘shoot’; ‘hurry’	Completive (Total)	no	Productive
<i>dan</i>	‘set, drown’	Completive (Plural)	yes	Rare
<i>da</i>	---	Partitive	no	Productive
<i>dor</i>	‘become thin, lean’	Partly Complete	no	Semi-Productive
<i>der</i>	‘pull apart’	Temporary (of states)	(yes)	Rare
<i>duvakh</i>	‘be first’	Past Habitual	no	Productive
DUP	---	Iterative		Productive
		Durative (of states)		Productive
		Plural Argument		Productive

Table 7.3. Internal aspectual markers

The items *lu* and *da*, along with reduplication, are highly productive and are used by a number of different speakers in the corpus. *Dor* combines readily with semantically appropriate verbs, but is not a frequently-occurring item. The remaining items are low-frequency, and non-productive. There appears to be some overlap in the meanings of the very productive items with the other less productive items, suggesting that syncretism may have occurred in the speech of younger community members.

Some of the serial verbs discussed below are clearly related to independent verbs; in other cases, the relationship between the aspectual markers and verbs is less clear or there are no attested independent verb forms. Additionally, some of the serial verbs are marked with the applicative suffix to signal the overall transitivity of the construction. Interestingly, the more productive items do not require transitivity concordance. One possible explanation for this is that the productive serial verbs are undergoing reanalysis as post-verbal grammatical morphemes and are losing their verbal properties.

7.2.3.1. Completive (total) aspect *lu*

The aspectual serial verb *lu* signals completive aspect in the sense that it marks situations where ‘the object of the action is totally affected, consumed, or destroyed by the action’ (Bybee, Perkins & Pagluica 1994:57). It is most likely to be related to the independent verb stem *lu* which can mean either ‘shoot’ or ‘hurry’. As a serial verb, *lu* commonly occurs in the corpus with transitive verb stems, some of which are listed in (7.59) below.

(7.59)	Verb stem		With aspectual serial verb
	<i>der</i>	‘pull apart’	<i>der-lu</i> ‘pull down, demolish’
	<i>lav</i>	‘get, take’	<i>lav-lu</i> ‘take away, take out’
	<i>rev</i>	‘pull’	<i>rev-lu</i> ‘pull away’
	<i>vul</i>	‘buy’	<i>vul-lu</i> ‘pay off’
	<i>vuv</i>	‘blow’	<i>vuv-lu</i> ‘blow down/away/out’

The example below illustrates how completive aspect interacts with the verb *vuv* ‘to blow’.

(7.60)	<i>I-vuv-lu</i>		<i>nakhmal</i>		<i>i-vuv-lu</i>
	3REAL:SG-blow-COMPL	house		3REAL:SG-blow-COMPL	
	<i>nakha</i>	<i>edr</i>			
	tree	PL			

‘It blew down houses, it blew down the trees.’ [NVDL01.25]

In §7.2.1.4, the discourse perfect *lu* was described. This marker has the same shape as the marker of completive aspect and may also derive from the verb *lu*

‘shoot, hurry’. Sequences of completive aspect, followed by the discourse perfect are attested in the corpus.

- (7.61) *Baga man-jing at-rev-lu lu nibarbar*
 then man-be.there 3REAL:PL-pull-COMPL PERF pig
at-uv at-likh-likh
 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-DUP-tie.up
 ‘Then, having pulled away the pigs, those men went and tied them up.’ [NVKI21.55: 234.177]

- (7.62) *I-vis-lu lu nakhavakh titi-r er*
 3REAL:SG-scoop-COMPL PERF yam.mound 3PS-PL PL
be i-khan si nidam ang
 but 3REAL:SG-eat NEG yam ANA
 ‘It had dug out all their yam mounds but it didn't eat the yams.’
 [NVCV03.17: 97.020]

7.2.3.2. Completive (plural) aspect *dan*

A second and far less common marker of completive aspect is the serial verb *dan*. This form differs slightly in meaning, marking situations where ‘the action involves a plural ... object of transitive verbs, especially an exhaustive or universal plural’ (Bybee, Perkins & Pagluica 1994:57). This marker has a similar meaning to the argument quantifier *mokh*. It differs from both *lu* and *mokh* in that it carries the applicative suffix *-ikh*. Transitivity concordance occurs in this case because the independent verb *dan* ‘set, drown’ is intransitive while all of the serial constructions with *dan* are transitive.

(7.63)	Verb stem		With aspectual serial verb
	<i>tur</i>	‘stand’	<i>tur-dan-ikh</i> ‘stand up all (of something)’
	<i>te</i>	‘cut’	<i>te-dan-ikh</i> ‘cut all (of something)’
	<i>trasil</i>	‘stake (vines)’	<i>trasil-dan-ikh</i> ‘stake all (the vines)’

(7.64)	<i>I-gav</i>	<i>nokhos</i>	<i>ang</i>	<i>gaga-gaga</i>
	3REAL:SG-rake	garden	ANA	DUP-on.and.on
	<i>i-gav-dan-ikh</i>	<i>si</i>	<i>naut</i>	<i>i-met</i>
	3REAL:SG-rake-all-APPL	NEG	place	3REAL:SG-dark
	‘He raked the garden on and on (but) he hadn’t raked it all (before) it got dark.’ [NVKS16.10: 47.390]			

7.2.3.3. Partitive aspect *da*

The serial verb *da* encodes partitive aspect. Actions which are marked with *da* are only partly carried out. Events which are seen as durative in Neverver, such as *ver* ‘talk’ or *kke* ‘call’, become punctual as in *ver-da* ‘mention’ or *kke-da* ‘hail’. States which are marked with *da* have a short duration. *Da* is attested with over fifty different verb stems in the corpus, making it the most productive internal aspect marker. Some of the more common examples are listed below. Although the marker of partitive aspect modifies the meaning of the verb stem to which it is attached, there is a clear relationship between the meaning of the verb stem in a simple nucleus and that found in the complex nucleus.

(7.65)	Verb stem	With aspectual serial verb
	<i>lukh</i> ‘live, be’	<i>lukh-da</i> ‘rest’
	<i>sber</i> ‘reach’	<i>sber-da</i> ‘touch’
	<i>sil</i> ‘burn’	<i>sil-da</i> ‘burn off (a small area of garden)’
	<i>sir</i> ‘accompany, follow’	<i>sir-da</i> ‘visit (for a short time)’
	<i>tos</i> ‘colour’	<i>tos-da</i> ‘mark’
	<i>tutn</i> ‘hot’	<i>tutn-da</i> ‘a little hot’
	<i>ver</i> ‘say’	<i>ver-da</i> ‘mention’
	<i>vor</i> ‘sit’	<i>vor-da</i> ‘rest’

(7.66)	<i>Khavut-tro</i>	<i>lele</i>	<i>ang</i>	<i>i-vu</i>	<i>i-lukh-da</i>
	husband-old	small	ANA	3REAL:SG-go	3REAL:SG-live-PART
	<i>lon</i>	<i>nakhmal</i>			
	LOC	house			
	‘The little old man went and rested in the house.’				
	[NVCT05.33:404.498]				

7.2.3.4. Partly complete aspect *dor*

Another aspectual serial verb that signals a partitive type of meaning is the form *dor* which combines with a transitive stem and signals that a P participant has been partly affected. This partitive verb is less productive than *da* and occurs just three times in natural texts, although language consultants produced other combinations with *dor* in elicitation sessions.

(7.67) Verb stem Naturally occurring constructions with aspectual serial verb *dor*

rakh ‘clear (ground)’ *rakh-dor* ‘partly clear (ground)’

khan ‘eat s.t.’ *khan-dor* ‘partly eat s.t.’

(7.68) Verb stem Constructions produced in elicitation sessions with aspectual serial verb *dor*

lmus ‘wash’ *lmus-dor* ‘wash part of s.t.’

khavukh ‘plant’ *khavukh-dor* ‘plant some of s.t.’

khavakh ‘plant (yams)’ *khavakh-dor* ‘plant some (of the yams)’

var ‘harvest (cobs)’ *var-dor* ‘harvest some (of the corn)’

(7.69) *Ni-tokh ni-rakh- dor ang*

1REAL:SG-PROG 1REAL:SG-clear.ground-PTLY ANA

‘I am partly clearing it.’ [NVKS16.75:320.879]

(7.70) *Na ni-khan-dor ni-kkan-ian na.*

1SG 1REAL:SG-eat-PTLY NPR-eat-NSF 1SG

‘I partly ate my food.’ [NVE13.17]

7.2.3.5. Temporary aspect *der*

Related to the aspect markers that signal partitive aspect is the serial verb *der*. Reduplication of a stative verb stem can produce a temporary interpretation, the addition of *der* seems to emphasise the temporary nature of the state. In the corpus, the following states are attested with *der*. We can observe transitivity

concordance with the third construction which is a two-argument complex predicate.

(7.71)	Verb stem		With aspectual serial verb
	<i>lukh</i>	‘live, be’	<i>lukhlukh-der</i> ‘stay temporarily, wait’
	<i>tokhtokh</i>	‘exist’	<i>tokhtokh-der</i> ‘exist temporarily, wait’
	<i>wet</i>	‘wait’	<i>wet-der-ikh</i> ‘wait for someone/until someone comes’

In each of the examples below, the state is marked as temporary. The event that will terminate the state is predictable or known.

(7.72)	<i>Kum-lukh-lukh-der</i>	<i>ga-gaga</i>	<i>naut</i>	<i>i-met</i>
	2IRR:SG-DUP-live-TEMP	DUP-on.and.on	place	3REAL:SG-dark
	‘Wait until it is dark.’ [NVDL10.15]			

(7.73)	<i>Barnakh</i>	<i>i-lukh-lukh-der</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>nidam</i>
	now	3REAL:SG-DUP-live-TEMP	DEMSPN	NMOD	yam
	<i>titi</i>	<i>abit-maur</i>	<i>abit-sakka</i>	<i>ibi-rvikh</i>	
	3PS:SG	3IRR:PL-live	3IRR:PL-climb	3IRR:SG-good	
	‘Now he waited (until) the occasion when his yams were going to grow and climb well’ [NVKS16.65: 269.473]				

The other verb that can be reduplicated and form a complex predicate with the temporary serial verb *der* is *ngar* ‘cry’. The action of crying has inherent duration, as compared to cry out which is punctual. When combined with *der*,

this highly lexicalised complex predicate means ‘be shocked suddenly’. This durative-punctual pairing of meanings is similar to the permanent-temporary pairing that forms when *der* combines with verbs encoding states.

7.2.3.6. Past habitual with *duvakh* and reduplication

Duvakh is a serial verb that refers to an event that took place ‘before’ or ‘at first’ when combined with realis mood as in (7.74), or that will take place first when combined with irrealis mood as in (7.75). The combination of *duvakh* with realis mood and reduplication is used to signal the past habitual ‘used to’, as shown in (7.76).

(7.74) *Niterikh an adr at-lem-duvakh ang*
 child NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL-give.birth-first ANA
i-vu
 3REAL:SG-go
 ‘The child that they bore first went.’ [NVCT02.33: 161.509]

(7.75) *Okh kum-tos-duvakh na*
 2SG 2IRR:SG-paint-first 1SG
 ‘Paint me first.’ [NVCV24.9: 49.834]

(7.76) *lon nesal an kati-le-lles-duvakh ye akhsung*
 LOC road NMOD 2REAL:PL-DUP-bathe-first RSPN inland
 ‘on the road where you used to bathe inland...’ [NVCV09.14: 95.013]

7.2.3.7. Aspectual distinctions encoded through reduplication

Reduplication has a wide range of functions in Neverver, described in detail in chapter eight. Three functions which are aspectual in nature are the use of a reduplicative affix to signal iterative, durative and habitual aspect. Habitual aspect is illustrated in (7.76). Punctual situations can be rendered iterative with reduplication, while non-punctual verbs (including states) are emphatically durative when reduplicated. When signalling iterative or durative aspect, the verb stem may be reduplicated numerous times. In the corpus, it is common for three to six reduplicative affixes to be used. Multiple aspectual reduplication contrasts with repetition for pragmatic functions (see §8.3).

- (7.77) *Ba i-vu, i-khit ar-te nakha ang*
 when 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-see IMPS:REAL-cut tree ANA
ar-te-te-te-te i-suvsuv
 IMPS:REAL-DUP-DUP-DUP-cut 3REAL:SG-be.finished
 ‘When he went, he saw the trees had been cut, they had been cut on
 and on (until) it was finished.’ [NVKS10.13: 80.422]

In example (7.78), the stative form *vorvor* ‘to sit’ (already reduplicated from the active verb *vor* ‘to sit down’) is multiply reduplicated to signal duration. In (7.79), the inherently durative verb *llang* ‘look.for.s.t.’ is also reduplicated to express duration. In examples (7.77) and (7.79), we can see that the P argument is not encoded explicitly in the reduplicated construction, despite the verbs being transitive in the preceding simplex constructions. The relationship between reduplication and detransitivity is explored in detail in chapter eight.

(7.78) *I-vor-vor mej i-vor-vor-vor-vor-vor-vor*
 3REAL:SG-DUP-sit IMM 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-sit
tuan nolong titi niterikh titi var
 LOCPSN laplap 3PS:SG child 3PS:SG unfortunate
 ‘She just sat then, she sat for a long long time by her poor child's
 laplap.’ [NVKS03.51]

(7.79) *I-llang nibarbar ang*
 3REAL:SG-look.for.s.t pig ANA
i-la-la-la-llang
 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-look.for.s.t.
 ‘She looked for the pig. She looked and looked and looked.’
 [NVCV03.16:89.451]

The reduplication of verb stems can be used to emphasise argument plurality. When a verb is intransitive, reduplication can emphasise the plurality of the only available argument encoded as S; when a verb is transitive, reduplication could emphasise the plurality of either A or P. In the text corpus, there are examples of singular A and plural P, where reduplication appears to emphasise the plurality of P. There are no examples of plural A and plural P however, where reduplication is clearly interacting exclusively with the plurality of P. The emphasis of argument plurality marked by reduplication appears to follow the same ergative pattern observed for the other plural argument marker *mokh*, although evidence from the text corpus is somewhat ambiguous.

(7.80) *Ga at-uv, ni-kkol-ian ang*
 then 3REAL:PL-go NPR-make.ceremony-NSF ANA
i-suvsuv at-mal-malu.
 3REAL:SG-be.finished 3REAL:PL-DUP- disperse
 ‘Then they went, the ceremony finished and they all dispersed.’
 [NVKS08.72]

(7.81) *Ba i-gang nangatian ati-vle-vlem*
 when 3REAL:SG-like.so everyone 3REAL:PL-DUP-come
at-dum-dum lon nemaling titi-r at-das
 3REAL:PL-DUP-run LOC bed 3PS-PL 3REAL:PL-go.down
vere
 outside
 ‘When it was so, everyone all came running from their beds and
 went outside.’ [NVKS15.65]

(7.82) *Ni-khit-khit nidam angedr.*
 1REAL:SG-DUP-see yam ANA PL
 ‘I look at/check all the yams.’ [NVDL08.3]

(7.83) *ni-vus-vus nani i-vlem sur nesal*
 1REAL:SG-DUP-carry coconut 3REAL:SG-come near road
 ‘I carried all the coconut to the road.’ [NVDL02.08]

7.2.4. Phasal aspect encoded in core layer juncture

The final category of aspect that is overtly encoded in Neverver is phasal aspect. Bhat (1999:49) uses the term phasal aspect to describe aspectual marking that focuses attention on the beginning, middle or end of a situation. In Neverver, we find phasal aspect encoded in a core layer juncture, where the phasal meaning (to begin, continue or end) is encoded as a separate verb carrying its own subject/mood marker. In these constructions, mood is obligatorily matched to the mood marking of any other verbs that appear in the core – that is, the mood marking of the phasal verb is concordant³².

The ordering of the aspectual verb with respect to the event verb displays some iconicity, with the serial verb that signals ingressive aspect preceding the event verb (START-DO), and the serial verb that signals egressive aspect following the event verb (DO-STOP). Iconicity seems less relevant in the progressive construction, where the event and its continuation are simultaneous. In Neverver, the serial verb signalling progressive aspect precedes the event verb (CONTINUE-DO).

7.2.4.1. Progressive aspect *tokh*

The best example of core layer phasal aspect is the encoding of progressive aspect with the verb *tokh*. *Tokh* is also used as the existential/locative verb meaning ‘exist, be at’. The aspectual usage is distinct from existential and locative usages because when signalling progressive aspect, *tokh* must occur as the first element of a core layer juncture, signalling that a situation is in progress at the reference time. As an aspectual marker, *tokh* is not attested in a negative

³² Concordant mood marking is a defining characteristic of core layer juncture. Core serial constructions are described in detail in chapter eleven.

construction in connected text; simple verb forms are preferred (see §7.1.1.2 above). This differs from the existential/locative usage which may be marked for negative.

- (7.84) *Ba i-tokh i-patel i-gang*
 when 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-paddle 3REAL:SG-like.so
be nibisbokh ang tu, i-tokh i-khan
 but rat ANA too 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-eat
nauj ang
 pawpaw ANA
 ‘When he was paddling like so, the rat too was eating the pawpaw.’
 [NVKS04.11: 77.458]

Progressive aspect is attested with irrealis mood just four times in the text corpus, signalling a situation that will be in progress at some reference point following the moment of speech. Occurrences of progressive aspect with irrealis mood are found either in traditional narratives, where one of the characters is speaking to another about something that is going to be happening, or in conversational texts. In example (7.85), a woman is in the process of telling her husband that she is leaving him and he will have to care for their children alone. In example (7.86), irrealis mood is a marker of the imperative, and a continuative interpretation seems appropriate, especially as the progressive action of ‘looking for bags’ is described with realis mood in the preceding clause.

(7.85) *I-okh mej kum-tokh kum-matmat-ikh*
 PSNPR-2SG IMM 2IRR:SG-PROG 2IRR:SG-take.care-APPL
niterikh t-git edr
 child PSDT-1IN:NSG PL
 ‘From now on, you will be looking after our children.’
 [NVKS10.120]

(7.86) *Gam kabir-tokh kabri-llang lakh lakh bak*
 2NSG 2IRR:DL-PROG 2IRR:DL-look.for.s.t. quiet bag
tang
 there
 ‘You keep looking/get on with looking for bags there.’ [NVCV02.70:
 451.513]

In example (7.87), we can see a contrast between the stative verb *vorvor* ‘to sit’ which does not take the progressive marker, and the active verb *patel* ‘to paddle’ which is marked for progressive aspect. Again, a continuative interpretation is appropriate.

(7.87) *Ale i-okh kum-bbuorvor lakh lakh, na*
 alright PSNPR-2SG 2IRR:SG-sit quiet 1SG
nim-tokh nim-patel.
 1IRR:SG-PROG 1IRR:SG-paddle
 ‘Alright, you sit still; I’ll keep on paddling.’ [NVKS04.10: 64.608]

7.2.4.2. Ingressive aspect *tabatn* ~ *stait*

Ingressive aspect, encoded with the indigenous form *tabatn* ‘to begin’ or the borrowed form *stait(em)* from Bislama *stat* ‘to start’, also appears in a core layer juncture. The sequence of the core layer juncture is always iconic, with the verb of ingression preceding the situation verb.

The expression of ingressive aspect is rather unstable, with a number of competing patterns attested in the corpus. The same verbs (meaning ‘to begin’) are also found in complement constructions, marked with a complementiser. This is normally *il*, but can also be *an*. In addition, there is a zero-complementiser construction where the mood marking of the complement is independent of the mood of the ingressive verb (see §12.4.9. for a description of these alternative constructions). Amongst the competing constructions available to express ingression, the core layer construction, illustrated in (7.87) and (7.88), was produced by oldest recorded female speaker of Neverver. The second of these examples illustrates ingressive aspect combined with irrealis mood.

(7.88) *I-tabatn* *i-ve* *niar* *an* *nokhos* *ang*
 3REAL:SG-start 3REAL:SG-make fence NMOD garden ANA
 ‘He started making the garden fence.’ [NVKS10.17: 108.457]

(7.89) *Baga* *im-tabatn* *im-te* *nakha*
 then 3IRR:SG-start 3IRR:SG-cut tree
 ‘Then, he was about to start cutting trees.’ [NVKS10.11: 69.355]

Among younger speakers, the borrowed form *stait(em)* is more commonly used than the indigenous form and the verb generally functions as a

complement-taking predicate with the complementiser *i/* rather than as the first member of a core serial construction.

7.2.4.3. Egressive aspect *suvsvuv*

The third aspectual marker that is encoded in core layer juncture is *suvsvuv* ‘be finished’. This form encodes egressive aspect. Unlike ingressive and progressive aspect, which are always the first members of the core construction (START/CONTINUE + DO), egressive aspect occurs as the final member of the core construction (DO + FINISH). The different ordering patterns attested with different types of phasal aspect can be attributed to iconicity, where a situation has to start before it can occur, and be underway before it can be terminated.

Serial verbs marking ingressive and progressive aspect carry the same subject/mood prefix as the situation verb. In contrast, the verb *suvsvuv* is always marked with the third person singular subject/mood prefix. This means that there is no obligatory agreement in person and number of the subject/mood prefix. Mood marking, however, remains concordant as is required in all core serial constructions.

- (7.90) *Ar-sil-sil-sil-sil* *i-suvsvuv*
IMPS:REAL-DUP-DUP-DUP-burn 3REAL:SG-be.finished
‘The garden was burned until it was finished.’ [NVKS10.23]

Egressive aspect may co-occur with irrealis mood, as the final example illustrates.

(7.91) *Ba kabir-rakh im-suvsuv*
when 2IRR:DL-clear.ground 3IRR:SG-be.finished
'When you two finish clearing it...' [NVKS13.21]

Chapter Eight

Reduplication

Reduplication is understood to be a morphological process. It is generally described as type of affixation where the phonological content of the reduplicative affix is underspecified and gains content from the stem or base to which it is attached (cf. Broselow & McCarthy 1984; Marantz & Wiltshire 2000; Moravcsik 1978). Moravcsik (1978:305) makes the early observation on reduplication that ‘reference is always made both to the meaning and to the sound form of the constituent to be reduplicated’. Thus, in considering reduplication, forms are analysed in §8.1. and semantic features are considered in §8.2. Reduplication is contrasted with repetition in §8.3.

Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002:44) observe that reduplication occurs ‘almost universally in Oceanic verbal morphology, as well as in noun derivation’. Crowley (2006a; 2006b) and Musgrave (2007) identify reduplication in Avava and Neve’ei, Neverver’s closest neighbours, and reduplication is also attested in the Neverver corpus.

In Neverver, productive reduplication is associated with the verb phrase. It is a common element in detransitive constructions, including object incorporation and suppression, as well as reflexive and reciprocal constructions. Reduplication is used as a derivational process to form stative verbs and stative nominal modifiers. It is one of the means of expressing participant and event quantity. It is involved in the expression of certain negative constructions. Verbs, nouns, and members of other word classes may exhibit inherent or fossilised reduplication, where a semantically-related plain stem cannot be identified in the

corpus. An important characteristic of reduplication in Neverver is that it frequently occurs in conjunction with other morphological and syntactic features of the language to express particular meanings.

8.1. Forms of reduplication

In Neverver, reduplication prototypically involves a single reduplicative affix attached to a verb stem. There are, for example, instances of the simplex transitive stem *tukh* ‘strike’ in the semantically related reduplicated transitive construction *tukh-tukh* ‘beat ITERATIVE’.

(8.1) *Baga mang at-tukh nibilkhe ang*
 then man:ANA 3REAL:PL-strike slitgong ANA
 ‘Then, the men struck the slitgong.’ [NVKS17.148]

(8.2) *Im-tukh-tukh nibilkhe*
 3IRR:SG-DUP-strike slitgong
 ‘He was going to play the slitgong.’ [NVKI26.92: 449.510]

Although a given morpheme will typically carry only one reduplicative affix, there are forms that display up to six instances of the affix. Moravcsik (1978:312), in her typological study of reduplication, observes that multiple reduplication is a feature of many languages, and that it is generally associated with the expression of emphasis and continuity of events. In Neverver, multiply reduplicated forms are associated with the aspectual meanings of duration and in

some cases iteration, discussed in §8.2.3.3.

Reduplication applies to borrowed items as well as indigenous forms. The Bislama borrowing *nok* ‘knock’ reduplicates to *nok-nok* ‘knock ITERATIVE’. The Bislama verb *plei* ‘play’ appears in the corpus as the reduplicated *ple-ple* ‘play (a game)’. Similarly, the Bislama verb *sukul* ‘learn’ reduplicates as the stative *suk-sukul* ‘be educated’.

A range of reduplicative patterns are attested in the corpus. The various forms can be united by a single phonological constraint which limits the surface realisation of the reduplicative prefix to a maximum CVC shape. The constraint extends to cover instances of multiple reduplication and can be formulated as follows:

Reduplication Constraint 1:

In a reduplicated construction, the reduplicative prefix (or prefixes) is maximally realised by the structure CVC.

Table 8.1. illustrates patterns of reduplication attested in the corpus for a range of stem shapes. The patterns shown in Table 8.1. indicate that the right-hand morpheme occurs in its full phonological form while the form of the left-hand morpheme varies. This patterning indicates that the stem is located in the right-hand position while the reduplicative affix is attached or prefixed to the left.

The application of Reduplication Constraint One results in full reduplication of monosyllabic stems with a CV(C) structure such as *te* ‘hit’ and *tas* ‘scratch’,

partial reduplication of disyllable stems such as *malu* ‘leave’ and *takhtakh*³³ ‘damage, destroy’, and partial reduplication of stems with a CCV structure.

Simple stem		Reduplicated stem	
CV	<i>te</i> ‘hit’ <i>dri</i> ‘turn’	CV-CV	<i>tete</i> ‘fight REFLEXIVE’ <i>dri-dri</i> ‘roll ITERATION’
CVC	<i>tas</i> ‘scratch’ <i>nok</i> ‘knock’	CVC-CVC	<i>tas-tas</i> ‘file, sharpen ITERATION’ <i>nok-nok</i> ‘knock ITERATION’
CVCV	<i>vavu</i> ‘walk’ <i>malu</i> ‘leave’	CV-CVCV CVC-CVCV	<i>va-vavu</i> ‘walk DURATION’ <i>mal-malu</i> ‘disperse PLURAL ACTION’
CVCCVC	<i>takhtakh</i> ‘damage, destroy’	CVC-CVCCVC	<i>takh-takhtakh</i> ‘damage, destroy + PROHIBITION’
CCV	<i>tnga</i> ‘search’ <i>kkekh</i> ‘call s.o.’	CV-CCV	<i>ta-tnga</i> ‘search DURATION/EMPHASIS’ <i>ke-kkekh</i> ‘call s.o. PLURAL OBJECT’
CCVC	<i>vkhal</i> ‘fight’ <i>sber</i> ‘reach’ <i>rrav</i> ‘laugh’ <i>lles</i> ‘bathe’	CV-CCVC	<i>va-vkhal</i> ‘grate ITERATION’ <i>se-sber</i> ‘touch’ <i>ra-rrav</i> ‘laugh HABITUAL’ <i>le-lles</i> ‘bathe HABITUAL’

Table 8.1. Reduplication patterns in Neverver

A second constraint can be observed in the realisation of the reduplicated form of *vavu* ‘walk’. This constraint prohibits, as a by-product of CVC reduplication, the creation of geminate consonants that are not already in the simplex form.

Reduplication Constraint 2: Degemination

The coda consonant of the reduplicative prefix must differ from the onset consonant of the stem. Any consonant which will form a geminate sequence is omitted.

³³ The verb *taxtax* ‘to damage, destroy’ exhibits inherent or fossilised reduplication. Once a form has been lexicalised, it can be subject to further reduplicative processes. See §8.3.7 for other examples of inherent reduplication.

Reduplication Constraint Two appears to be an effect of the OBLIGATORY CONTOUR PRINCIPLE (OCP), which is formulated by McCarthy (1986) as:

OBLIGATORY CONTOUR PRINCIPLE

At the melodic level, adjacent identical elements are prohibited.

(McCarthy 1986:208)

The OCP is formulated as a universal constraint, but it does not apply in all cases in Neverver. Geminate consonants are permitted to form over the morpheme boundary between the subject/mood prefix and verb stem. They may also form between compounded morphemes. It is only in the case of reduplication then, that the language-specific tolerance for sequences of identical consonant segments gives way to the universal OCP.

The application of Reduplication Constraint Two means that the disyllabic stem *vavu* ‘walk’ reduplicates as *va-vavu* ‘walk DURATIVE’ rather than **vav-vavu*. The disyllabic stem *malu* ‘leave’ is not subject to this constraint and reduplicates as *mal-malu* ‘disperse’. Additional examples of the effect of Reduplication Constraint Two include the verb *sus* ‘ask’, which reduplicates as *su-sus* ‘ask REFLEXIVE’ rather than **sus-sus*, and *vuv* ‘blow’, which reduplicates as *vu-vuv* ‘blow ITERATIVE’ rather than **vuv-vuv*.

As discussed in chapters one and six, when stems begin with a sequence of two consonants (either geminate or heterogeneous), the initial C cannot be assigned to the syllable structure of the stem. This is due to the syllable constraint that limits syllables to a maximal CVC shape. Stem consonants must however, be assigned and so when the reduplicative prefix is attached, the

outstanding consonant associates with the prefix syllable. An outstanding stem C takes precedence over any copied Cs in the syllabification of reduplicated items.

Because the reduplicative prefix has the maximal shape CVC, it always has a simple onset, regardless of the phonotactic structure of the unprefix simplex form. This coincides with Moravcsik's (1978:310) observation that reduplication involves cluster simplification.

Some CVC stems have more than one reduplication option. The options allow for different meanings to be expressed. The transitive verb *sil* 'burn' reduplicates with the structure CVC-CVC to express duration, habituation, or complete affectedness. It can also undergo detransitivisation by reduplicating to the structure CV-CVC *si-sil* 'burn INTRANSITIVE'. The single argument that is retained is the actor; the undergoer argument is obligatorily suppressed.

8.1.1. Non-prototypical verb reduplication

There are a small number of exceptions to the basic reduplication pattern in Neverver. These exceptions are specific to individual lexical items. One involves the high frequency motion verb *vlem* 'come'. According to the CVC pattern, we would expect the reduplicated form to take the shape *ve-vlem* and this is the form produced in an elicitation session (8.3); however, in recorded texts, this verb typically is reduplicated as *vle-vlem* (8.4) which violates Reduplication Constraint One.

(8.3) *Man-jing i-ve-vlem si tnakh.*

man-be.there 3REAL:SG-DUP-come NEG here

‘That guy never comes here.’ [NVE06.36.1]

(8.4) *Ari-vle-vle-vle-vlem*

3REAL:DL-DUP-DUP-DUP-come

‘They came closer and closer.’ [NVKS18.60: 302.218]

Reduplication Constraint One is also ignored in the cases of *kruk* ‘lead (of a mother hen)’, which reduplicates as *kru.kruk* ‘follow (of chickens)’, and *bling* ‘turn under, coil’, which is fully reduplicated as *bling.bling* ‘braid’. The borrowed verb *ple.ple*, from Bislama *plei* ‘play’, which exhibits inherent reduplication, also violates Reduplication Constraint One.

We can observe that the stems that violate Reduplication Constraint One involve a syllable-initial consonant cluster where the second member is a liquid. They display the characteristic of increasing sonority from onset to peak, a characteristic which is predicted by the universal Sonority Sequencing Generalisation [SSG] (Selkirk 1984). The SSG is also observed in other cases where consonant clusters form, such as in the compound structures described in §2.5.4. Universally then, the complex onsets in these reduplicated constructions contribute to well-formed syllables and this may override the language specific syllable constraint against complex onsets.

A further observation that can be made is that the stems that violate Reduplication Constraint One have a similar phonetic structure to the complex segment *dr* [ʰdʰ]. This segment remains intact through the reduplication process

in items such as *dri-dri* ‘roll’ (rather than **di-dri* which we would expect if *dr* represented a sequence of two separate segments) and *drom-drom* ‘be thirsty’ (rather than **do-drom*). Stems that violate Reduplication Constraint One may be patterning as complex segments rather than as complex syllable onsets. Not all stems with liquid clusters behave in this way. *Trokh* ‘see’ and *klar* ‘burn off’ reduplicate in accordance with Reduplication Constraint One as *to-trokh* and *ka-klar*.

As we have seen in the preceding examples, the phonological content of the reduplicative prefix is derived from the phonological content of the verb stem. A small number of verbs exhibit some variation in form. This variation, referred to by Inkelas and Zoll (2005:42) among others as Melodic Overwriting, results in changes to the realisation of the vowel in the prefix. For the verb *prong* ‘listen’, we would predict the reduplicated form *po-prong*. Attested reduplicated forms vary between the predicted *po-prong* and *pe-prong*.

The numeral *skham* ‘one’ reduplicates with the predicted form *sa-skham* ‘individually, alone’, but it alternates with the form *si-skham*. There is no distinction in the morphological or semantic environments in which the two forms appear. For example, both *i-si-skham* and *i-sa-skham* ‘by him/herself’ are attested.

The transitive verb stem *tn* ‘cook’ [tɲ] has a syllabic nasal rather than a separate vowel segment serving as the syllable peak. When reduplicated, a vowel segment is inserted. Two contrasting reduplicated forms are attested in the corpus. The intransitive activity verb *ti-tn* ‘cook’ contrasts with the stative verb *tu-tn* ‘be (boiling) hot’. Although this is the only item in the corpus to display this kind of contrast, it provides evidence that the reduplicative prefix

has a minimal realisation of CV. Reduplication Constraint One can now be altered to reflect this fact:

Reduplication Constraint 1 (revised):

In a reduplicated construction, the reduplicative prefix (or prefixes) is realised by the structure CV(C).

8.1.2. Formalising the process of reduplication

We can formalise the process of reduplication by making use of general steps outlined by Broselow and McCarthy (1984). These have been modified to reflect language specific constraints. Broselow and McCarthy work within the framework of CV phonology (Clements and Keyser 1983), now autosegmental phonology (Goldsmith 1990) which was applied in the description of general phonotactic constraints in Neverver in §2.5.

Formation and syllabification rules for reduplicated stems in Neverver

(After Broselow and McCarthy 1984:27)

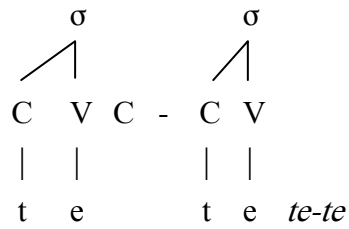
- a. Create an unassociated copy of the phonemic melody of the stem.
- b. Associate from the copied phonemic melody onto the CV-skeleton one-to-one from left to right filling the available CVC prefix positions, applying any lexical constraints.
- c. Syllabify according to the general syllabification rules for Neverver:
 - i. Peak formation: Assign each V to a syllable node.
 - ii. Onset formation: Associate one C with each right-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).
 - iii. Coda formation: Associate any single remaining C with a left-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).

If the verb stem has an unassociated C, it takes precedence over any copied Cs and is associated with the preceding V of the reduplicative prefix.

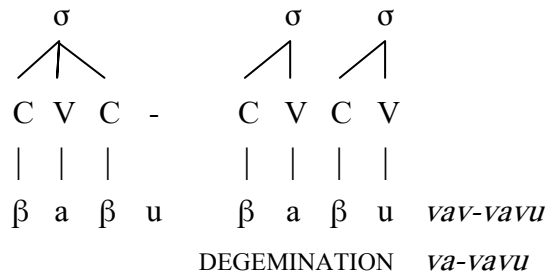
- d. Erase all material from the phonemic melody or the CV skeleton that remains unassociated.

Examples are given of the formation and syllabification of reduplicated verb stems in Neverver below.

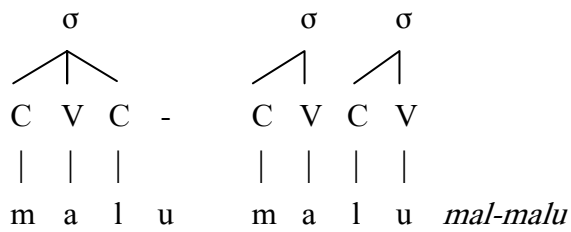
- (8.5) CV stem: reduplication of *te* ‘hit, cut’



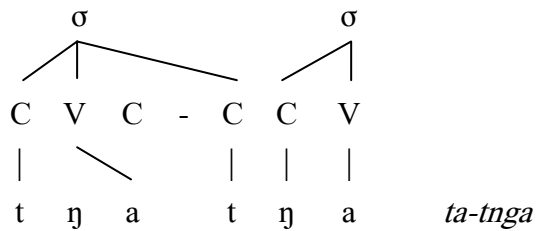
- (8.6) CV stem: reduplication of *vavu* ‘walk’



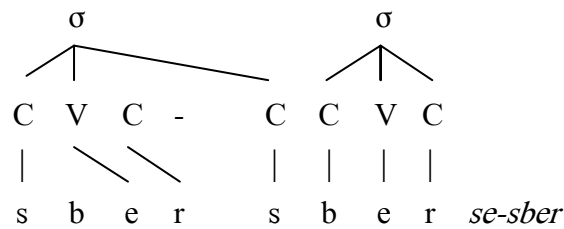
- (8.7) CV stem: reduplication of *malu* ‘go out’



- (8.8) CCV stem: reduplication of *tnga* ‘search (visually)’

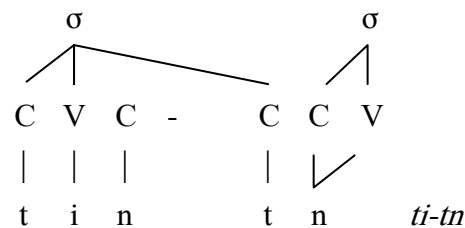


(8.9) CCV stem: reduplication of *sber* ‘reach’



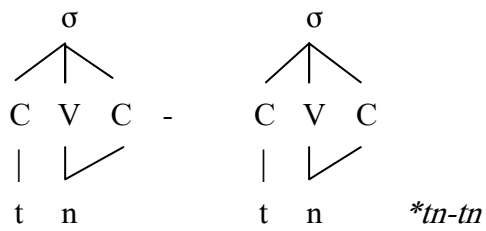
The reduplication of *tn* ‘cook TRANSITIVE’ to *ti-tn* ‘cook INTRANSITIVE’, provides evidence that the syllabic consonant occupies a pair of CV slots on the CV tier. This verb syllabifies as a CCV stem. The initial C position of the prefix is associated with the initial *t* of the copied stem. There is no available vowel in the stem and so to meet the minimal CV prefix requirement, the vowel segment /i/ (designated in the lexicon) is inserted. Of the two remaining unassociated Cs, the stem C takes precedence and is associated with the prefix V, forming the coda of the initial syllable. The unassociated copied consonant is deleted from the segmental tier and CV tier.

(8.10) CCV stem: reduplication of *tn* ‘cook’



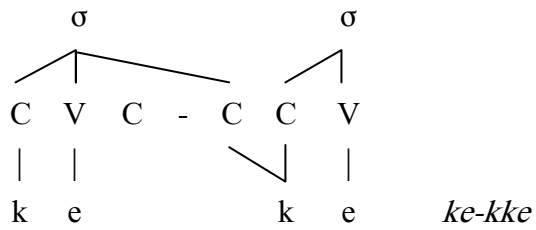
If *tn* was a CV stem, then we would predict that it would reduplicate as **tn.tn*, with the syllabic nasal filling a V and C slot in both the stem and the reduplicative affix. This form however, is unacceptable.

(8.11) *CV stem: reduplication of *tn* 'cook'

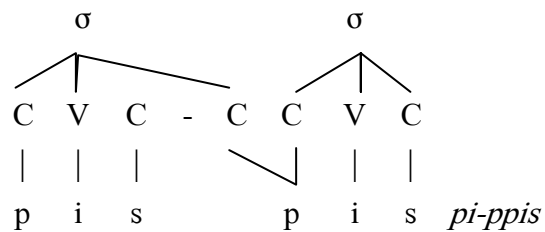


CCV stems with initial geminate consonants reduplicate in the same way as
 CCV stems with heterogeneous consonants.

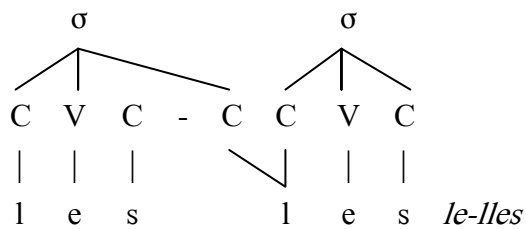
(8.12) CCV stem: reduplication of *kke* 'call'



(8.13) CCV stem: reduplication of *ppis* 'hurt'



(8.14) CCV stem: reduplication of *lles* 'bathe'



8.1.3. Interaction with the subject/mood prefix

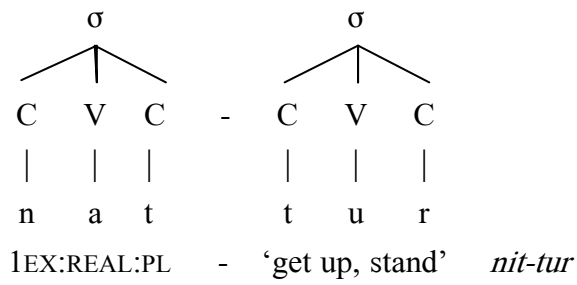
In the formation of inflected verbs, the invariant CV structure of the reduplicative prefix is ignored; instead, the CV structure of the stem determines the shape of the subject/mood prefix. Thus, when the subject/mood prefix is attached to reduplicated verbs, the subject/mood prefix appears as it would with its simplex base. Example (8.15) shows the inflected simplex verb *nati-llang* ‘we(excl) looked for’ followed by the inflected reduplicated verb *nati-la-la-la-llang* ‘We(excl) looked for DURATIVE’. If the reduplicated prefix was visible to the subject/mood prefix, we would expect the inflected verb to take the form **nat-la-la-la-llang* as happens with *nat.tur* ‘we(excl) stood up’.³⁴

- (8.15) *Ga* *nam* *ba* *nat-tur* *nati-llang*
 then 1EX:NSG when 1EX:REAL:PL-stand.up 1EX:REAL:PL-look.for
 nani *ang* *nati-la-la-la-llang*
 coconut ANA 1EX:REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-look.for
 ‘Then when we stood up and looked for the coconut, we looked for it
 for ages...’ [NVCV06.27: 560.933]

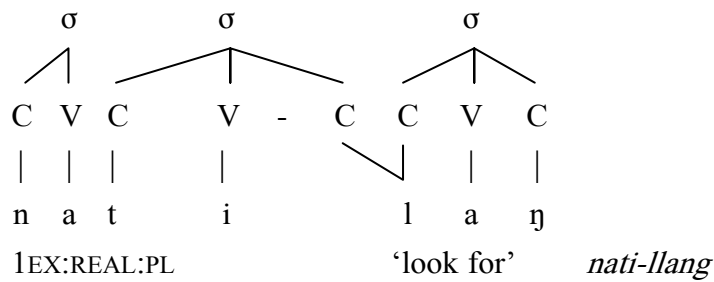
Inflection and syllabification of the CV stem *tur* (8.16) contrasts with the inflection and syllabification of the CCV stem *llang* (8.17).

³⁴ The realisation of the subject/mood prefix is not always consistent; there are cases of a speaker producing a re-syllabified subject/mood prefix with a reduplicated verb. In a description of child development, *ibi-ra-rrav* ‘he will laugh HABITUAL’ is articulated as *ib-ra-rrav*; *ibi-ka-kkan* ‘he will eat HABITUAL’ is articulated as *im-ka-kkan*. It should be noted however, that this particular speaker resides permanently outside of the Neverver speech community and this may have affected the speaker’s productive adherence to constraints.

(8.16) CV stem: inflection of *tur* ‘get up, stand’

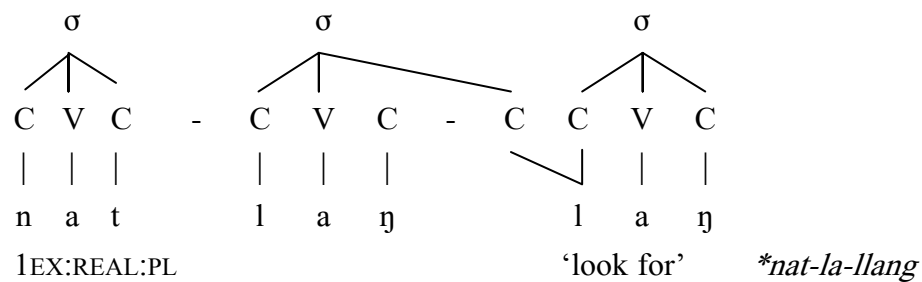


(8.17) CCV stem: inflection of *llang* ‘look for’

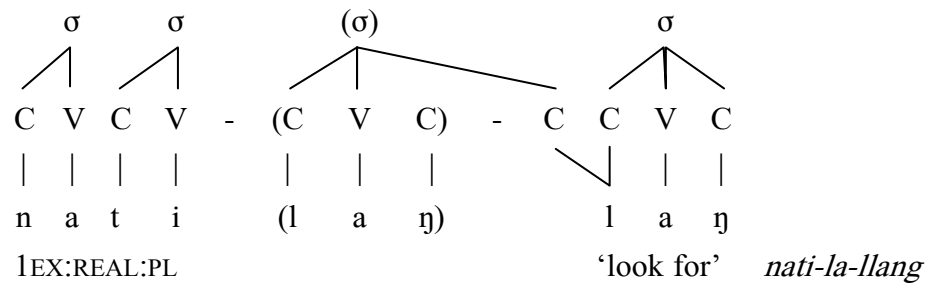


When inflected and reduplicated, the form of the subject/mood prefix is determined by the stem shape, rather than the reduplicative affix. In a very linear way, this suggests that formation and syllabification of the subject/mood prefix precedes the formation and syllabification of the reduplicative prefix.

(8.18) *CV DUP: inflection and reduplication of *llang* ‘look for’



(8.19) CCV stem: inflection and reduplication of *llang* ‘look for’



The same pattern is found with other simplex and reduplicated forms. Both the simplex and reduplicated forms of *tn* ‘cook’ appear with the subject/mood prefix *ati-*:

(8.20)	<i>Ba</i>	<i>nimokhmokh</i>	<i>ang</i>	<i>edr</i>	<i>ati-ti-tn</i>
	when	female	ANA	PL	3REAL:PL-DUP-cook
	<i>aran</i>	<i>nevat</i>	<i>ang,</i>	<i>ati-tn</i>	<i>mokh ij</i>
	LOC.on	stone	ANA	3REAL:PL-cook	all ANT
	<i>nisin</i>	<i>ngatian</i>	<i>anjing</i>	<i>edr</i>	
	thing:INDEF	many	that	PL	

‘When the women cooked on the stones, they already cooked up many of those.’ [NVKI29.83: 925.900]

While the form **at-ti-tn* observes the basic phonotactic constraint on the structure of syllables, it is not attested in the corpus.

8.1.4. Reduplication in other parts of speech

For most parts of speech other than verbs that exhibit reduplication, it is inherent or fossilised. The reduplicative template CV(C) is apparently observed, with no violations of Reduplication Constraint One. The notable exception to

this general pattern involves two vowel-initial items which reduplicate in the corpus. The local noun *ale* ‘far away’ is also attested as *ale-le* and *ale-le-le-le-le* with greater distance emphasised. The interjection *ave* ‘no’ is also attested as the more emphatic *ave-ve-ve-ve*. In both cases, the simplex form is disyllabic. The expected reduplication of the initial syllable does not occur. Instead, the reduplicative affix contains phonological material from the second syllable. There is no synchronic evidence that the initial vowel (*a-*) is a separable prefix in either case. As there are only two items that behave in this way, the items are considered to be exceptions.

8.2. Functions of reduplication

Reduplication expresses a range of functions in Neverver. Marantz and Wiltshire (2000:560) observe that ‘reduplicating affixes serve the same types of functions that any affix with its own phonological form can serve, including all derivational and inflectional functions’. Many of the functions commonly attested with reduplication are iconic in nature, in that ‘MORE OF FORM stands for MORE OF CONTENT’ (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:128), (also see Kiyomi 1995); however, Inkelas and Zoll (2005:14) observe that ‘reduplication, especially partial reduplication, is associated cross-linguistically with all sorts of meanings, both inflectional and derivational, whose degree of iconicity is often negligible’.

In Oceanic languages, Lynch et al. (2002:44) identify functions of reduplication which are more iconic, such as the repetition of an event and the plurality of participants, and functions of reduplication which are less iconic,

such as randomness of action and de-transitivisation. Similar iconic and non-iconic functions are expressed by reduplication in Neverver. In many constructions, reduplication is just one component of the construction; other affixes or morphemes may appear in conjunction with reduplication to express a given function. Table 8.2. summarises the range of functions of reduplication attested in the Neverver corpus.

Functions of Reduplication		In conjunction with...
Detransitive	Unspecified object deletion	
	Inherent object	
	Incorporated object	loss of noun marker <i>n(V)</i> -
	Reflexive/Reciprocal	pronominal object co-referential to subject argument
Stative Modifiers	Nominalisation	noun marker <i>n(V)</i> - and suffix <i>-ian</i>
	Stative verbs	(the marker <i>m-</i>)
	Verb modification	nuclear serial verb
Imperfective	Noun modification	
	Iterative	
	Durative action	
Number	Habitual	(progressive aspect)
	Diminutive	V2 nuclear serial verb <i>da</i>
	Participant number (S/O)	
Modality (+ negation)	Event number	
	Non-individuated patient	
	Prohibition	impersonal subject/mood prefix
Semantic extension of Verbs	Inability	
	Negative condition	conditional adverb <i>besi</i> 'if'
Inherent/Fossilised Reduplication		

Table 8.2. Functions of reduplication in Neverver

One of the most interesting observations that can be made regarding reduplication in Neverver is that it expresses functions that are associated with low transitivity. Transitivity is traditionally understood to concern the number of core arguments that are required to appear with a verb (cf. Crystal 1997:397; Dryer 2007a:250). The presence of a direct object argument is the defining characteristic of a transitive verb. Hopper and Thompson (1980:251), in their seminal article on transitivity, break down the traditional argument-based notion of transitivity into a range of parameters involving the degree to which ‘an activity is ‘carried-over’ or ‘transferred’ from agent to patient’. While they consider the number of participants to be an important indicator of transitivity, they also regard the inherent aspectual nature of the verb (kinesis, aspect, punctuality and volitionality), mood (mode) and polarity (affirmation), and the semantic nature of the participant encoded as the object (affectedness of O and individuation of O) as indicators of transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980:252-3).

Almost all of the functions of reduplication listed in Table 8.2. are associated with one or more low transitivity indicator. Thus, the claim can be made that the prototypical function of reduplication in Neverver is to mark low transitivity. The functions of reduplication and relevant comments on transitivity are presented in the following sub-sections.

8.2.1. Reduplication in detransitive constructions

Reduplication occurs in a range of constructions that are detransitive in the sense that they involve a reduction in the number of core arguments that are syntactically or semantically present. A range of transitive verb stems

reduplicate to form intransitive verbs with an unspecified or inherent object. Reduplication also occurs when objects are incorporated. Reduplication is part of the formation of reflexive/reciprocal constructions and it occurs in the derivation of nouns from verbs. It is displayed in the expression of prohibition which uses an impersonal subject construction. A brief description of each detransitive construction and a selection of examples follows.

8.2.1.1. Unspecified object deletion (§6.3.1.2.)

Certain transitive verbs undergo unspecified object deletion. In unspecified object deletion, reduplication derives an intransitive stem from a transitive verb. No patient/undergoer argument may be stated and none is implied.

(8.21)	<i>tn</i>	‘roast/cook s.t.’
	<i>titn</i>	‘do cooking’
	<i>gav</i>	‘rake’
	<i>gavgav</i>	‘do raking’
	<i>vul</i>	‘buy’
	<i>vulvul</i>	‘go shopping’
	<i>tuv</i>	‘cast (of a round object) at s.t.’
	<i>tuvtuv</i>	‘cast (of round objects) at s.t. (unspecified)’
	<i>tuv-ikh</i>	‘cast s.t. at s.t.’
	<i>tuvtuv-ikh</i>	‘cast s.t. at s.t. (unspecific)’
	<i>khit</i>	‘see s.t.’
	<i>khitkhit</i>	‘to look’

8.2.1.2. Inherent object (§6.3.1.2.)

Reduplication applies to transitive verbs which detransitivise to express an inherent object. With inherent object constructions, reduplication forms an intransitive stem. In each case, a particular patient is implied, though it is ungrammatical to encode it explicitly.

(8.22)	<i>leb</i>	‘carry s.t.’
	<i>lebleb</i>	‘carry a load of food’
	<i>leb</i>	‘give birth’
	<i>lebleb</i>	‘bear a large litter’
	<i>min</i>	‘drink’
	<i>minmin</i>	‘drink alcohol’
	<i>rakh</i>	‘clear (of garden area)’
	<i>rakhrakh</i>	‘do the weeding’
	<i>dev</i>	‘carry (of fire)’
	<i>devdev</i>	‘damp a fire’
	<i>gis</i>	‘cut’
	<i>gisgis</i>	‘cut hair’

8.2.1.3. Object incorporation (§10.1.)

In most incorporated object constructions, reduplication occurs, followed by a noun without its common noun marker *n(V)*-. Verbs with incorporated objects are formally intransitive.

- (8.23) *rev-rev-sal* 'walk in single file' from *rev* 'pull'; *nesal* 'road'
ver-ver-sal-ikh 'give directions to s.o.' from *ver* 'say'
sil-sil-kha 'burn trees' from *sil* 'burn, roast'; *nakha* 'tree, wood'
jal-jal-kha 'strip wood' from *jaljal* 'strip'
sir-sir-io 'follow a water course' from *sir* 'follow'; *nio* 'water, river'
lav-lav-ran 'give a hand/help' from *lav* 'get'; *nevran* 'hand'

8.2.1.4. Reflexives and reciprocals (§9.4.)

In Neverver, reflexive and reciprocal constructions are syntactically transitive but semantically intransitive. The argument encoded in object position is co-referential with the argument encoded in subject position. The co-referential object argument is invariably encoded as a pronoun. While some verb stems are inherently reflexive, reflexive constructions can also be formed by reduplicating a transitive stem as in (8.24) and (8.25).

- (8.24) Plain form *khur* 'scratch, itch'
- I-na ni-khurkhur na.*
- PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-scratch 1SG
- 'I scratched/itched myself.' [NVE08.35]

(8.25) Plain form *ve* ‘make, do’, lexicalised as ‘dress up’ when used in this reflexive construction

I-ve-ve *ei*
 3REAL:SG-DUP-make 3SG

‘He dressed himself up.’ [NVLX21.46]

Reciprocal constructions are formed in the same way as reflexives, with reduplication of the verb stem and the coreferential object argument encoded as a pronoun.

(8.26) *At-te-te* *adr*
 3REAL:PL-DUP-hit 3NSG

‘They(all) fought each other.’ [NVCT07.6: 23.57]

(8.27) *Ar-bir-bir* *sakhsakh adr*
 3REAL:DL-argue 3NSG 3NSG

‘They(2) always argued with each other’. [NVKS02.39]

(8.28) *Ar-ver-ver-ikh* *adr ar-ver*
 3REAL:DL-DUP-say-APPL 3NSG 3REAL:DL-say

barnakh nibr-uv...’

now 1IN:IRR:DL-go

‘They said to each other ‘Now we’ll go...’ [NVKS13.9]

In (8.29), reduplication occurs with both of the verbs in the core serial construction ‘give’. The reduplication of *lav* ‘get’ may be analysed both as reciprocal concordance, and as a marker of event/object argument plurality.

- (8.29) *Nit-lav-lav* *nebatn* *nidam*
 1IN:REAL:PL-DUP-get head yam
 nit-lik-lik *git*
 1IN:REAL:PL-DUP-pass 1IN:NSG
 ‘We give yams to each other.’ [NKVI06.123]

8.2.1.5. Nominalisation (§3.7., §12.5.)

Nominalisation may be signalled in part by the reduplication of a verb stem. Nominalised verbs prototypically carry the common noun marker *n(V)-* and the nominal suffix *-ian*. These affixes mark nominalisations as de-verbal. Nominalisations represent abstract rather than concrete concepts and they are therefore typically inanimate. Nominalisation in Neverver is detransitive in that the nominalised verb appears without any arguments, or with only a single argument encoded in a genitive construction.

- (8.30) INTRANSITIVE
 ni-bit-bit-ian ‘wrong-doing, evil’ from *bit* ‘err’
 ni-si-sien-ian ‘thought, decision’ from *sien* ‘think, consider’
 ni-tev-tev-ian ‘growth’ from *tev* ‘begin to grow’
 ni-jal-ian ‘sickness’ from *jal* ‘be ill’
 ni-jal-jal-ian ‘epidemic’

- (8.31) TRANSITIVE
- ni-bir-bir-ian* ‘competition’ from *bir* ‘be angry at s.o.’
- ni-vul-ian* ‘price, payment’ from *vul* ‘buy’
- ni-vul-vul-ian* ‘bride price’

The examples in (8.30) and (8.31) show that both intransitive and transitive stems may be reduplicated when nominalised. In addition, for some stems there are contrasting meanings associated with simplex and reduplicated nominalisations.

8.2.2. Reduplication in stative verbs

The process of reduplication often applies to verb stems belonging to the stative sub-class of verbs. Reduplication occurs when stative verbs are main verbs, when stative verbs appear as V2 elements in nuclear serial constructions, and when the same verbs are used as post-nominal modifiers in the noun phrase. When stative verbs function as the heads of the verb phrase, they have a single non-agentive argument. States are non-active, atelic, non-punctual and non-volitional. Combined with their single argument, this means that the transitivity associated with stative verbs is low.

8.2.2.1. Inherently stative verbs (§6.3.2.1)

A number of stative verbs belong to a special sub-class of intransitive verbs that carry the stative prefix *m-*. Many (though not all) of the verbs marked by *m-* display reduplication.

As noted in §6.3.2.1, the prefix *m-* is rather unproductive in the corpus.

Most of the verbs in this class are fossilised, with the prefix and (reduplicated) stem being inseparable.

(8.32)	<i>m-roro</i>	‘be withered (of yams, limbs)’
	<i>m-turtur</i>	‘be spotted (of leaves, fabric)’
	<i>m-rasras</i>	‘be light (of objects)’
	<i>m-sirsir</i>	‘be frilled (of leaves, petals, dresses)’
	<i>m-khiskhis</i>	‘be shattered (of objects)’
		‘be sure (of one’s knowledge)’
	<i>m-yolyol</i>	‘be baggy, loose (of clothing, bellies)’
	<i>m-yevyev</i>	‘be soft (of laplap ingredients)’
	<i>m-yovyov</i>	‘be plain (of laplap)’
	<i>m-kherkher</i>	‘be difficult (of situations)’

The prefix **mA-* has been reconstructed as a detransitive prefix with low productivity in Proto-Oceanic, deriving ‘neutral O-verbs from transitives’ (Lynch et al. 2002:82). There is no longer evidence that *m-* is specifically detransitive in Neverver; however, the constructions in which it occurs do exhibit features of low transitivity. The single arguments of the stative verbs in this sub-class are common and inanimate or abstract, and either mass or plural. According to Hopper and Thompson (1980:253), nouns with these semantic features are non-individuated and therefore contribute to low transitivity in a given proposition.

The lack of transitivity associated with the arguments of this sub-class of stative verbs may explain the presence of both reduplication and the prefix *m-* in verb forms. At an earlier stage of the language, *m-* was likely to have been a

more productive detransitive or stative prefix. A fossilised relic of this prefix remains in the lexicon. Given the hypothesis that reduplication is a marker of low transitivity in contemporary Neverver, the low transitivity associated with stative arguments could have triggered reduplication in a separate process.

8.2.2.2. Action to state (§6.3.2.)

A rather more productive process is the use of reduplication to derive a stative verb from a verb encoding an action. The actions listed in (8.33) all have stative reduplicated counterparts.

(8.33)	<i>tur</i>	‘stand up’	<i>turtur</i>	‘stand’
	<i>vor</i>	‘sit down’	<i>vorvor</i>	‘sit’
	<i>ngot</i>	‘break’	<i>ngotngot</i>	‘be broken’
	<i>jing</i>	‘lie down’	<i>jingjing</i>	‘be lying down’
	<i>tn</i>	‘cook’	<i>tutn</i>	‘be hot’
	<i>yav</i>	‘grow bushy leaves’	<i>yavyav</i>	‘be long-haired’

8.2.2.3. Temporary state to permanent state (§6.3.2.)

Reduplicated forms can display a contrast in terms of permanence where the simplex stem encodes a temporary state and the reduplicated stem encodes a more permanent state:

(8.34)	<i>bbut</i>	‘be silent’	<i>bbutbbut</i>	‘be dumb’
	<i>gal</i>	‘be stuck’	<i>galgal</i>	‘be tight’
	<i>lab</i>	‘be plentiful’	<i>lablab</i>	‘be big’

The verbs listed in example (8.34) all encode intransitive states. We also find the transitive verb *ling* ‘put’ can be reduplicated as *ling-ling* ‘leave’, expressing an action with a more permanent result.

8.2.2.4. State to maximal state

A small number of stative verbs display an excessive or maximal meaning when reduplicated. The examples in (8.35) demonstrate similar semantic relationships of excess/maximal meaning in the reduplicated forms.

(8.35)	<i>meser</i>	‘be ripped’	<i>mesmeser</i>	‘be shredded’
	<i>bbun</i>	‘be full’	<i>bbunbbun</i>	‘be full to the brim’
	<i>sar</i>	‘hang’	<i>sarsar</i>	‘be flowing’

8.2.2.5. Permanent state to temporary state

The contrasts between simplex and reduplicated forms of the verbs described in §8.2.2.2. - §8.2.2.4. express increased permanence or statehood in a proposition. In a rather interesting contrast, the state *lukh* ‘live, stay’, which has inherent permanent duration, reduplicates as *lukh-lukh* ‘wait’, emphasising the temporary nature of duration. The form also appears with multiple reduplicative affixes, indicating an event of long, although temporary, duration. The examples in (8.36) to (8.39) contrast in terms of permanent and temporary duration, and in terms of long and short temporary duration.

(8.36)	<i>Dran</i>	<i>i-skham,</i>	<i>nibisbokh</i>	<i>adr-ikh</i>	<i>nivri</i>
	TMPPN	3REAL:SG-one	rat	3NSG-APPL	crab

ar-lukh.

3REAL:DL-live

‘One time, there lived a rat and a crab.’ [NVCT.01.3: 7.408]

(8.37) Reduplicated form *lukhlukh* lexicalised as ‘wait’

Gam kabir-lukhlukh blev tata t-gam,

2NSG 2IRR:DL-wait with father PSDT-2NSG

i-na nim-bbu.

PSNPR-1SG 1IRR:SG-go

‘You wait here with your father, I’ll go.’ [NVKS18.68: 336.628]

(8.38) *At-lukh-lukhlukh i-sber dran an*

3REAL:PL-DUP-wait 3REAL:SG-reach TMPPN NMOD

nidam i-yaj

yam 3REAL:SG-ripe

‘They waited until the time when the yams were ripe.’ [NVKS12.06]

(8.39) *Baga at-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukhlukh, ba naut ang*

then 3REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-wait when place ANA

i-met...

3REAL:SG- dark

‘Then they waited on and on and when it was dark...’ [NVKS15.29-

30]

A similar function is expressed with the reduplicated form of the existential verb *tokh* ‘exist’. When reduplicated, *tokh-tokh* also expresses the meaning of staying or waiting with temporary duration.

- (8.40) *Niterikh titi-dr ar-tokh-tokh, adr*
 child 3PS-PL 3REAL:DL-DUP-exist 3NSG
ar-uv lakha.
 3REAL:DL-go bush
 ‘Two of their children stayed and two went to the bush.’ [NVKS07.9:
 53.356]

The use of reduplication to express a temporary state seems at odds with the examples of reduplication used to express increased stativeness, and corresponding low transitivity. Reduced permanence or a focus on the temporary nature of a state is however, a feature that is compatible with the detransitive notion of imperfectivity, which is discussed in §8.2.3.

8.2.2.6. Verb modification: Nuclear serial verb constructions (§10.2. - §10.5.)

Stative verbs can appear in the V2 position of a nuclear serial construction. Many verbs in this position display reduplication. These V2 elements may combine quite productively with semantically appropriate V1 elements. They contribute adverb-type meanings to the V1 element that they occur with. Some modifiers appear in fossilised reduplicated forms, with a simplex stem not attested in the contemporary corpus.

- (8.41) *ngis-langlang* ‘smile drunkenly’ from *ngis* ‘smile’; *langlang* ‘be drunk
- tur-malmal* ‘stand naked’ from *tur* ‘stand’; *malmal* ‘be naked’
- tev-gon-gon* ‘grow together’ from *tev* ‘begin to grow’; *gon* ‘be joined, to join’
- vrokh-tata* ‘hold tightly’ from *vrokh* ‘hold’; *tata* ‘promise’
- sar-yel-yel* ‘hang out (e.g. of husk)’ from *sar* hang; *yel* ‘scoop out’
- tur-lakhlakh* ‘stand quietly’ from *tur* ‘stand’; **lakh*
- vu-tettes* ‘go quickly’ from *vu* ‘go’; *?ttes* ‘V2 EMPHATIC’
- matur-melmel* ‘sleep deeply’ from *matur* sleep; *?mmel* ‘be sour (of fruit)

A further comment can be made about reduplication in nuclear SVCs. A small number of nuclear SVCs exhibit reduplication in V1 rather than V2. One example is the intransitive construction *ka-kkan-bor* ‘eat plain, without seasoning’. Another is the transitive construction *susuv-bkhas* ‘shave/scrape clean’. Both examples were elicited from language consultants and in the elicitation context, appear to express habitual/generic aspect. Reduplication in V1 then, may involve aspectual rather than stative meaning. The nuclear SVC *kha-khavukh si-skham-ikh* ‘plant (seedlings) individually with s.t.’ displays reduplication in both V1 and V2. In this case, V1 reduplication expresses the aspectual meaning of iteration, and V2 reduplication expresses the expected stative-type meaning, deriving ‘individually, alone’ from the numeral ‘one’. The applicative suffix *-ikh* adds a core instrumental argument.

8.2.2.7. Noun modification (§4.5.1.)

A small number of stative verbs are reduplicated when used as nominal modifiers. Verbs such as *lele* ‘small’ and *(ber)ber* ‘long’ combine quite productively with semantically appropriate nouns and contribute a consistent quality or attribute to the noun they occur with. Verbs such as *lalleng* ‘drooping/hanging (of corn)’ and *tevtev* ‘germinated (of coconuts)’ combine with only one noun and have more lexicalised meanings. The stative verb *lele* ‘small’ appears in a fossilised reduplicated form, with the simplex stem **le* not attested.

- (8.42)
- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>nisib lele</i> | ‘a small knife’ from <i>lele</i> ‘be small’ |
| <i>nevas berber</i> | ‘a long yam’ from <i>(ber)ber</i> ‘be long, tall’ |
| <i>kon lalleng</i> | ‘corn with drooping husks’ from <i>lalleng</i> ‘droop, hang down’ |
| <i>nani tevtev</i> | ‘a germinated coconut’ from <i>tev</i> ‘begin to grow’ |
| <i>netas yalyal</i> | ‘a kind of fish’ from <i>yalyal</i> ‘fly’ |
| <i>nevat metmet</i> | ‘a black stone’ from <i>(met)met</i> ‘be dark, black’ |
| <i>nidam sokhsokh</i> | ‘baked yams’ from <i>sokh</i> ‘join’ |
| <i>namur dengdeng</i> | ‘a landslide’ from <i>deng</i> ‘step’ <i>dengdeng</i> ‘be moving’ |

8.2.3. Reduplication and imperfective aspect (§7.2.3.7.)

The functions of reduplication that are discussed in this section all involve the expression of imperfective aspect. Imperfective aspect can be understood as a focus on the internal temporal structure of an event rather than a focus on a

There are a number of punctual verb stems that display an iterative meaning when reduplicated. The meaning of the reduplicated form is often somewhat lexicalised. A selection of these verbs is displayed in example (8.46):

(8.46)	<i>bling</i>	‘coil, tie’	<i>blingbling</i>	‘braid’
	<i>voj</i>	‘clap’	<i>vovoj</i>	‘applaud’
	<i>bing</i>	‘fold’	<i>bingbing</i>	‘roll’
	<i>jur</i>	‘poke’	<i>jurjur</i>	‘spread out’
	<i>tas</i>	‘scratch’	<i>tastas</i>	‘file, sharpen’
	<i>sokh</i>	‘join’	<i>sokhsokh</i>	‘have intercourse’
	<i>khas</i>	‘bite’	<i>khaskhas</i>	‘chew’
	<i>tav</i>	‘spear’	<i>tavtav</i>	‘spread out (with a stick)’

Hopper and Thompson (1980) identify punctual events as having high transitivity. When a punctual action is reduplicated to express the imperfective meaning of iteration, the transitivity of the event is reduced.

8.2.3.2. Habitual

Reduplication of a verb can signal that an action is performed habitually. Habitual meaning expressed through reduplication is particularly associated with inherently durative actions. Such actions have low transitivity according to Hopper and Thompson (1980).

Habitual reduplication is attested in descriptions of places where particular activities are commonly carried out:

(8.47) *I-vlem kut ati-ka-kkan ye*
 3REAL:SG-come LOCPN 3REAL:PL-DUP-eat RSPN
 ‘He came to the place where they eat’ [NVCV05:32: 1420.252]

(8.48) *Nibir-sir nesal an kati-le-lles*
 1IN:IRR:DL-follow road NMOD 2REAL:PL-DUP-bathe
duvakh ye ang
 first RSPN ANA
 ‘We’ll follow the road where you used to bathe.’ [NVCV09.14:
 95.013]

(8.49) *I-vu lon kut an ar-maur-maur*
 3REAL:SG-go LOC LOCPN NMOD IMPS:REAL-DUP-live
ye lon hospitel.
 RSPN LOC hospital
 ‘He went to the place where they/people recuperate, to hospital.’
 [NVCT04.33:120.136]

Reduplication with habitual meaning is compatible with the progressive serial construction.

(8.50) *Bor kut an adr at-tokh*
 maybe LOCPN NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL-PROG

at-vet-vet *mat e*

3REAL:PL-DUP-weave mat RSPN

‘...maybe at the place where they are weaving mats.’ [NVCV02.96:
654.187]

(8.51) *Marlin a i-tokh i-ku-kuk*

Marlin ANA 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-DUP-cook

duvakh Rensarie ang?

first Rensarie ANA

‘The Marlin who used to be cooking at Rensarie?’ [NVCV08.1:
385.673]

8.2.3.3. Durative action

Reduplication of an action verb can emphasise the time that it takes for an action to be carried out. In contrast to punctual verbs, which reduplicate to express iterative meaning, verbs that reduplicate to focus on duration are non-punctual and therefore already low in transitivity. Duration is generally expressed with multiple reduplicative affixes. The longer that an action is perceived to continue, the more reduplicative affixes are present. Durative action clauses are typically introduced with a simplex form in a preceding clause. Termination of the action is signalled in a subsequent clause.

The action verb *dum* ‘run’ has inherent duration and when reduplicated, its inherent duration is emphasised, indicating that running takes place for a long time. In example (8.52), the action of running goes on and on until the agent reaches a river. His running terminates when he jumps into the water.

- (8.52) *Khavut-tro i-jadr i-dum;*
 husband-old 3REAL:SG-pass 3REAL:SG-run
i-dum-dum-dum-dum, i-trov lon nio
 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-run 3REAL:SG-jump LOC river
 ‘The old man passed them running (ran past?); he ran on and on and
 jumped into the river.’ [NVKS12.87-88]

In the second example, a group of agents laugh for a period of time, during which individual members of the group carry out other actions. The termination of the laughter is encoded explicitly.

- (8.53) *Nati-vlem nat-vor lappan mago*
 1EX:REAL:PL-come 1EX:REAL:PL-sit under mango
nati-rrav nati-ra-ra-ra-ra-rrav,
 1EX:REAL:PL-laugh 1EX:REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-laugh
Lucy i-rrik bak...
 Lucy 3REAL:SG-throw bag
Nati-rrav lu i-suvsvuv,
 1EX:REAL:PL-laugh COMPL 3REAL:SG-to.be.finished
 ‘We came and sat under the mango tree and we laughed; we laughed
 our heads off, Lucy threw down her bag... (When) we finished
 laughing...’ [NVCV02.76-78: 485.741-499.553]

In the third example, the agents (boys returning from an initiation ceremony) dance closer and closer to their mothers.

- (8.54) *At-sav* *ati-vlem,* *ati-vle-vle-vle-vlem*
 3REAL:PL-dance 3REAL:PL-come 3REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-come
ati-vlem *tuan* *nida* *titi* *edr*
 3REAL:PL-come LOCPSN mother 3PS:SG PL
 ‘They danced and came; they came closer and closer; they came to
 their mothers.’ [NVKS03:42]

Punctual verbs are occasionally affixed with multiple reduplicative affixes. The following examples display transitive verbs stem with inherent punctuality undergoing multiple reduplication. Interestingly, the object argument of the simplex stem is suppressed in the reduplicated form. Multiple reduplication in this case serves an overtly detransitive function.

- (8.55) *I-te* *nakha* *ang...* *i-te-te-te-te-te;*
 3REAL:SG-cut tree ANA 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-cut
salan *ang* *i-vu,* *i-tokh* *i-te*
 friend ANA 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-cut
mad-ikh
 EMPH-VI
 ‘He cut the tree... he cut on and on; his friend went but he was
 cutting it!’ [NVKS21.30-31: 213.058-217.024]

- (8.56) *Man-jing* *i-ver* *nabit-var* *kon* *ang.*
 man-be.there 3REAL:SG-say 1EX:IRR:PL-pick corn ANA

Ba nat-var, nat-var-var-var-var-var,
 when 1EX:REAL:PL-pick 1EX:REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-pick
nat-var mokh mej kon ang.
 1EX:REAL:PL-pick all IMM corn ANA
 ‘That man told us to pick the corn. When we picked (the corn), we
 picked and picked and picked; we just picked all the corn.’
 [NVKW06.19]

In example (8.56), the clause *Ba natvar...* ‘when we picked (the corn)’ does not have a patient argument; however, it is not detransitive construction. Instead, it involves a patient that can be retrieved from the immediately preceding clause. For this reason, the patient argument does not need to be overtly encoded. The reduplicated clause *nat-var-var-var-var-var* ‘we picked ITERATIVE’ also has no overt patient. In contrast to the simplex clause however, this clause may not express a patient. Language consultants rejected a formally transitive clause with an overtly expressed patient: **nat-var-var-var-var-var kon*.

8.2.3.4. Diminutive

Diminution of varying kinds can be signalled by reduplication in a nuclear SVC with the aspectual serial verb *da* ‘PARTITIVE’ in V2 position. The precise nature of diminution depends on the nature of the proposition encoded. The following four constructions were produced during a word processing session by two language consultants and illustrate the contrast between diminution of action and diminution of entity. Examples (8.57) and (8.58) concern the positioning of the cursor on a computer screen:

(8.57) *Kub-rev im-sakh-sakh-da*
2IRR:SG-pull 3IRR:SG-DUP-go.up-PART
'Pull it up a bit.' [KWKW01.11]

(8.58) *Kub-rev im-das-das-da*
2IRR:SG-pull 3IRR:SG-DUP-go.down-PART
'Pull it down a bit.' [KWKW01.12]

Examples (8.59) and (8.60) concern the sizing of images. In both cases, the size of the image is to be altered by a small amount. The stem *lab* 'be plenty' reduplicates to form *lablab* 'be big'. As noted previously, *lele* 'be small' is an instance of inherent or fossilised reduplication.

(8.59) *Kum-bbue ib-lablab-da*
2IRR:SG-make 3IRR:SG-big-PART
'Make it a little bigger.' [KWKW01.9]

(8.60) *Kum-bbue ib-lele-da*
2IRR:SG-make 3IRR:SG-small-PART
'Make it a little smaller.' [KWKW01.10]

The state *tgar* 'be cool' reduplicates to the inchoative form *ta-tgar* 'become cool/cool down'. Stative-inchoative pairs expressed through reduplication are rare in the corpus. The reduplication of *tgar* is only attested with the partitive serial verb meaning 'cool down a bit'. Example (8.61) is a rather complex

construction combining two nuclear serial verbs in a switch subject core serial sequence:

- (8.61) *Kum-lav-lu im-ta-tgar-da*
2IRR:SG-get-COMPL 3IRR:SG-DUP-cool-PART
'Take it out to cool down a bit (of a cooked laplap).' [NVDL11.12]

The action *lu* 'shoot' is inherently punctual. As noted in §7.2.3.7, reduplication of punctual actions produces an iterative meaning; combined with the partitive serial verb, this signals repetition of the action over a short time span in (8.62).

- (8.62) *Nar-lu-lu-da niten t-nam*
1EX:REAL:DL-DUP-shoot-PART thing:DEF PSDT-1EX:NSG
'We shot with our things (bows and arrows) for a bit.' [NVKS18.111: 569.817]

A semantic property of the temporary state *mjakh* 'have a fever' is intensity. Reduplication, combined with the partitive serial verb, signals a lower degree of intensity.

- (8.63) *Ni-mjakh-mjakh-da ing.*
1REAL:SG-DUP-have.fever-PART EXCL
'I'm a bit feverish!' [NVKS26.34: 162.383]

8.2.4. Reduplication and number

Reduplication is widely associated with the expression of quantity.

Languages may encode distinctions related to ‘participants of event [sic] or events themselves’ (Moravcsik 1978:317). Corbett (2000:246-7), in his general discussion of verbal number, distinguishes between PARTICIPANT NUMBER, where a verb varies in form according to how many participants are involved, and EVENT NUMBER, where a verb varies in form according to how often the event it encodes occurs. Corbett (2000:249) also observes that ‘some languages have both types of verbal number and may signal both using the same formal device’. In Neverver, this is precisely what we find, with reduplication encoding both event number and participant number.

With respect to imperfective aspect, we have seen that multiple reduplicative affixes mark greater iteration and duration. With respect to participant number, there is no distinction made between different quantities of participants, that is, we don’t find multiple reduplicative affixes when the number of participants is very large. A single reduplicative affix signals general plurality.

Participant number is associated with low transitivity as plural participants are non-individuated (Hopper and Thompson 1980). We might also associate event number with low transitivity on the grounds that plural events are less individuated than singular events.

8.2.4.1. Marking plural S/P

Reduplication can signal multiple agents, when they have the grammatical function S, performing the same action separately.

- (8.64) *[Nangatian ati-vle-vlem]₁ [at-dum-dum*
 everyone 3REAL:PL-DUP-come 3REAL:PL-DUP-run
lon nemaling titi-r]₂
 LOC sleeping.mat 3PS-PL
 ‘Everyone came, they ran from their beds...’ [NVKS15.65]

Reduplication can signal multiple patient participants, with the grammatical function P.

- (8.65) *Ale, i-likh-likh neman ang edr.*
 then 3REAL:SG-DUP-tie.up bird ANA PL
 ‘Then he tied up all the birds.’ [NVKS09.58]

- (8.66) *Ni-khit-khit nidam ang edr.*
 1REAL:SG-DUP-see yam ANA PL
 ‘I look at/check all the yams.’ [NVDL08.3]

In example (8.67), both clauses involve plural event number as well as encoding plural subject (and in the first clause, object) arguments. In this example, reduplication appears to reinforce the plurality of all components of the proposition.

- (8.67) *[At-lemlem nidam titi-dr]₁ [at-mal-malu]₂*
 3REAL:PL-DUP-carry yam 3PS-PL 3REAL:PL-DUP-leave
 ‘They carried their yams and they dispersed.’ [NVKI21.68: 270.507]

8.2.4.2. Participant number and ergativity

With respect to the patterning of participant number in transitive constructions, Corbett (2000:253) makes the observation that ‘verbal number operates on an ergative basis: if the number of participants is relevant it will be that of the most directly affected argument of the verb (the absolutive).’ An ergative pattern is suggested in the preceding data, with reduplicated transitive constructions providing information about arguments with the grammatical function P as in (8.65) and (8.66) (also see §7.2.3.7). Reduplicated intransitive constructions provide number information about arguments with the grammatical function S as in (8.64) and (8.67₂). When both arguments of a transitive verb are plural in number, reduplication may serve to reinforce both event and participant number simultaneously. Thus, reduplication might be interpreted as modifying the entire proposition in (8.67₁).

Corbett (2000:253) observes that ‘we regularly find verbal number operating on an ergative basis, while in the same language nominal number marked on the verb operates on a different basis.’ This can be observed in Neverver. Nominal number can be signalled on the verb in the subject/mood prefix. The subject/mood prefix agrees with the number of nominative arguments (S and A) but not the accusative argument (P). Verbal number can be reflected through reduplication which appears to encode the participant number of absolutive arguments (S and P). The marking of participant number has been observed to follow an ergative pattern elsewhere, with respect to the argument quantifier *mokh* ‘all’ (§7.2.2.2.).

8.2.4.3. Non-individuated patients

In addition to signalling participant and event number, reduplication can indicate the complete affectedness of the single patient participant. Affectedness is normally associated with high transitivity; however, in example (8.68), the patient argument is a mass noun which happens to be treated as singular. Mass nouns are non-individuated and therefore low in transitivity.

Example (8.68) involves the patient *nani* ‘coconut’ encoded in object position. While *nani* can refer to individual coconut fruit or trees, in this case it refers to multiple pieces of freshly harvested copra that are being transported from the coconut plantation to the copra burner. The switch subject core serial construction treats *nani* as a mass or collective noun and the verb *vlem* carries the singular subject/mood prefix.

- (8.68) *Ni-vus-vus* *nani* *i-vlem* *sur* *nesal*
 1REAL:SG-DUP-carry coconut 3REAL:SG-come near road
 ‘I carry all the coconut to the road.’ [NVDL02.8]

8.2.4.4. Reduplication and plural nouns

In many languages that exhibit reduplication, nouns are reduplicated to express plurality (cf. Malayo-Polynesian languages surveyed by Kiyomi (1995), noun reduplication in Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001), and noun reduplication in Maori (Keegan 1996)); however, this kind of reduplication is not found in Neverver. Instead, a range of other types of marking are used. Options include the use of post-nominal quantifiers or a plural marker within the noun phrase, the obligatory subject/mood prefix on the verb which encodes number, and the use of the post-verbal argument quantifier *mokh* ‘all’.

8.2.5. Reduplication, mood and negative polarity

Reduplication is associated with the expression of prohibition, inability and negative condition. The expression of all three functions involves the post-verbal negative particle *si*. Prohibition makes use of the impersonal subject prefix and in some cases irrealis mood. Negative condition always carries irrealis mood. Negative polarity and irrealis mood are both indicators of low transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980).

8.2.5.1. Prohibition (§7.1.2.3., §9.5.1.)

Reduplication is used in the formation of one type of prohibitive construction. In example (8.69), the reduplicated verb stem carries the impersonal subject/mood marker and the post-verbal negative particle *si*. This construction is marked for realis mood.

- (8.69) *No, ar-ver-ver si.*
 no IMPS:REAL-DUP-say NEG
 ‘No, don't say that!’ [NVCV05.9: 1327.521]

Prohibition can also be expressed through the use of the second person irrealis subject/mood prefix, as displayed in example (8.70).

- (8.70) *No! Kub-lis-lis si*
 no 2IRR:SG-DUP-afraid NEG
 ‘No, don't be afraid.’ [NVKS06.44]

8.2.5.2. Inability

Reduplication can be used to express inability, with the negative particle *si*.

- (8.71) *Be niterikh mokhmokh ang ei i-ka-kkan si*
 but child female ANA 3SG 3REAL:SG-DUP-eat NEG
 ‘But the girl, she couldn’t eat.’ [NVKS11.38]

- (8.72) *Ga i-yel-yel mo si i-vlem*
 then 3REAL:SG-DUP-scoop-out CONT NEG 3REAL:SG-come
aiem
 home
 ‘Then she couldn’t scoop out coconuts anymore and she came home.’
 [NVCV06.39: 612.182]

- (8.73) *Na ni-ver nimt-uv-uv mo si*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-say 1IN:IRR:PL-DUP-go CONT NEG
nibit-lav nivri ang
 1IN:IRR:PL-get crab ANA
 ‘I said we couldn’t go to get the crabs anymore.’ [NVCV02.99:
 684.626]

8.2.5.3. Negative condition (§13.3.4.)

Reduplication is used to express negative condition in clauses introduced by *besi* ‘if’. In the following constructions, speakers are lamenting the fact that the local Pastor is going to be extremely busy in the days prior to an upcoming wedding

ceremony. Only the condition is encoded by the speakers; the consequence has already been discussed.

- (8.74) *Besi man-jakh adr abit-ve-ve*
 if man-be.here PL 3IRR:PL-DUP-do
si im-gang
 NEG 3IRR:SG-like.so
 ‘If only these men hadn’t done it like that.’ [NVCV10.87: 436.187]

- (8.75) *Besi abit-lav-lav si kek ang im-bbu*
 if 3IRR:PL-DUP-get NEG cake ANA 3IRR:SG-go
tuan ei
 LOCPSN 3SG
 ‘If only they hadn’t assigned the cake (making) to him.’
 [NVCV10.90: 449.371]

8.2.6. Reduplication and semantic extension

There are a number of simplex stems in the corpus with semantically related reduplicated forms. The relationship between the plain and reduplicated forms is rather unpredictable. In some cases, it requires rather specific cultural knowledge to interpret the connection between a simplex and reduplicated pair. A good example of this is *bakh* ‘go for one’s circumcision ceremony’ and *bakhbakh* ‘hide’. The circumcision ceremony involves a considerable period of seclusion for young men, in a location hidden from the female members of the community.

Numerous pairs of simplex and reduplicated verbs are displayed in (8.76).

(8.76)	<i>skham</i>	‘one (NUMERAL)’
	<i>saskham~siskham</i>	‘be alone; V2 ‘individually’
	<i>ssor</i>	‘talk’
	<i>sorsor</i>	‘lie’
	<i>bir</i>	‘break’
	<i>birbir</i>	‘argue’
	<i>khas</i>	‘bite’
	<i>khaskhas</i>	‘be spicy’
	<i>khan</i>	‘eat s.t.’
	<i>khankhan-ikh</i>	‘eat s.t. with s.t.’
	<i>vkhal</i>	‘fight’
	<i>vavkhal</i>	‘grate’
	<i>vang</i>	‘be fascinated’
	<i>vangvang</i>	‘be alight (of fire)’
	<i>m-mang</i>	‘be noisy’
	<i>mangmang</i>	‘have an open mouth’
	<i>gar</i>	‘scale (of fish)’
	<i>gargar</i>	‘clean laplap grater’
	<i>lel</i>	‘be wise’
	<i>lelel</i>	‘listen hard’
	<i>bakh</i>	‘go for circumcision ceremony’
	<i>bakhbakh</i>	‘hide’
	<i>vkhas</i>	‘smooth out, tidy (cooking stones)’

<i>vavkhas</i>	‘decorate’
<i>vong</i>	‘yellow on one side (of a certain leaf)’
<i>vongvong</i>	‘be pure’
<i>yang</i>	‘be born’
<i>yangyang</i>	‘be yellow’
<i>?bar</i>	‘slap; be blind’
<i>barbar</i>	‘cheat’
<i>dev</i>	‘carry fire’
<i>devdev</i>	‘damp a fire’

8.2.7. Inherent/fossilised reduplication

Inherent or fossilised reduplication has been documented by Crowley (2006a:89) in Avava and by Hyslop (2001:360) in Lolovoli. In the Neverver corpus, items with inherent reduplication are found in the two major word classes – verbs and nouns.

A large number of verb stems are attested in what appears to be a reduplicated form; however, there is either no simplex form attested in the corpus, or the relationship between the simplex form and reduplicated form is unclear. Verb stems with inherent reduplication belong to a range of sub-classes.

(8.77) STATIVE

**mal*

malmal ‘be naked’

**yov*

<i>yovyov</i>	‘be white’
<i>*ban</i>	
<i>banban</i>	‘strongly (V2)’
<i>?kkis</i>	‘peel (by hand)’
<i>kiskis, khiskhis</i>	‘surely (V2)’
<i>?khat</i>	‘be spoiled (of yams)’
<i>khatkhat</i>	‘be dry’
<i>?bor</i>	‘be shy; tasteless’
<i>borbor</i>	‘be rough’

(8.78) INTRANSITIVE ACTION

<i>*gol</i>	
<i>golgol</i>	‘chat’
<i>*gos</i>	
<i>gosgos</i>	‘grunt fearfully’
<i>*vid</i>	
<i>vidvid</i>	‘writhe (of snakes)’
<i>vivid</i>	‘pulse painfully (of aches and wounds)’
<i>?vas</i>	‘four’
<i>vasvas</i>	‘be powerful; start a pandanas mat’

(8.79) TRANSITIVE ACTION

<i>*reb</i>	
<i>rebreb</i>	‘make level’
<i>*tak</i>	

<i>tatak</i>	‘create’
<i>*di</i>	
<i>didi</i>	‘dip’
<i>?jem</i>	‘chew’
<i>jemjem</i>	‘pick island cabbage’
<i>?jir</i>	‘be sick to one’s stomach’
<i>jirjir</i>	‘comb’
<i>?lov</i>	‘flood’
<i>lovlov</i>	‘beat out/flat (of walling bamboo)’

Different types of nouns also exhibit inherent reduplication. These items are commonly used and considered inseparable.

(8.80) KINSHIP

<i>bbubbu</i>	‘grandfather’
<i>bibi</i>	‘maternal uncle’
<i>tatan</i>	‘brother’

(8.81) PRONOUN

<i>titi</i>	‘3rd person possessive determiner’
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(8.82) COMMON NOUN

<i>nimokhmokh</i>	‘woman’
<i>nibarbar</i>	‘pig’
<i>nikhomkhomgris</i>	‘roof-frame bamboo’

<i>nijongjong</i>	‘grass’
<i>nakhavkhav</i>	‘leaf mat’
<i>nitamtam</i>	‘temporary shelter’
<i>nakhatkhat</i>	‘basket’

The postverbal frequentative modifier *sakhsakh* ‘FREQ’ also displays inherent reduplication, as do the adverbial modifiers *lala* ‘early (of mornings)’, *savsav* ‘mid (of the day)’, *sese* ‘late (of the afternoon)’ and *tatang* ‘mid (of the night)’.

8.3. Reduplication and repetition

In Neverver, a given morpheme will typically carry one reduplicative affix; however, as reported in §7.2.3.7., multiple reduplication is used productively in Neverver to express the meanings of duration and iteration. This is illustrated the following examples:

- (8.83) *At-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukh-lukh.*
 3REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-live
 ‘They stayed/waited there for ages and ages.’ [NVKS03.22]
- (8.84) *Niterikh-mokhmokh ati-le-le-le-le-lles,*
 child-female 3REAL:PL-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-bathe
 ‘The girls bathed on and on.’ [NVKS18.16: 76.713]

In her work on the Ambae dialect of Lolovoli in Vanuatu, Hyslop (2001:341) distinguishes between the reduplication of a word, and the multiple repetition of a word. While the functions associated with the two processes overlap, Hyslop (2001:362) reports that intonation and stress patterns differ. In Lolovoli, when a word is repeated, each instance carries its own stress, and it can be separated from other instances of the word by a pause. In Neverver, we can also distinguish between repetition and reduplication, with respect to verbs. Repetition and reduplication are both used to express the aspectual notion of duration. In the case of repetition, there appears to be an additional dramatic effect, where repetition is used to build suspense. When a verb stem is repeated rather than reduplicated, it carries its own subject/mood prefix and its own stress. In the corpus, there are examples of repetition, particularly within core serial constructions. There are also a small number of examples of atypical reduplication in both core and nuclear serial constructions. In these atypical cases of reduplication, there is only one subject-mood prefix per construction, but the constraint that applies to the formation of any reduplicative affix is ignored.

(8.85) Repetition inside a core SVC

Ar-suka-kh *ar-suka-kh* *ar-suka-kh*
 IMPS:REAL-stake-VI IMPS:REAL-stake-VI IMPS:REAL-stake-VI

ar-suka-kh *i-suvsvuv*
 IMPS:REAL-stake-VI 3REAL:SG-be.finished

‘They staked (the yams) on and on to completion.’ [NVKS10.35]

(8.86) Repetition and reduplication inside a core SVC

I-mlili *lon* *nokhos* *i-vlem*
 3REAL:SG-return LOCgarden 3REAL:SG-come

i-vlem *i-vlem* *i-vlem*
 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-come

i-vle-vle-vle-vle-vlem *i-sber* *aiem*
 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-come 3REAL:SG-reach home
 ‘He returned from the garden, he came on and on and on until he
 reached home.’ [NVKS02.59]

(8.87) Repetition + multiple atypical reduplication inside nuclear SVC

Baga *mang* *i-vavu* *i-vavu-vavu-vavu-vavu*
 then man-ANA 3REAL:SG-walk 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP
 -*vavu* -*melmelikh* *kut* *an* *i-mbbu* *e*
 -walk -know.nothing.about LOC PN NMOD 3IRR:SG-go RSPN
 ‘Then, the man walked, he walked on and on not knowing where he
 was going.’ [NVKS17.86]

In (8.87), full reduplication of a bisyllabic stem is present; in (8.88) below, a form of bisyllabic reduplication is present, but various consonants have been dropped. This last example might best be understood as a product of rapid speech.

(8.88) Multiple atypical reduplication inside core SVC

Ar-khavu-avu-avukh *i-suvsuv* *ij*

IMPS:REAL-DUP-DUP-plant 3REAL:SG-be.finished ANT

‘They had planted on and on to completion.’ [NVKS10.28]

Chapter Nine

Clause Structure

The formation of clauses with verbal and non-verbal predicates is considered in this chapter. In verbal clauses, core arguments are encoded as grammatical subjects, primary objects or secondary objects; non-core arguments are encoded as optional obliques (§9.1.). Most obliques are introduced by prepositions, which are discussed in detail in §9.1.4. Verbal clauses are negated by a simple post-verbal negative particle described in §9.2. Interrogative clauses, including constituent interrogatives, polar interrogatives, and alternation questions are described in §9.3., followed by a presentation of reflexive and reciprocal constructions in §9.4. and impersonal constructions in §9.5. In the text corpus, the fronting of constituents can be observed. Fronting is considered in §9.6.; followed by brief descriptions of a small number of multipurpose modifiers in §9.7., and additional markers of modality in §9.8. Non-verbal clauses are considered in §9.9. The chapter concludes with observations on common interjections in interactional texts in §9.10.

9.1. The structure of verbal clauses

In chapter six, the grammatical functions A, P, and S were introduced in the description of verbs and their core arguments. A is the function played by the agent/actor of a prototypical transitive verb; P is the function played by the patient/undergoer of a prototypical transitive verb; and S is the function played by the single argument of an intransitive verb. In considering ditransitive verbs in Neverver, it is necessary to expand the set of core grammatical functions

already introduced as these functions can only account for the arguments of intransitive and transitive verbs. In ditransitive constructions, there is both a primary object and secondary object. Dryer (2007a) offers a useful extension to Andrew's (1985; 2007) account of noun phrase functions. Dryer (2007a) employs the grammatical functions A, P, and S in discussing transitive and intransitive clauses; in addition, he uses two further grammatical functions when considering ditransitive clauses: 'we can use the label 'R' for the recipient-like argument in ditransitive clauses and 'T' for the theme argument (something which undergoes a change in location or to which a location is attributed)' (Dryer 2007a:254). A ditransitive clause then can be described as having arguments with the functions A, R, and T.

In this section, the encoding of arguments with core grammatical functions into the grammatical relations of subject, primary object, and secondary object is explored, along with the encoding of other arguments as obliques. In the clause, arguments that are expressed as subjects, primary objects and secondary objects can be described as core arguments. They contrast with arguments that are expressed as obliques, which are peripheral (Foley & Van Valin 1984:300-301).

Typological research has shown that grammatical relations can be encoded through word order patterns, verb-agreement morphology, and nominal or case morphology (cf. Andrews 2007; Givón 2001a; Keenan 1976; Van Valin 2001). In Neverver, all three strategies are employed in various ways to distinguish between subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique. Subject is marked by a combination of word order and verb agreement; primary object is marked purely by word order; and secondary object is marked by a combination of word order and verbal morphology. In contrast, obliques are coded with nominal morphology in the form of prepositions.

The word order patterns for Neverver, exemplified in (9.1) to (9.3) are as follows:

INTRANSITIVE	Subject + Verb
TRANSITIVE	Subject + Verb + Primary Object
DITRANSITIVE	Subject + Verb + Primary Object + Secondary Object

(9.1) [Nibisbokh ang] [i-dum]
 rat ANA 3REAL:SG-run
 ‘The rat ran.’ [NVKS05.17: 92.552]

(9.2) [Nibisbokh ang] [i-te] [noron nidaro]
 rat ANA 3REAL:SG-cut leaf taro
 ‘The rat cut taro leaves.’ [NVKS05. 24: 121.014]

(9.3) [Niterikh] [i-sus-ikh] [nida titi] [ni-kkan-ian]
 child 3REAL:SG-ask-APPL mother 3PS:SG NPR-eat-NSF
 ‘The child asked his mother for food.’ [NVE26.06]

Arguments with the grammatical functions S and A are encoded in the grammatical relation of subject and have the following properties:

- the subject argument is pre-verbal, in the left core position;
- the person and number of the subject argument is cross-referenced in the subject/mood prefix attached to the verb.

Arguments with the grammatical function P and R are encoded in the grammatical relation of primary object and have the following properties:

- the primary object argument is post-verbal, in the right core position;
- the primary object of a derived transitive verb is signalled by the applicative suffix *-ikh* on an intransitive verb stem.

Arguments with the grammatical function T are encoded in the grammatical relation of secondary object and have the following properties:

- the secondary object follows the primary object;
- the applicative suffix *-ikh* on a transitive verb stem signals the presence of two objects.

Using Dryer's (2007a:257) method of labelling the arguments of intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive clauses, Neverver thus displays the following accusative system:

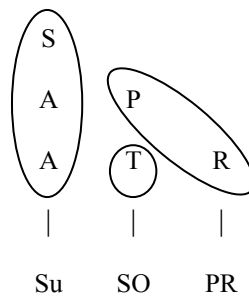


Figure 9.1. The treatment of arguments in Neverver (after Dryer 2007a:257)

Non-core arguments are encoded as obliques. Obliques have the following properties:

- obliques are always optional;
- obliques are introduced by prepositions, except for spatial and temporal local nouns which form obliques without any further morphology;
- obliques may precede or follow a verb and its core arguments.

9.1.1. Single-argument verbs

In a clause with a single-argument (intransitive) verb, the S argument is encoded in the grammatical relation of subject, which is pre-verbal.

(9.4) *Ga, mang i-vu*
 then man:ANA 3REAL:SG-go
 ‘Then, the man went.’ [NVKS02.25]

(9.5) *Ei i-matur*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-sleep
 ‘He slept.’ [NVCT06.65: 329.448]

The subject noun phrase is readily suppressed when its intended referent can be retrieved from the context. In (9.6), the same participant serves as the agent/actor of each action. In the first clause, the subject noun phrase is overtly expressed; in the second clause, the subject noun phrase is suppressed and signaled only through the subject/mood marker on the verb.

- (9.6) *Nida t-na i-vlem ij.*
 mother PSDT-1SG 3REAL:SG-come ANT
I-vu i-vor man bbukhut.
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-sit EMPH inside
 ‘My mother has come. She went and sat inside!’ [NVKS01.25-26]

Simple clauses with intransitive verbs may optionally encode non-core arguments in the oblique position. Obliques are typically introduced by prepositions (9.7), although local nouns appear in a bare adjunct (9.8).

- (9.7) *Mang i-das lon nutusu*
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-go.down LOC sea
 ‘The man went down to the sea.’ [NVKS017.s060]

- (9.8) *At-das Ala*
 3REAL:PL-go.down Ala
 ‘They went down to Ala.’ [NVKS15.04]

9.1.2. Two-argument verbs

In simple clauses containing prototypical two-argument (transitive) verbs, the agent/actor argument with the grammatical function A is encoded as the subject, preceding the verb. The patient/undergoer argument with the grammatical function P is encoded as the object, following the verb.

- (9.9) *Vin-ang i-vet nemkhat ang*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-weave trad.wms.wrap ANA
 ‘The woman wove the traditional woman’s wrap.’ [NVKI004.s15]

Less prototypical transitive verbs with experiencer/actor arguments display the same arrangement of arguments. Like arguments of intransitive constructions, arguments of transitive constructions are suppressed when their referents are contextually available.

- (9.10) *I-khitrokh niviturtur i-skham*
 3REAL:SG-see adolescent.girl 3REAL:SG-one
 ‘He saw a young girl.’ NVKS002.s08]

The arguments of derived rather than basic transitive verbs are also encoded in this way. The applicative suffix *-ikh* on an intransitive stem such as *lis* ‘be afraid’ marks it as transitive (see §6.3. on verb classes and the valency increasing properties of *-ikh*).

- (9.11) *Nit-lis-ikh adr*
 1IN:REAL:PL-afraid-APPL 3NSG
 ‘We feared them.’ [NVKI25.25: 231.482]

9.1.3. Three-argument verbs

Ditransitive verbs have an agent argument with the grammatical function A, which is encoded as the subject. They have an argument with the grammatical function R which is encoded as primary object, and an argument with the grammatical function T which is encoded as secondary object.

Most ditransitive verbs are derived from a transitive verb by means of the applicative suffix *-ikh*. There are a small number of inherently ditransitive verbs; however even these appear to reflect a derived form. For example *tek* ~ *tekh* ‘strike s.o. with s.t.’ is clearly related to the alternative ditransitive form *te-k-ikh*, with an intrusive velar plosive between the stem *te* ‘hit, cut’ and the applicative suffix *-ikh*. Both forms occur in the corpus with the same meaning.

It was observed in chapter six that there is no one-to-one relationship between the grammatical functions A, P, and S, and the semantic roles of the arguments with those functions. This observation can be extended to the grammatical functions T and R also. The action GIVE, with its agent A, recipient R and theme T, is usually expressed through a core serial construction in Neverver (see §11.3.2.3.), although it can be expressed through a nuclear serial construction, with primary and secondary objects following the complex nucleus.

- (9.12) *Kub-lav-lik* *ei* *nio*
 2IRR:SG-get-pass 3SG water
 ‘Give him water.’ [NVE16.35]

Ditransitive verbs sometime have recipient-like arguments and theme-like arguments, as illustrated in (9.12), but in many cases the semantic roles of the non-agent arguments are non-prototypical. It is clear however, that a non-agent

human argument, regardless of its semantic role, will take the grammatical function R over a non-human argument. This characteristic calls to mind the Animacy Hierarchy. The animacy hierarchy models an arrangement of arguments that proposes those with higher animacy (among other characteristics) in a given situation are treated distinctly from arguments with lower animacy (cf. Silverstein 1976; Whaley 1997:172-73).

In examples (9.13) to (9.15), the subject and A argument in each case is an agent. The primary object and R argument is a patient (with recipient-like characteristics), while the secondary object and T argument is an instrument (with theme-like characteristics).

- (9.13) *Ale, nimkhut an ar-tek mam naglat*
 then man NMOD 3REAL:DL-strike 1EX:NSG devil.nettle
ar-tuv-ikh mam nibbuang
 3REAL:DL-cast-APPL 1EX:NSG swamp.taro
 ‘Then, the two men who struck us with nettles, threw swamp taro at us.’ [NVKI03.42]

It is very common in ditransitive constructions for an object to be suppressed when it can be retrieved from the surrounding context (9.14), or fronted (9.15) when it is particularly salient. In the corpus, there is an observable stylistic preference, confirmed by language consultants, for no more than one core argument to appear after the verb.

- (9.14) *Ar-lav* *nibbuang* *i-skham* *ar-ver*
 3REAL:DL-get swamp.taro 3REAL:SG-one IMPS:REAL-say
nibrar, *ar-tuv-ikh* *nimkhut*
 k.o.taro 3REAL:DL-cast-APPL man
 ‘They got a kind of swamp taro called Nibrar and cast it at the man.’
 [NVKI03.35]

- (9.15) *Naglat* *ang* *ar-gorgorbyakh* *me* *nimkhut*
 devil.nettle ANA 3REAL:DL-brush.all.over³⁵ just man
 ‘The nettles, they brushed them all over the man.’ [NVKI03.34]

In the ditransitive example (9.16), *nigovin nakhaj* ‘rice’ is a staple in the diet and takes the role R, whereas *niviskhon nibbwas* ‘pork’ is an additional luxury and takes the role T.

- (9.16) *Nimkhut* *i-kuk* *nigovin* *nakhaj,* *i-lav*
 man 3REAL:SG-cook egg ant 3REAL:SG-get
niviskhon *nibbwas* *i-khan-khan-ikh*
 meat male.pig 3REAL:SG-DUP-eat-APPL
 ‘A man cooks rice, he gets pork and eats (rice with pork).’
 [NVKS02.169-170]

³⁵ A possible analysis for the morphologically complex item *gorgorbyakh* is reduplicated *gor* ‘block’, followed by an allomorph of the stative prefix *m-* and the verb *yal* ‘fly’ which has lost its final liquid. Instead, it carries the applicative suffix *-ikh* which is realised as *-kh* following a vowel. This suffix is a concordant marker of transitivity, as *gor* ‘block’ is inherently transitive, while *yal* ‘fly’ is inherently intransitive. *Ververbyakh* ‘gossip about’ has a similar structure with *ver* ‘say’. Both items are examples of nuclear serialisation (see chapter ten).

This arrangement of arguments is reflected in an elicited construction with the same verb (9.17), although the alternative construction with a fronted object (9.18) is considered stylistically better. This time a staple R is combined with a condiment T.

(9.17) *At-khan-khan-ikh* *nidaro* *ang* *nani*
 3REAL:PL-DUP-eat-APPL taro ANA coconut
 ‘They ate the taro with coconut.’ [NVLX16.13a]

(9.18) *Nidaro* *ang,* *at-khankhan-ikh* *nani*
 taro ANA 3REAL:PL-DUP-eat-APPL coconut
 ‘The taro, they ate it with coconut.’ [NVLX16.13b]

9.1.4. Encoding non-core arguments

Non-core arguments are expressed as obliques. Prepositions serve as markers of oblique noun phrases and provide information about the semantic roles of the subsequent noun phrase.

The class of prepositions in Neverver is a small closed class. Prepositions do not take affixes, although *b/ev* ‘with’ can function as either a preposition or a verb with the same meaning, and thus takes a subject/mood prefix in some instances. Each preposition functions to indicate a number of different, although broadly related, meanings. Because of this, the precise meaning of a preposition is assigned by the semantics of verb and in some cases, the prepositional object. The range of meanings associated with each preposition is presented in Table 9.1. below.

Prepositions take either full noun phrases or pronouns as their objects. They are not permitted to take a local noun as their object. In cases where the prepositional object is contextually retrievable, it can be gapped, although the preposition must remain. The structure of the prepositional phrase is:

$$\text{PP} \rightarrow \text{Preposition} + (\text{NP})$$

		<i>lon</i>	<i>aran</i> ~ <i>ar</i>	<i>sur</i>	<i>lappan</i>	<i>blev</i>	<i>tuan</i>	<i>il</i>
Spatial	in, at	✓						
	on	✓	✓					
	source (from)	✓						
	goal (to)	✓						
	by, near			✓				
	along, through			✓				
	under				✓			
Temporal	in, on, at	✓						
Comitative	with (volitional)					✓		
Accompanitive	with (non-volitional)			✓				
Personal (combines with personal nouns)	location at a person's place						✓	
	motion to a person's place						✓	
	motion from a person's place						✓	
	benefactive		✓				✓	✓
Locution	about a topic		✓	✓				
	to a person						✓	
Reason								✓

A three-way distinction between types of prepositions has been observed in Malakula languages, and in Vanuatu languages more generally. The Lolovoli dialect of North-East Ambae (Hyslop 2001), the Naman language of central Malakula (Crowley 2006b), and the V'ënen Taut language of North Malakula (Fox 1979) all exhibit this three-way distinction where prepositions are either

noun-like (carrying nominal possessive morphology), verb-like (carrying verbal inflections), or fully prepositional (being morphologically invariant). Contemporary Neverver, like Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2007) and Avava (Crowley 2006a), does not clearly reflect this three-way distinction; however, an interesting observation can be made with respect to the prepositions listed in Table 9.1. Two of the prepositions (*sur*, *blev*) display some verbal characteristics in certain contexts. The preposition *il* is morphologically invariant, although it is more commonly employed as a subordinating conjunction of purpose or cause. The four remaining prepositions (*lon*, *aran*, *lappan*, *tuan*) are n-final. The final *-n* may derive from the third person singular possessive suffix (described in §5.1) and it is possible that these four prepositions may have more noun-like at an earlier stage of Neverver’s history.

Preposition phrases occur almost exclusively as clausal adjuncts. Assuming a layered clause structure, we find most preposition phrases in the right periphery, following the verb phrase and core arguments in object positions. The preposition *blev* ‘with’ and *lon* ‘to, at’ are generally clausal modifiers, but they can also modify the head noun of a noun phrase. *Tuan* ‘to (a human goal/recipient)’ is also attested as a phrasal modifier. While most preposition phrases appear in the right periphery, temporal preposition phrases introduced by *lon* behave like other temporal adjuncts and may appear in either the right or left periphery.

9.1.4.1. *lon* ‘LOC’

Lon is the most widely occurring preposition in the corpus. One function of *lon* is to introduce spatial information, including location, source and goal. When introducing spatial information, the prepositional construction contrasts

with an unmarked spatial adjunct construction, containing a member of the class of local nouns.

- (9.19) *Ale nat-uv nat-khit ei lon nebelkha*
 so 1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-see 3SG LOC cacao.burner

‘So we went and saw him at the cacao burner.’ [NVCV02.30: 157.522]

- (9.20) *At-tokh lon nakhmal an nividumni*
 3REAL:PL-exist LOC house NMOD kangaroo.grass

‘They lived in houses (made) of kangaroo grass’ [NVKS02.34]

- (9.21) *I-vor-ikh lon tebel*
 3REAL:SG-sit-APPL LOC table

‘She put it on the table.’ [NVCT06.62:312.031]

- (9.22) *At-uv at-ev lon nidong*
 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go.to LOC mangrove.swamp
abit-lav nivri
 3IRR:PL-get crab

‘They went to the mangroves to collect crabs.’ [NVKS15.5]

- (9.23) *Ar-uv ar-sakh bbukhut lon nokhos ang*
 3REAL:DL-go 3REAL:DL-go.up inside LOC garden ANA

‘They went inside, at the garden.’ NVKS05.9: 45.873]

- (9.24) *I-vu i-malu lon nokhos titi*
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-go.out LOC garden 3PS:SG
 ‘He went out of his garden’ [NVKS02.53]

Another function of *lon* is to introduce temporal information. Temporal adjuncts most commonly comprise unmarked temporal nouns, but in addition to this unmarked construction, temporal preposition phrases with *lon* also occur in the corpus. These prepositional phrases are used with borrowed temporal expressions and with indigenous temporal common nouns (see §3.3.5.). Whether they comprise an unmarked temporal adverbial or a temporal prepositional phrase, temporal adjuncts may occur in either the left or right periphery.

- (9.25) *Lon las Satete, i-okh ku-vu abi?*
 LOC time Saturday PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-go where
 ‘Last Saturday, where did you go?’ [NVCV02.7:12.713]

- (9.26) *I-sber mam lon sikis si haf-pas-fæv*
 3REAL:SG-reach 1EX:NSG LOC 6:00 or 5:30
livrav
 afternoon
 ‘It reached us at 6:00 or 5:30 in the afternoon.’ [NVDL14.5: 25.078]

- (9.27) *Sukul i-sber tuan git [lon*
 church 3REAL:SG-reach LOCPSN 1IN:NSG LOC

eitin-eiti-faev]

1885

‘The Church arrived at our place in 1885.’ [NVKI07.4]

As noted above, *lon* is generally a clausal modifier; however, there are a small number of examples in the corpus where *lon* functions as a phrasal modifier. It is interesting to note that both the examples below involve head nouns borrowed from Bislama, modified by a prepositional phrase.

- (9.28) *Manasmen* *titi-r* *lon* *nakhmal* *i-rvikh*
management 3PS-PL LOC house 3REAL:SG-good
‘Their management in the house was good.’ [NVCT02.52:252.834]

- (9.29) *At-ve* *Elda* *lon* *jej*
3REAL:PL-COP Elder LOC church (Bis.)
‘They are Elders in the Church’ [NVCT04.14:63.145]

9.1.4.2. *aran* ‘LOC.on’

In addition to the general locational preposition *lon*, there is a preposition *aran* which has a primary function to indicate the location of one object ‘on’ another. Another common function of *aran* is to introduce a benefactive or a recipient role, or to indicate the topic of a discussion. With this last function, *aran* takes either a nominal object or a sentential complement.

Aran has an allomorph *ar*. The allomorph appears commonly in the speech of younger people and has almost replaced *aran*. Among older speakers, *aran* is more common, although *ar* also occurs.

- (9.30) *Ni-vu nim-jik niat ang*
 1REAL:SG-go 1IRR:SG-put Sago.Palm ANA
aran nakhmal ang
 LOC.on house ANA
 ‘I go to put the thatch on the house.’ [NVDL06.27]
- (9.31) *I-tokh mej i-ngar arkha*
 3REAL:SG-PROG IMM 3REAL:sg-cry up
ar nibet ang
 LOC.on breadfruit ANA
 ‘He was just crying up in the breadfruit tree.’ [NVKS31.44:256.707]
- (9.32) *Mama an i-jing i-tnga-kh*
 father NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there 3REAL:SG-search(visually)-APPL
si aran nimokhmokh il neskhan?
 NEG LOC.on female CAUSE what
 ‘Why doesn't that father look at the woman?’ [NVKI06.205]
- (9.33) *Mang im-bbue³⁶ ni-kkol-ian*
 man:ANA 3IRR:SG-make NPR-make.ceremony-NSF
im-bbu aran ei.
 3IRR:SG-go LOC.on 3SG
 ‘The man was going to hold the ceremony for him (lit. made the ceremony go on him).’ [NVKS08.62]

³⁶ The causative is expressed in a complex structure with the complement-taking predicate *ve* ‘make’, followed by a sentential complement (see §12.4.3).

(9.34) *Am-bbue ngosgon im-bev aran bbubbu*
 IMPS:IRR-make present 3IRR:SG-go.to LOC.on grandfather
 ‘They were going to make a present to the grandfather.’ [NVKI02.54]

(9.35) *nim-sisir aran nidam*
 1IRR:SG-discuss LOC.on yam
 ‘I’m going to discuss yams.’ [NVKI05.25]

9.1.4.3. *lappan* ‘under’

The preposition *lappan* occurs in the corpus with the invariant meaning ‘under’. It is found only in the right periphery, introducing a clausal adjunct. As well as specifying the location of an entity ‘under’ something else, it also specifies a direction in which a human participant can look.

(9.36) *Nati-vlem nat-vor lappan mago*
 EX:REAL:PL-come 1EX:REAL:PL-sit under mango
 ‘We came and sat under the mango tree.’ [NVCV02.76:485.741]

(9.37) *I-vlem i-tnga-kh lappan*
 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-search(visually)-APPL under
nibelkha
 yam.platform
 ‘He came and looked for it under the yam platform.’ [NVKS08.17]

9.1.4.4. *sur* ‘near, by, along’

The core meaning of the preposition *sur* is ‘near’ or ‘by’. Like *lappan*, it always occurs after the verb. There are some cases however, where it appears to behave more like a serialised verb than a preposition introducing a locational adjunct (see §10.3.1.3. for a detailed discussion of this matter).

As a locational preposition, *sur* can be used to introduce a location where something happens or a goal of motion. *Sur* can mean ‘along’ with verbs that indicate motion on or up a tree or similar vertical object. It occurs with verbs of listening and seeing, indicating the thing being listened to or looked at. *Sur* also occurs with locution verbs meaning ‘about’ to indicate the topic that is being discussed.

- (9.38) *Niterikh ang i-vu i-vor sur*
 child ANA 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-sit near
nida titi adr-ikh mama titi
 mother 3PS:SG 3NSG-APPL father3PS:SG
 ‘The child went and sat by his mother and his father.’ [NVKS12.26]

- (9.39) *Nakha i-skham i-salsal i-vlem*
 wood 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-DUP-float 3REAL:SG-come
sur ei
 near 3SG
 ‘A branch was floating towards him.’ [NVKS04.47: 230.608]

(9.40) *Niterikh lele ang i-sakka sur nibet ang*
 child small ANA 3REAL:SG-climb along breadfruit ANA
 ‘The small child climbed up the breadfruit tree.’ [NVKS31.34:
 201.196]

(9.41) *Ni-ver nim-sisir sur nisisienian*
 1REAL:SG-want 1IRR:SG-discuss about thought
i-skham Yesu i-sisir
 3REAL:SG-one Jesus 3REAL:SG-discuss
 ‘I want to talk about an idea that Jesus spoke of.’ [NVCT04.2:4.794]

A final meaning of *sur* is found with a set of verbs involving carrying. Here, *sur* introduces an accompanitive argument. This is a non-volitional entity that is carried ‘with’ the human agent. The verbs are *leb* ‘to carry’; *vrok* ‘to hold’ and *vus* ‘to carry (on one’s shoulder or head)’

(9.42) *Ei im-brokh sur ni-kkan-ian ibi-skham*
 3SG 3IRR:SG-hold near NPR-eat-NSF 3IRR:SG-one
 ‘He’ll take a piece of food with him.’ [NVKI23.10]

(9.43) *Helen i-vus sur Limel ar-uv lakha*
 Helen 3REAL:SG-carry near Limel 3REAL:DL-go bush
 ‘Helen carried Limel (an infant) with her and they went to the bush.’
 [NVLX16.05]

9.1.4.5. *blev* ‘comitative’

The preposition *blev* introduces a human entity that accompanies another entity encoded as a core argument in the clause. Arguments introduced by *blev* can be expressed as clausal adjuncts, for example (9.44) and (9.45).

(9.44) *I-lukh blev adr.*
 3REAL:SG-live with 3NSG
 ‘He lived with them.’ [NVCT02.08:27.744]

(9.45) *Khavut-tro mej i-vor blev niterikh-mokhmokh*
 husband-old IMM 3REAL:SG-sit with child-female
 ‘The old man sat with the girl.’ [NVKI06.57]

Arguments introduced by *blev* can also occur as phrasal adjuncts, for example (9.46) and (9.47). As a phrasal adjunct, *blev* performs the function of a simple nominal coordinator. This use of *blev* is found in the speech of younger community members and may be the result of contact with English *and* or Bislama *mo* ‘and’. While (9.46) involves a comitative phrase with human participants, (9.47) displays the coordination of two NPs encoding inanimate entities. Thus, along with the change from preposition to conjunction, we also find a change from comitative to general coordination.

(9.46) *I-na lon Satete anjing, i-na, tata*
 PSNPR-1SG LOC Saturday that PSNPR-1SG father

t-na blev Limel tata titi blev nida

PSDT-1SG with Limel father 3PS-SG mother with

titi Limel, blev Grisi nat-uv

3PS-SG Limel with Grace 1EX:REAL:PL-go

‘On that Saturday, me, my father, Limel's father and Limel's mother
and Grisi went...’ [NVCV02.15:58.68]

(9.47) *I-na ni-ver nib-lav mat ibi-skham blev*

PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-want 1IRR:SG-get mat 3IRR:SG-one with

nidam ibi-skham nib-lik Pierre, blev noto

yam 3IRR:SG-one 1IRR:SG-pass Pierre with chook

‘I wanted to get a mat and a yam to give to Pierre, with a chook.’

[NVCV02.31.167.85]

Blev differs from other prepositions because it also functions as a comitative verb meaning ‘be with’. Example (9.48) displays a core serial construction.

(9.48) *At-uv ati-blev vinang*

3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-be.with woman:ANA

‘They went with the woman’ [NVKI09.28]

As a verb, *blev* may also be serialised in a nuclear construction. In (9.49), it carries the applicative suffix *-ikh*, signalling the third argument of the complex predicate ‘hold s.t. with s.t.’.

- (9.49) *Nidam an ari-vrok-blev-ikh ang,*
yam NMOD IMPS:REAL-hold-be.with-APPL ANA
nimokhmokh ang, nidam titi ing
female ANA yam 3PS:SG EXCL
‘The yam that they held with (the pig), the woman, it was her yam.’
[NVKI06.71]

9.1.4.6. *tuan* ‘personal locational preposition’

The preposition *tuan* introduces a range of non-core participants. Although varied, these non-core participants almost all share the semantic characteristic of being human. In a survey of the corpus, 96% of prepositional objects following *tuan* were either human, or referred to human abodes³⁷.

Tuan differs from other prepositions in that when it has a pronominal object, the person and number features of this object can be copied into a pre-phrasal position. This is the case with both independent pronouns and possessive determiners.

- (9.50) *git [tuan git]* ‘to us/our place’
na [tuan na] ‘to me/my place’
na [tuan mama tna] ‘to my father’s place’
ei [tuan nesal titi] ‘to his friend’s place’

Tuan occurs as both a clausal and phrasal modifier. The examples below illustrate arguments with a range of semantic roles that appear in the corpus as

³⁷ It is interesting to note that most occurrences of *tuan* followed by a non-human object were produced by single speaker who now resides permanently outside of the Neverver speech community.

the object of *tuan*, including human destination, location, and source, as well as recipient-like arguments.

(9.51) *At-ver na nim-bbu-vu si tuan*
 3REAL:PL-say 1SG 1IRR:SG-DUP-go NEG LOCPSN

khavut t-na

husband PSDT-1SG

‘They said I couldn’t go to my husband.’ [NVDL04.04]

(9.52) *kabr-uv kabir-vor-ikh tuan nida t-okh*
 2IRR:DL-go 2IRR:DL-sit-APPL LOCPSN mother PSDT-2SG

adr-ikh mama t-okh

3NSG-APPL father PSDT-2SG

‘You two go and set them down by your mother and father.’

[NVKI06.133]

(9.53) *Abir-ver te wallas im-bbu tuan niterikh*
 3IRR:DL-say COMP thank-you 3IRR:SG-go LOCPSN child

ang bibi titi-dr

ANA maternal.uncle 3PS.PL

‘They will say thank-you to the children’s maternal uncle.’

[NVKI02.13]

(9.54) *Im-malu i-git tuan git*
 3IRR:SGgo.out PSNPR-1IN:NSG LOCPSN 1IN:NSG
 ‘He’ll leave from our place’ [NVKI23.10]

(9.55) *I-malu tuan Neverver adr*
 3REAL:SG-go.out LOCPSN Neverver PL
 ‘It originates from the place of the Neverver people.’ [NVKI30.46]

(9.56) *Be ei i-ver-da si tuan mang*
 but 3SG 3REAL:SG-say-PART NEG LOCPSN man:ANA
 ‘But she didn’t reveal to the man...’ [NVKS02.38]

The locution verb *sus* ‘to ask about’ can occur with a prepositional adjunct introducing a recipient-like argument (the person being asked). In (9.57) below, the stimulus (the thing being asked for) is a core argument, while the recipient of asking is an adjunct.

(9.57) *I-vlem i-sus vinang tuan*
 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-ask woman:ANA LOCPSN
mama titi
 father 3PS:SG
 ‘He came and asked for the woman of her father.’ [NVKI09.03]

A more commonly occurring construction is where the recipient argument is encoded as a core argument, licensed by the applicative suffix *-ikh*. In most instances when the recipient occurs, the stimulus is not mentioned; however, in

the example below, both occur. Where there are two core arguments following the verb, the recipient (with the grammatical function R) occurs closer to the verb than the stimulus (with the grammatical function T).

- (9.58) *Ku-sus-ikh na kwesten an i-jing,*
 2REAL:SG-ask-APPL 1SG question NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there
 ‘You ask me that question...’ [NVKI25.17:193.667]

Tuan is attested as a phrasal adjunct also, modifying a head noun.

- (9.59) *Dran an nemakh i-git tuan git*
 TMPPN NMOD denizen PSNPR-1IN:NSG LOCPSN 1IN:NSG
ibi-skham im-malu...
 3IRR:SG-one 3IRR:SG-go.out
 ‘Whenever when one of our people leaves, ...’ [NVKI23.05]

- (9.60) *Dran adr abit-rongrok nimkhut an git*
 TMPPN 3NSG 3IRR:PL-want man NMOD 1IN:NSG
tuan git adr abit-ve
 LOCPSN 1IN:NSG3NSG 3IRR:PL-make
no-kkol-ian
 NPR-make.ceremony-NSF
 ‘Whenever they want the people of our place to make a ceremony...’
 [NVKI25.15:125.827]

9.1.4.7. *il* ‘BENE, CAUSE’ Benefactive, cause marker

The adverbial subordinator *il* can function as a preposition, introducing either a benefactive participant or a nominal cause. *Il* is also commonly used to introduce sentential purpose or reason clauses (§13.3.3.).

- (9.61) *Ni-tokh* *ni-tev-tev* *nivanbev*
 1REAL:SG-PROG 1REAL:SG-DUP-begin.to.grow Chinese.yam
il *nida* *t-na.*
 BENE mother PSDT-1SG

‘I’m cultivating Chinese Yams for my mother.’ [NVKS02.14]

- (9.62) *Ku-rongil* *kub-lem* *nibbuang*
 2REAL:SG-can 2IRR:SG-carry swamp.taro
il *nimkhudan* *okh*
 BENE family 2SG

‘You could carry swamp taro for your family.’ [NVKI20.13]

- (9.63) *I-ve* *neran* *il* *neskhan?*
 3REAL:SG-make debt CAUSE what

‘Why did it make a debt?’ [NVKI05.33] (Lit. ‘It made a debt because of what?’)

9.2. Negation of verbal predicates

Verbal predicates are negated with the post-verbal negative particle *si*. Post-verbal negation is typologically rather unusual in SVO languages (cf. Dryer 1988:94). In Oceanic languages, pre-verbal negation is not uncommon (Hovdhaugen & Mosel 1999; Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002), nor is the discontinuous expression of negation (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002).

Discontinuous negation has been identified in Neverver's neighbours Neve'ei (Musgrave 2007), Avava (Crowley 2006a) and Naman (Crowley 2006b).

Although Neverver does not display discontinuous negation, the post-verb negative particle *si* in Neverver has the same form as the second element of the discontinuous negative construction in Neve'ei and Naman.

In clauses with negative polarity, negation is usually the only post-verbal modifier. It carries stress, although it is normally not stressed as strongly as the stress-carrying syllable of the verb that it modifies. Negation is found in clauses marked for both realis and irrealis mood. The negative particle *si* negates imperative as well as declarative clauses (see §9.5.1 on prohibition for examples).

(9.64) *Be mama i-vu si*
but father 3REAL:SG-go NEG
'But the father didn't go.' [NVKS02.111]

(9.65) *Vinang i-ver 'Na nibi-kkan si ing.'*
woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-say 1SG 1IRR:SG-eat NEG EXCL
'The woman said 'I won't eat!'' [NVKS10.102]

There is no separate negative existential construction; the existential/locational verb *tokh* is simply marked for negative polarity with post-verbal *si*.

- (9.66) *Nakhabb vangvang i-tokh si.*
 fire be.alight 3REAL:SG-exist NEG
 ‘There was no fire.’ [NVKS07.3: 19.822]

When a verb that is marked for realis mood is negated, subsequent sentential complements or numeral modifiers of nominal objects carry irrealis mood.

- (9.67) *Git nit-rongil si nimti-ssor blev nimkhut*
 1IN:NSG 1IN:REAL:PL-can NEG 1IN:IRR:PL-speak with man
 ‘We couldn't talk to the man.’ [NVKI28.44: 153.727]

- (9.68) *Ei i-khan si navuj ibi-skham.*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-eat NEG banana 3IRR:SG-one
 ‘He didn't eat a banana.’ [NVE03.19]

9.2.1. *mosi* ‘no longer’ and *vasi* ‘not yet’

Although the negative morpheme is typically the only post-verbal modifier in a construction, negative polarity is compatible with the markers of continuative aspect. The negative particle *si* combines with the continuative aspect marker *mo* to express the meaning ‘no longer’. The order of these components may be *mo-si* or *si-mo*.

(9.69) *Ga i-yel-yel mo-si i-vlem aiyem*
 and 3REAL:SG-DUP-scoop-out CONT-NEG 3REAL:SG-come home
 ‘And she couldn't scoop out coconuts any longer (so) she came
 home.’ [NVCV06.39: 612.182]

(9.70) *Nimt-uv-uv mo-si il naut i-met*
 1IN:IRR:PL-DUP-go CONT-NEG CAUSE place 3REAL:SG-dark
 ‘We can't go any more because it is dark.’ [NVCV02.60: 370.849]

(9.71) *Git nimtuvuv si-mo.*
 1IN:NSG 1IN:IRR:PL-DUP-go NEG-CONT
 ‘We can't go any more.’ [NVCV02.75: 477.728]

Si also combines with *va-* to express the meaning ‘not yet’. *Va* is not attested independently and it is inseparable from the negative particle. The construction is usually reduced to *vas* when followed by the other continuative aspect marker *deb(b)*, although it is also attested as *vasi* in this environment (see example (9.150) below).

(9.72) *Nabbun nitan-jakh, nit-rongil vasi*
 smell thing:DEF-be.here 1IN:REAL:PL-know not.yet
 ‘The smell of this thing, we don't know it yet.’ [NVKS07.24:
 152.616]

(9.73) *Ar at-rongil vas deb nemakh Litslits*
 3NSG 3REAL:PL-know not.yet CONT denizen Litzlitz
 ‘They still don't know the people of Litzlitz yet.’ [NVCV07.56:
 604.316]

(9.74) *Ar abit-ling-ling vasi tu nivin titi-r*
 3NSG 3IRR:PL-DUP-leave not.yet too daughter 3PS-PL
 ‘They aren't going to farewell their daughter yet either (of the
 occasion when woman leaves to live permanently with her new
 husband).’ [NVCV10.23: 220.479]

9.2.2. Negative verbs

There is a small set of inherently negative verbs in the corpus. These verbs have positive counterparts. The applicative suffix *-ikh* that appears in some of these verbs is fused to the verb stem.

(9.75)	Positive	Negative	
	<i>rongrok</i> ‘want’	<i>rosikh</i>	‘not.want’
	<i>khita</i> ‘like/love’	<i>sre</i>	‘dislike’
	<i>dadikh</i> ‘be sufficient’	<i>varikh</i>	‘be insufficient’
	<i>(rongil)</i> ‘know’	<i>melmelikh</i>	‘know nothing about’
	<i>gang</i> ‘be like that’	<i>skhen</i>	‘be not so’

(9.76) *Netas ang at-rosikh.*
 fish ANA 3REAL:PL-not.want
 ‘The fish didn't want to (carry him).’ [NVKS04.22: 134.526]

(9.77) *Nimokhmokh im-bbuis nidam, dran*
 female 3IRR:SG-count yam TMPPN
im-bbuarikh, am-jilbir-bir
 3IRR:SG-insufficient IMPS:IRR-split-DUP-break
 ‘The woman was going to count the yams, and whenever they were
 insufficient they would be split into pieces.’ [NVKI06.128]

In (9.77) the singular number marker appears on the irrealis form of the verb *varikh* ‘insufficient’, despite the plurality of the subject argument in this context. This is likely to be because of the collective nature of the argument. A similar treatment of collective entities has been observed in §8.2.4.3.

(9.78) *I-tokh i-ngis-langlang*
 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-smile-drunken
i-melmelikh me naut bbukhut tang.
 3REAL:SG-know.nothing.about just place inside there
 ‘Was he smiling drunkenly, not knowing where he was inside there?’
 [NVCV05.34: 1440.596]

The negative verb *skhen* ‘not so’ forms a pair with the high-frequency verb *gang* ‘be so, be like that’. The negative verb allows speakers to deny some piece

of information, either negative or positive. It is used in a range of different semantic contexts, illustrated below.

(9.79) *Kon le-lleng i-skhen ing*
 corn DUP-hang.down 3REAL:SG-not.so EXCL
 ‘It is not droopy corn (i.e. the kind with hanging husks).’
 [NVCV04.33: 352.078]

(9.80) *An an i-skhen avev tnakh*
 DEMSPN NMOD 3:REAL:SG-not.so seaward here
be an an akhus
 but DEMSPN NMOD inland
 ‘It is not the one down here but the one inland.’[NVCV06.6: 465.123]

(9.81) *Ni-ver nim-sir si im-bbulem*
 1REAL:SG-say 1IRR:SG-accompany NEG 3IRR:SG-come
be i-okh ku-ver ibi-skhen.
 but PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-say 3IRR:SG-not.so
 ‘I said I wouldn't fetch her here but you said otherwise.’
 [NVKS01.30]

(9.82) *Ku-tbbukh si nibarbar drong tokhtokh ibi-skham?*
 2REAL:SG-have NEG pig common huge 3IRR:SG-one

I-ver *'I-skhen,* *ni-tbbukh* *iskham.'*
 3REAL:SG-say 3REAL:SG-not.so 1REAL:SG-have INDEF.PN
 'You don't have a big sow?' 'He said 'On the contrary, I have one.'
 [NVKS06.30-31]

The verb *skhen* 'not so' can serialise to express the meaning 'do in vain'. In (9.83), it occurs as V2 in a core serial construction meaning 'pull in vain'. In (9.84), it is part of a three-part nuclear serial construction. The first verb *llang* 'look for' is reduplicated. It is followed by *dro-skhen*. **Dro* does not have an independent meaning, although it could be related to *tro* 'old', which may reinforce the notion of duration.

(9.83) *Sano lele ang i-rev* *i-rev* *i-rev*
 Sano small ANA 3REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-pull
i-rev *i-skhen* *mej,*
 3REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-not.exist IMM
 'Little Sano pulled and pulled and pulled and pulled and pulled in
 vain.' [NVCV06.11: 487.521]

(9.84) *Niterikh ang adr ati-llang* *nibarbar ang*
 child ANA PL 3REAL:PL-look.for.s.t. pig ANA
gaga *ati-lallang-dro:skhen.*
 on.and.on 3REAL:PL-DUP-look.for.s.t.-in.vain
 'The children looked for the pig on and on (but) they looked in vain.'
 [NVE02.24]

9.3. Interrogatives

Interrogative constructions in Neverver fall into three categories. Following König and Siemund (2007), we can identify constituent interrogatives, polar interrogatives, and alternation questions. Constituent interrogatives are characterised by the presence of an interrogative lexeme; polar interrogatives are characterised by a distinctive intonation pattern; and alternation questions contain the disjunctive coordinator *si* ‘or’ and typically display a polar alternation between two options.

9.3.1. Constituent interrogatives

Constituent interrogatives are uttered with falling intonation. This is the same intonation contour that occurs in declarative clauses. Constituent interrogatives are distinguished from declarative clauses by the presence of one of the interrogative lexemes listed in (9.85) below. The interrogative morpheme either occurs *in situ*, or is fronted (see §9.6. below for a general discussion of fronting).

(9.85)	<i>niskhan ~ neskhan</i>	‘what’	common interrogative
	<i>il niskhan</i>	‘why’	reason interrogative
	<i>i-sikh</i>	‘who’	personal interrogative
	<i>abi</i>	‘where’	local place interrogative
	<i>tebi</i>	‘where’	local object interrogative
	<i>i-vis</i>	‘how many’	numeral interrogative
	<i>angas</i>	‘when’	temporal interrogative
	<i>i-tmakhan</i>	‘how’	manner interrogative

While interrogative lexemes function to signal questions, many are attested with additional functions also.

The common noun *niskhan* ‘what’ serves as an interrogative lexeme.

- (9.86) *Ga niskhan im-bbue nuag ang im-das*
then what 3IRR:SG-make boat ANA 3IRR:SG-go.down
lon nutusu?
LOC sea
‘Then what will make the boat go down to the sea?’ [NVCT07.16:
71.065]

- (9.87) *Ga ni-ver Ei! niskhan i-ve*
and 1REAL:SG-say hey what 3REAL:SG-make
i-okh ang?
PSNPR-2SG ANA
‘And I said, ‘Hey! What happened to you?’’ [NVCV01.36: 465.103]

- (9.88) *Nibit-khan niskhan ing?*
1IN:IRR:PL-eat what EXCL
‘What were we going to eat?’ [NVDL14.27: 158.214]

In (9.89), *niskhan* ‘what’ appears to introduce a headless relative clause as ‘whatever’. The corpus contains few analogous examples and the possibility of interference from English or Bislama (cf. Crowley 2004:191), where questions words can be used in this way, cannot be discounted.

- (9.89) *Nabit-ve* [*niskhan i-okh ku-rongrok*]
 1EX:IRR:PL-do what PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-want
 ‘We’ll do whatever you want.’ [NVDL04.24]

Niskhan ‘what’ combines with the causal subordinator *il* to form the question ‘why’, literally ‘because of what’.

- (9.90) *I-okh ku-ngar il niskhan?*
 PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-cry CAUSE what
 ‘Why are you crying?’ [NVKS18.30: 142.268]

- (9.91) *Ku-ver il niskhan?*
 2REAL:SG-say CAUSE what
 ‘Why do you say that?’ [NVKS02.22]

Niskhan can also be compounded with a common noun to mean ‘what (kind of) N’ or ‘which N’. Examples are listed in (9.92).

- (9.92) *nisib-skhan* ‘what knife?’
nossorian-skhan ‘what language?’
navuj-skhan ‘what kind of banana?’
plan-skhan ‘what plan?’

The personal interrogative *i-sikh* ‘who’ is similar to independent pronouns in that it carries the personal prefix *i-*. Examples (9.93) and (9.94) show that the same interrogative forms are found in direct and indirect questions.

(9.93) *I-okh ku-tokh ku-llang*
 PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-PROG 2REAL:SG-look.for.s.t.
i-sikh ing?
 PSNPR-who EXCL
 ‘Who are you looking for?’ [NVDL04.16]

(9.94) *Nibir-khit-khit i-sikh im-maur*
 1IN:IRR:DL-DUP-see PSNPR-who 3IRR:SG-live
i-sikh im-mas.
 PSNPR-who 3IRR:SG-dead
 ‘We’ll see who lives and who dies.’ [NVCT01.12: 62.045]

There are two local interrogatives. *Abi* ‘where’ asks about the location of a place; *tebi* asks about the location of an object. *Abi* occurs in verbal and non-verbal interrogative constructions. *Tebi* is only attested in non-verbal constructions, although the response is generally verbal as in (9.97).

(9.95) *Ga, nibr-uv nibri-llang nimjal abi?*
 then 1IN:IRR:DL-go 1IN:IRR:DL-look.for.s.t. meat where
 ‘So where will we go and look for meat?’ [NVKS20.15: 77.092]

(9.96) *Ei! okh ku-vu abi ku-vlem ang?*
 hey 2SG 2REAL:SG-go where 2REAL:SG-come ANA
 ‘Hey, where did you come from?’ [NVKS17.97]

- (9.97) *'Nibbua Nansi, tebi Susian?'*
 grandmother Nancy where Susian
ga i-ver 'O! Susian adr-ikh Lesale
 then 3REAL:SG-say Oh Susian 3NSG-APPL Lesale
ar-lukh man son tang
 3REAL:DL-Stay EMPH somewhere there
 ‘‘Grandmother Nancy, where is Susian?’ and she said ‘Oh, Susian
 and Lesale are around somewhere.’ [NVCV02.86: 585.03]

The interrogative verb *vis* ‘how many’ behaves like the numerals one to nine, carrying a third person singular subject/mood prefix. It is only attested with count nouns in the corpus. It is also attested as a transitive verb meaning ‘count’.

- (9.98) *Okh ku-lukh nimdan nial i-vis?*
 2SG 2REAL:SG-live eye sun 3REAL:SG-how.many
 ‘How many days did you stay?’ [NVE07.45]

- (9.99) *Buluk ang, ar-vul i-vis?*
 cow ANA IMPS:REAL-buy 3REAL:SG-how.many
 ‘The cow, how much did they pay for it? [NVCT06.15: 68.945]

- (9.100) *Nimokhmokh im-bbuis nidam*
 female 3IRR:SG-count yam
 ‘The woman is going to count the yams.’ [NVKI06.128]

The temporal interrogative *angas* ‘when’ is rather rare in the text corpus, but it occurs in daily conversation.

(9.101) *Ibi-tokh angas?*
 3IRR:SG-exist when
 ‘When will it be (of a ceremony)?’ [NVKS17.105]

(9.102) *Nibit-tokh ib-ran angas*
 1IN:IRR:PL-exist 3IRR:SG-end when
 ‘When will we be here until?’ NVKI03.79]

Finally, the verb *tmakh(an)* occurs in clauses to ask ‘how’ something was or will be done. It carries the third person singular realis prefix *i-tmakhan* in conversation as a greeting ‘how’s it going?’, or inquiry ‘what’s happening?’. In declarative clauses, it functions to express ‘how’ something happens.

(9.103) *I-ver ‘O, i-tmakhan? Nisin-skham*
 3REAL:SG-say Oh 3REAL:SG-how thing:INDEF-one
i-bit?’
 3REAL:SG-make.mistake
 ‘He said, ‘Oh, what’s happening? Is something wrong?’’
 [NVCT03.11: 49.574]

(9.104) *Ga kon t-gam ati-tmakhan?*
 and corn PSDT-2NSG 3REAL:PL-how
 ‘And how is your corn?’ [NVCV04.12: 300.540]

(9.105) *Mil nim-sisir i-tmakhan ar-ve*
 again 1IRR:SG-discuss 3REAL:SG-how IMPS:REAL-make
nolong-mavus
 plain.laplap
 ‘Again, I’ll describe how plain laplap is made.’ [NVDL12.11]

9.3.2. Polar interrogatives

Polar interrogatives bear no special morphology. They have the structure of declarative clauses, but are marked by a distinctive intonation contour. While declarative clauses have falling terminal intonation, polar interrogatives are uttered with rising intonation on the penultimate syllable, and falling intonation on the final syllable. A polar interrogative may be expressed with either negative or positive polarity.

(9.106) *I-na ni-ver ba lonial ang, gam*
 PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-say when lunchtime ANA 2NSG
kat-itrokh ↗ ei? ↘
 2REAL:PL-see 3SG
 ‘I say, at lunchtime, did you see him?’ [NVCV05.04: 1310.234]

(9.107) *Be Helen, i-okh ku-rodrokh si stori an↗jing?↘*
 but Helen 2SG 2:REAL:SG-hear NEG story that
 ‘But Helen, you didn't hear that story?’ [NVCV03.64: 296.871]

(9.108) *At-rev net↗ ing?↘*
 3REAL:PL-pull net EXCL
 ‘Did they use a net?’ [NVCV08.75: 508.946]

9.3.3. Alternation questions

Alternation questions present two alternatives to a hearer. The first option is expressed with rising non-terminal intonation, and the second option has falling intonation. The options are conjoined with the disjunctive coordinator *si* ‘or’. Often, a polar alternation is presented. When this is the case, the second option need not be stated overtly; rather, the speaker utters *si* to indicate the alternation and then pauses.

(9.109) *Am-khit adr abir-ve tnakh↗*
 IMPS:IRR-see 3NSG 3IRR:DL-make here
si abir-ve atling?↘
 or 3IRR:DL-make over.there
 ‘Does it appear/seem that they'll make it here or there?’
 [NVCV10.68: 370.296]

(9.110) *I-tmakhan? I-okh ku-rosikh*
 3REAL:SG-how PSNPN-2SG 2REAL:SG-not want

i-na ↗ *si* *ku-rongrok?* ↘

PSNPR-1SG or 2REAL:SG-want

‘What’s going on? Do you not want me, or do you?’ [NVDL03.11]

(9.111) *Ga* *at-maur* *ati-rvikh* *we*

and 3REAL:PL-live 3REAL:PL-good AUGCO

ati-rvikh ↗ *si* ...?

3REAL:PL-good or

‘And are they growing really well or...?’ [NVCV04.18: 314.971]

9.4. Reflexive and reciprocal constructions

In Neverver, reflexive and reciprocal constructions take the same form.

Givón (2001b:95) observes that ‘there are strong functional and syntactic parallelisms between reflexive and reciprocal clauses, to the point where in many languages they share their grammatical morphology’. Reflexives are syntactically transitive though semantically intransitive: ‘the subject and object of the event or state, regardless of their semantic roles, are *co-refèrent*’ (Givón 2001b:95). Reciprocal constructions involve two separate events expressed in the same clause ‘with the subject of the first being the object of the second, and vice versa. The two participants are thus *reciprocally co-refèrent*’ (Givón 2001b:96). One key difference between the two constructions is that the coreferential argument of a reflexive construction may be singular, while the coreferential argument of a reciprocal construction is necessarily non-singular. Both reflexive and reciprocal propositions take the form of a syntactically transitive construction.

9.4.1. Reflexives

Reflexive constructions have both a subject and an object grammatical relation. The coreferential object argument is invariably encoded as a pronoun. A small number of verbs are inherently reflexive and require a coreferential object argument. Example (9.111) with the reflexive stem *dri* ‘turn’ contrasts with (9.112) where the transitive verb *lerikh* ‘turn over’ is used in a situation where an agent acts on a distinct patient. The verb *lerikh* has a fused applicative suffix.

- (9.112) *Ale nat-dri nam nat-uv.*
 then 1EX:REAL:PL-turn 1EX:NSG 1EX:REAL:PL-go
 ‘Then we turned and went.’ [NVCV02.50: 278.899]

- (9.113) *Ni-lerikh nani ang.*
 1REAL:SG-turn.over coconut ANA
 ‘I turned over the coconut.’ [NVDL02.13]

Examples (9.114) to (9.116) display other inherently reflexive stems.

- (9.114) *Nisin-skham im-dak ei aran nasus*
 thing:INDEF-one 3IRR:SG-fall.down 3SG LOC.on breast
t-okh
 PSDT-2SG
 ‘Something will fall on your breast.’ [NVKS01.42]

(9.115) *I-duk ei*
 3REAL:SG- bang.into 3SG
 ‘He banged himself.’ [NVCV05.31: 1416.980]

(9.116) *Man-jing i-sir ei*
 man-be.there 3REAL:SG-diet 3SG
 ‘That man is on a diet.’ [NVLX19.79]

Apart from inherently reflexive verb stems, reflexive constructions occur very rarely in the corpus. The examples in (9.117) and (9.118) were both produced in elicitation sessions. In each case, the reflexive is formed with reduplication of a transitive stem. A coreferential pronoun occupies the object position.

(9.117) Simplex stem *khur* ‘to scratch, itch’
I-na ni-khur-khur na
 PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-DUP-scratch 1SG
 ‘I scratched/itched myself.’ [NVE08.35]

(9.118) Simplex stem *ve* ‘to make, do’
I-ve-ve ei
 3REAL:SG-DUP-make 3SG
 ‘He dressed himself up.’ [NVLX21.46]

9.4.2. Reciprocals

Like the reflexive construction, the reciprocal construction is syntactically transitive and requires a pronoun in object position. The non-singular object argument is coreferential with the non-singular subject argument and the participants act upon each other. Additionally, we find that the transitive verb stem is consistently reduplicated in reciprocal constructions.

(9.119) Simplex stem *te* ‘hit’

Niterikh ang edr ar-te-te adr.

child ANA PL 3REAL:DL-DUP-hit 3NSG

‘The two children are fighting/fought each other. [NVE08.24]

(9.120) Simplex stem *sibrik* ‘let go’

Kabir-sib-sibrik gam!

2IRR:DL-DUP-let.go 2NSG

‘Let go of each other!’ [NVLX22.32]

(9.121) Simplex stem *ver* ‘say’

Baga, noto ang abir-ver-ver-ikh adr

then chook ANA 3IRR:DL-DUP-say-APPL 3NSG

‘Then, the two chooks were going to talk/plan with each other.’

[NVKS23.5: 33.725]

In the final example below, a ditransitive construction is presented. The direct object and second object are both animate. We can observe the placement

of the reciprocal argument (with the function R) in primary object position, and the stimulus (with the function T) in secondary object position.

(9.122) Simplex stem *sus* ‘ask’

At-su-sus-ikh *adr* *niterikh-vidro* *ang*

3REAL:PL-DUP-ask-APPL 3NSG pre-adolescent.girl ANA

‘They asked each other about the girl.’ [NVKS14.18]

9.5. Impersonal constructions

Among the possible subject/mood prefixes that obligatorily attach to verbs, one option is the use of an impersonal prefix. The realis form of the impersonal prefix is *ar(i)-*. This makes it homonymous with the third person realis dual subject/mood prefix *ar(i)-*. The irrealis forms differ, however, with the impersonal irrealis form being *am-* or *ab(i)*, while the dual forms contain the dual morpheme *r-* as in *abir* or *abr(i)*. The two types of prefixes also differ in another important respect. The impersonal prefix cannot be cross-referenced to material in the pre-verbal subject position. In contrast, the third person realis dual prefix is readily cross-referenced to a nominal or pronominal argument in the subject position. There are instances of the subject slot remaining unfilled when the third person dual realis prefix is used, but these occur when the argument serving as the grammatical subject can be retrieved from the prior discourse or from the physical context in which the utterance is produced.

One important semantic constant in impersonal constructions is that the impersonal subject argument is human. When the impersonal subject prefix is used, the precise semantic details of the human subject are either deliberately

underspecified as in (9.123) and (9.124), or simply unknown as in (9.125). It is possible for both transitive and intransitive stems to take the impersonal subject/mood prefix. Intransitive impersonal constructions are similar to constructions with *one* or the generic *they* in English; the most natural translation of transitive impersonal constructions is the English passive.

(9.123) Deliberately underspecified agent/actor

Ar-rongil si am-tur terter

IMPS:REAL-can NEG IMPS:IRR-stand close

‘One couldn’t stand nearby (of a nest of the writhing snakes).’

[NVKS12.59:435.085]

(9.124) *Tue i-gen ar-malmal*

before 3REAL:SG-like IMPS:REAL-naked

‘Before, it was like, they(people) were naked.’ [NVKI04.57]

(9.125) Unknown agent/actor

Ba i-vu, i-khit ar-jal nakha ang

when 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-see IMPS:REAL-strip wood ANA

‘When he went, he saw the trees had been stripped.’ [NVKS10.15:

96.129]

A common function of the impersonal subject construction is to name places and things. Locations and objects are named by the group of people who live (and have always lived) in the area and speak Neverver; any further specification of the ‘namers’ is unnecessary.

(9.126) *Nolog tokhtokh adr ar-ve ang,*
 laplap huge PL IMPS:REAL-make ANA
ari-kke-kh ar-ver-t nimerbbun
 IMPS:REAL-call-APPL IMPS:REAL-say-COMP doubled.laplap
 ‘The two big laplaps that are made are called ‘Nimerbbun’ laplaps.’
 [NVKI29.05: 552.609]

(9.127) *I-sakh Irakhalav im-bev aiyem an*
 3REAL:SG-go.up Irakhalav 3IRR:SG-go.to home NMOD
ar-ver Marin
 IMPS:REAL-say Marin
 ‘He went up to Irakhalav to go to the dwelling (that is) called Marin.’
 [NVKS08.07]

(9.128) *Nikhijan nakha ang ari-kke-kh ar-ver*
 name tree ANA IMPS:REAL-call-APPL IMPS:REAL-say
Nakhabatekh.
 k.o.tree
 ‘The name of the tree was called Nakhabatekh.’ [NVKS011.s31]

9.5.1. Impersonal subjects and prohibition

In the expression of imperatives, the personal prefix *kum-* ‘2IRR:SG’ (as well as the dual and plural forms) is employed (9.129); it is also common to hear the impersonal *ar-* in everyday speech in prohibitive constructions (9.130). The impersonal prohibitive literally states ‘One doesn’t do X’, but it sends the message ‘Don’t do X!’. In the expression of prohibition, the impersonal prefix

is always coded for realis mood and the construction is marked for negative polarity with the post-verbal negative particle *si*.

(9.129) *Kum-bbue-ve si*
2IRR:SG-DUP-do NEG
'Don't do that!' [NVCT07.25: 108.545]

(9.130) *Ar-vu-vu si! Kum-bbuor-vor!*
IMPS:REAL-DUP-go NEG 2IRR:SG-DUP-sit
'Don't leave! (lit. 'One doesn't go.') Sit down!' [NVE05.39]

Although the use of the impersonal prefix for prohibition looks as though it could be a politeness strategy, speakers do not consider it to be a weaker form of command. Mothers use this construction to yell orders at their children. The two constructions are in fact distributed dialectally, with speakers from Limap village using the impersonal realis prefix more for prohibition, and speakers from Lingarakh using second person irrealis prefixes more. The impersonal prohibitive construction might be evidence of an older form of Neverver, and reflect more conservative language practices in Limap which is geographically more isolated than Lingarakh (see §1.1.1. and §1.1.2. for sociolinguistic descriptions of Limap and Lingarakh).

9.6. Fronting of constituents

One recurring feature in the text corpus is the fronting of constituents. This is a common feature of Vanuatu languages, with Crowley (2006b) commenting:

In many Vanuatu languages, there is a highly productive pattern of movement of noun phrases to the head of the clause as a way of promoting a noun phrase from the position of verbal or prepositional object into a position of pragmatic salience'. (Crowley 2006b:204)

In the Lolovoli dialect of Ambae, Hyslop (2001:70) associates fronting with the pragmatic notion of topicality, observing that 'any constituent of the clause can be fronted to an extra-clausal position, to indicate that it is the topic'. In Neverver, fronting typically involves movement of a noun phrase to a pre-clausal position. This position appears to indicate pragmatic salience, as antecedents of fronted arguments are typically present in the immediately preceding clauses; however, this is a superficial observation and pragmatic matters are not explored in any detail in this work.

Along with the expected fronting of arguments in main clauses, we find that arguments of subordinate clauses and temporal constituents can appear in a pre-clausal position. Fronted constituents are separated from their clause or phrase by rising intonation, and often a brief intonation break.

9.6.1. Fronting core arguments of a main clause

Core arguments in transitive and ditransitive clauses can be fronted. From (9.131) to (9.135) below, the fronted subject argument is separated from the

remainder of the clause by rising intonation. Post-nominal modifiers are fronted along with their head noun.

- (9.131) *Vinang*↗ *barnakh*↗ *i-ve* *nimokhmokh* *t-na*.
 woman:ANA now 3REAL:SG-COP female PSDT-1SG

‘The woman, now she is my wife.’ [NVKS14.57]

- (9.132) *Nakhabb* *anjakh*↗ *nar-somda* *me*
 fire this 1EX:REAL:DL-discover just

akhsung Bongrari

inland Bongrari

‘This fire, we found it up at Bongrari.’ [NVKS07.27: 164.073]

- (9.133) *Nivunbbu* *an* *ni-te* *ang*↗, *ni-vlem*
 bamboo NMOD 1REAL:SG-cut ANA 1REAL:SG-come

ni-lovlov

1REAL:SG-beat.flat

‘The bamboo that I cut, I come and beat it flat.’ [NVDL06.35]

- (9.134) *Nokhovas* *ang*↗ *ni-rev* *i-vlem*
 k.o.vine ANA 1REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-come

ni-ga(k)-ikh *nakhmal*.

1REAL:SG-tie.up-APPL house

‘The Nokhovas vine, I pull it home and bind the house with it.

[NVDL06.25]

In (9.134), *nokhovas* ‘k.o.vine’ is used to bind parts of a house. As an instrument, it has the grammatical function T. It is fronted from second object position, where it would ordinarily follow *nakhmal* ‘house’ which is a patient argument with the grammatical function R.

When an impersonal construction is used, it is possible for the P argument to be fronted. Although the impersonal construction is non-promotional, fronting the P argument has a similar affect to the promotion of P to subject position that we find in prototypical passive constructions (cf. Givón 1979; Keenan 1985a). As noted above in §9.5., impersonal constructions with transitive verbs translate most naturally into the English passive.

- (9.135) *Nibarbar* ↗ *ar-khan* *si;* *nibbwas* *lume* ↗
 sow IMPS:REAL-eat NEG male.pig only
ar-khan
 IMPS:REAL-eat
 ‘Sows were not eaten. Only male pigs were eaten.’ [NVKI08.05-06]

- (9.136) *Nidam* *anjing* ↗ *ar-somda* *lon* *nial* *adr-ikh*
 yam that IMPS:REAL-discover LOC sun 3NSG-APPL
navul
 moon
 ‘That yam, it was discovered at (the dwelling of) the sun and the moon.’ [NVKS15.89]

9.6.2. Fronting arguments of sentential complements

When an argument of a sentential complement is fronted, it may precede the entire construction as in (9.137), or only the complement clause as in (9.138).

- (9.137) *Plan-skhan* ↗ *okh ku-ver* *git nibir-yakhsur?*
plan-what 2SG 2REAL:SG-want 1IN:NSG 1IN:IRR:DL-follow
'What plan do you want us to follow?' [NVCT01.11: 57.662]

- (9.138) *At-rongil* *nemat* ↗, *nakhabb i-khan ang*
3:REAL:PL-know snake fire 3REAL:SG-eat ANA
'They all knew that the snake, the fire consumed it. [NVKS02.82]

In most constructions with fronted arguments, any post-nominal modifiers are fronted along with the head noun. In (9.138) however, the anaphoric demonstrative *ang* is stranded *in situ*, only the head noun has been fronted.

9.6.3. Fronting core arguments of a subordinate clause

Like main clauses, core arguments of subordinate clauses can be fronted when the subordinate clause precedes the main clause.³⁸ This occurs with arguments that are shared by both main and subordinate clause, as well as when the argument is only present in the subordinate clause. There is usually a slight

³⁸ While the fronting of main clause arguments is widely attested in Vanuatu languages (Crowley 2006b), the fronting of arguments of subordinate clauses is typologically unexpected. Bybee (2002:2) observes that 'subordinate clauses contain backgrounded information that is less likely to be subject to topicalization, contrast and presentative focus; such manipulations are more appropriate and more commonly occur in main clauses'.

intonation rise on the fronted noun phrase, but no intonation break before the subordinate clause is uttered.

- (9.139) *Nio* ↗ *ba* *i-lab,* *i-deng*
 river when 3REAL:SG-many 3REAL:SG-pull.out.s.t
nias *ang*
 Tahitian.chestnut ANA
 ‘The river, when it was full, it pulled out the Tahitian chestnut tree.’
 [NVKS14.20]

- (9.140) *Nokhowit* *ang* ↗ *ba* *i-tnga,*
 octopus ANA when 3REAL:SG-search(visually)
i-trokh *nakha* *i-skham* *i-salsal*
 3REAL:SG-see wood 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-DUP-float
i-vlem *sur* *ei*
 3REAL:SG-come near 3SG
 ‘The octopus, when he looked, he saw a branch floating towards
 him.’ [NVKS04.47: 230.608]

- (9.141) *Nemat* *ang* ↗ *ba* *i-mas,* *khavut-tro*
 snake ANA when 3REAL:SG-dead husband-old
i-sakh *aut*
 3REAL:SG-go.up ashore
 ‘The snake, when it died, the old man came ashore.’ [NVKS12.93]

9.7. Multi-purpose modifiers

Two modifiers appear in a range of positions both inside and outside the clause. These are *mil* ‘again’ and *(lu)me* ‘just, only’. Both particles can modify verbs, nouns, and adverbials. *Mil* modifies clauses also. They usually follow the constituent that they are modifying, although *mil* can occur as a pre-clausal modifier.

- (9.142) *Ale, mil baga adr i-skham mil*
 then again then 3NSG 3REAL:SG-one again
i-vlem
 3REAL:SG-come

‘Then, again, after that another one of them came.’ [NVCT04.16: 69.291]

- (9.143) *I-git mokh me nit-ve nimkhut*
 PSNPR-1IN:NSG all just 1IN:REAL:PL-COP man
an i-is
 NMOD 3REAL:SG-bad

‘All of us just are people who are bad.’ [NVCT03.17: 79.700] Note the generic noun *nimkhut* ‘man’ takes a singular subject/mood prefix.

- (9.144) *Ga at-uv mil at-vul iskham*
 and 3REAL:PL-go again 3REAL:PL-buy INDEF.PN³⁹

³⁹ The contrast in glossing of ‘one’ is due to the different function that the forms play; in (9.142) and (9.145), *i-skham* ‘one’ modifies the pronoun *adr* meaning ‘one of them’ while in (9.144) *iskham* ‘INDEF.PN’, with subject/mood prefix fused, functions as the pronominal head of a noun phrase.

MapBest

MapBest.Plantation

‘And they went again and bought one at MapBest Plantation.’

[NVCV07.48: 578.082]

(9.145) *Ni-lav me bak tokhtokh i-skham*

1REAL:SG-get just bag huge 3REAL:SG-one

‘I just got a big bag.’ [NVCV02.68: 437.822]

(9.146) *Ni-tur mitabbukh mil lon nabbung tle*

1REAL:SG-get.up morning again LOC day another

‘I get up again on another day...’ [NVDL02.03]

9.8. Expressions of modality

In addition to the obligatory mood marking that is indicated in the subject/mood prefix in all verbal clauses, clauses may carry other markers of epistemic (knowledge-based) and deontic (evaluative) modality (cf. Givón 2001a:300-329). These markers have varied distribution and function.

9.8.1. *ing* ‘EXCL’ exclamatory marker

When a speaker wishes to assert his or her belief that a proposition is particularly note-worthy, or wants to ensure the hearers full attention, the clausal modifier *ing* is post-posed. This particle functions as a exclamation mark and is particularly common in conversational exchange. It occurs in a range of verbal and non-verbal clauses, and with both realis and irrealis mood.

(9.147) *Niskhan ing?*

what EXCL

‘What?’ [NVCV02.06: 11.993]

(9.148) *Barnakh ing?*

now EXCL

‘Now?’ [NVCV08.44: 455.234]

(9.149) *Nib-lav mej vivin na ing*

1IRR:SG-get IMM sister 1SG EXCL

‘I’m going to marry my sister!’ [NVKS09. 83]

(9.150) *Nibet ang i-tro vasi debb ing*

breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG-ripe not.yet CONT EXCL

‘The breadfruit still isn’t ripe yet!’ [NVKS31.18: 122.647]

9.8.2. *man* ‘EMPH’ emphatic marker

The emphatic marker *man* ‘really, actually’ occurs within the verb phrase. When combined with realis mood, it asserts the truth of the proposition encoded in the clause. When combined with irrealis mood, it asserts the speakers belief in the eventual truth of the proposition. As a consequence of this assertion, it can function to express the deontic modalities of obligation or necessity in irrealis constructions.

An important structural property of *man* is that it is marked for transitivity. When the main verb is intransitive, it occurs in a plain form; when the main verb has a higher valency, it carries the applicative suffix *-ikh*. An epenthetic

alveolar plosive is articulated between the emphatic marker and the applicative suffix [man^dikh].

(9.151) *Niterikh ang i-tokh i-susus man*
 child ANA 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-suckle EMPH

lon nibarbar ang.

LOC pig ANA

‘The child was actually suckling on the pig.’ [NVKS08.20]

(9.152) *Nemat ang i-yakhsur man(d)-ikh niterikh ang*
 snake ANA 3REAL:SG-follow EMPH-APPL child ANA

‘The snake actually followed the child.’ [NVKS12.29: 205.343]

(9.153) *Nim-bbue bkhas man(d)-ikh mini-akh*
 IIRR:SG-clean.up clean EMPH-APPL man-this

‘I have to/must clean up this man (of an injured traveller).’

[NVCT04.25:96.341]

9.8.3. *bor* ‘maybe’

When speakers wish to indicate that they are uncertain about the truth of a proposition or some component of it, *bor* can be pre-posed to the constituent in question.

(9.154) *Ga bor at-saleh si mo, ar me*
 so maybe 3REAL:PL-sell NEG CONT 3NSG just

at-khan me avev tang

3REAL:PL-eat just seaward there

‘So maybe they didn't sell it any more, they just ate it down there.’

[NVCV07.33: 548.810]

(9.155) *Bor abir-lem abir-ve abir-salem olbaot*

maybe 3:IRR:DL-carry 3IRR:DL-do 3IRR:DL-sell everywhere

bor lon aes atling

maybe LOC ice over.there

‘Maybe they were going to take it and (butcher it) and sell it

everywhere on ice (frozen) over there (of a beast).’ [NVCV07.11:

510.828]

9.8.4. *var* ‘unfortunately’

When speakers wish to indicate their sadness, or to express sympathy, they use the modal particle *var* ‘unfortunately’. *Var* is attested as a modifier of nouns and of verbs. It can also occur independently to mean ‘oh dear!’ or ‘that’s too bad’.

(9.156) *I-ver ‘O! Var!’*

3REAL:SG-say Oh unfortunate

‘He said, ‘Oh, dear!’’ [NVCT04.24: 95.079]

(9.157) *Barnakh niterikh t-na var im-sikki mej*
 now child PSDT-1SG unfortunate 3IRR:SG-be.lost IMM
 ‘Now my poor child will be lost.’ [NVKS12.33: 235.809]

(9.158) *I-lele mej var we*
 3REAL:SG-small IMM unfortunate AUGCO
 ‘It was so small, unfortunately.’ [NVCV07.35: 553.352]

9.9. Non-verbal predicates

Most predicates in Neverver are verbal. Non-verbal predicate plays a relatively limited role, with their most important function being the expression of classificatory or identificational information. In conversational interactions, the non-verbal predicate is also used for presentative purposes. By definition, verbal predicates carry mood marking, while non-verbal predicates do not. Non-verbal predicates are also not marked for any of the aspectual markers associated with the verb.

Dryer (2007a:224-5), in his typological description of clauses, identifies three clause types with non-verbal predicates: adjectival (My dog is *black*); nominal (My dog is *a cocker spaniel*); and locative (My dog is *in the house*). In English, these three clause types are all formed with the copula verb *be*; in the Lolovoli dialect of Ambae in Vanuatu, all three can be expressed by the juxtaposition of non-verbal phrases (Hyslop 2001:365). In Neverver, adjectival and locative predicates are verbal, formed with a member of the stative verb class, or the existential/locative verb *tokh* respectively. They are negated with the post-verbal particle *si*. In contrast, nominal predicates may be verbal or non-verbal.

(9.159) Adjectival predicate with stative verb

Buluk ang i-lele bbutakh.

cow ANA 3REAL:SG-small too.much

‘The cow was too small.’ [NVCV07.17: 529.759]

(9.160) *Sano, nibolgon i-kher bbutkha si*

Sano bone 3REAL:SG-strong too.much NEG

‘Sano, his bones were not strong enough.’ [NVCV06.12: 492.458]

(9.161) Existential *tokh*

Ni-sav-ian i-tokh

NPR-perform.dance-NSF 3REAL:SG-exist

‘There was a dance ceremony.’ [NVKS03.109]

(9.162) Locative predicate with existential *tokh*

Nemat tokhtokh i-skham i-tokh lon

snake huge 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-exist LOC

nebang ang

Banyan ANA

‘A big snake was in the Banyan tree.’ [NVKS01.4]

(9.163) Existential *tokh* with negative polarity

Nimkhut i-tokh si aiyem ang

man 3REAL:SG-exist NEG home ANA

‘There wasn’t anyone in the dwelling.’ [NVKS18.99: 494.841]

While adjectival and locative predicates must be verbal, nominal predicates with positive polarity may be either verbal or non-verbal in Neverver. Positive non-verbal constructions employ the inherently negative verb *skhen* ‘be not so’, while positive verbal constructions negate with the post-verbal negative particle *si*. There are four semantic sub-types of non-verbal clauses with nominal predicates, these being classificatory clauses, identificational clauses, ownership clauses, and presentative clauses⁴⁰. Examples of each non-verbal clause-type are presented in the sub-sections below.

9.9.1. Classificatory clauses

Classificatory predicates identify the general class or category to which the subject NP belongs. There are two predicate structures available for classificatory clauses. The non-verbal structure consists of two juxtaposed NPs. These clauses must be negated with the inherently negative verb *skhen* ‘not so’ (9.167) to (9.168).

(9.164) *Nida titi ang nemat tokhtokh ing.*
 mother 3PS:SG ANA snake huge EXCL
 ‘Her mother was a big snake!’ [NVKS02.29]

(9.165) *Nepanglab, aiyem titi nemat nibutriri i-skham*
 Nepanglab, home 3PS:SG snake hill.top 3REAL:SG-one

⁴⁰ The terms CLASSIFICATORY and IDENTIFICATIONAL are borrowed from Hyslop (2001:375-380). OWNERSHIP clauses are similar to Dryer’s (2007a:247) class of genitive predicates. The term PRESENTATIVE is taken from Crowley (2006a: 109; 2006b: 141), who uses this label to describe clauses in Avava and Naman with a similar structure and function to the sub-set of non-verbal clauses bearing this name in Neverver.

ing.

EXCL

‘Nepanglam, the home of the snake, was a hill top!’ [NVKS12.56:
411.781]

(9.166) *nimukhman an i-tur bbukhut ang,*

male NMOD 3REAL:SG-stand inside ANA

nimukhman an tnakh i-skham me ing.

male NMOD here 3REAL:SG-one just EXCL

‘The man who stood inside was just a man from here!’ [NVCV05.28:
1403.873]

(9.167) *Ei khabat i-skhen, ei nimkhut metmet.*

3SG European 3REAL:SG-not.so 3SG man dark

‘He isn’t a European, he’s a black man.’ [NVLX25.14]

(9.168) *Nidam i-skhen tjakh, nidaro me.*

yam 3REAL:SG-not.so here taro just

‘It’s not a yam here, it’s just a taro.’ [NVE23.5-6]

The verbal classificatory clause consists of a VP headed by the verb *ve* as in (9.169) to (9.171). In classificatory clauses, *ve* functions as a copula; elsewhere it is employed as a causative complement-taking predicate, and a lexical stem meaning ‘make s.t., do s.t.’. Verbal classificatory clauses are negated with the post-verbal particle *si* as illustrated in (9.169) and (9.171).

(9.169) *Nemat i-ve mo-si nemat, i-ve*
 snake 3REAL:SG-COP CONT-NEG snake 3REAL:SG-COP
nimkhut
 man
 ‘The snake was no longer a snake, it was a man.’ [NVKS17.77]

(9.170) *Nividumni i-ve ni-smut-ian*
 kangaroo.grass 3REAL:SG-COP NPR-be.laborious-NSF
 ‘Kangaroo grass is laborious (i.e. to make into thatch).’ [NVKS02.77]

(9.171) *Ei i-ve si khabat, ei i-ve*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-COP NEG European 3SG 3REAL:SG-COP
navong
 albino
 ‘He isn't a European, he's an albino.’ [NVLX25.13]

9.9.2. Identificational clauses

Identification predicates name the subject argument, which may be a person, place or thing. This can be achieved through the juxtaposition of two NPs, as the examples (9.172) to (9.175) below display.

(9.172) *Nikhijan Niovertavut*
 name Niovertavut
 ‘Its name is Niovertavut (of a place).’ [NVKS12.20: 141.911]

(9.173) *Na tuan na nikhijan Nepra*
 1SG LOCPSN 1SG name Nepra
 ‘My place, its name is Nepra.’ [NVKS01.01]

(9.174) *Na nikhijan na Lina*
 1SG name 1SG Lina
 ‘My name is Lina.’ [NVKS24.1]

(9.175) *Niterikh mukhman ang, nikhijan Maxim*
 child male ANA name Maxim
 ‘The boy, his name was Maxim.’ [NVCV01.20: 421.535]

As well as the non-verbal construction, the identity of an entity can be established in a verbal predicate with the locution verb *ver* ‘say’. Verbal identity predicates are always marked with the impersonal subject/mood prefix.

(9.176) *Ni-sav-ian ang ar-ver Arikhra*
 NPR-perform.dance-NSF ANA IMPS:REAL-say k.o.dance
 ‘The dance, it was called the Arikhra dance.’ [NVKI03.109]

(9.177) *Ni-sav-ian an ar-sav*
 NPR-perform.dance-NSF NMOD IMPS:REAL-perform.dance

lon ang ar-ver neblat

LOC ANA IMPS:REAL-say k.o.dance

‘The dance that they performed there was called the Neblat dance.’

[NVKI05.46]

(9.178) *Nakhmal ari-kke-kh ar-ver Nibarngankha*

house IMPS:REAL-call-APPL IMPS:REAL-say Nibarngankha

‘The house was called Nibarngankha.’ [NVKI03.40]

When the entity being identified is perceived to be indefinite, verbal identificational clauses are expressed as unmarked relative clauses. This encoding strategy is also employed in the expression of number as we observe that when a head noun is indefinite, it takes an inflected (thus verbal) numeral modifier. It is not introduced by the nominal modifying particle *an* that we find with relative clause constructions where the head noun is definite (§5.3.).

(9.179) *Ar-lav nibbuang i-skham ar-ver*

IMPS:REAL-get swamp.taro 3REAL:SG-one IMPS:REAL-say

nibrar.

k.o.taro.

‘They got a (kind of) swamp taro called Nibrar.’ [NVKI03.35]

(9.180) *At-uv at-sav kut i-skham*

3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-perform.dance LOCPN 3REAL:SG-one

ar-ver *Unua*

IMPS:REAL-say *Unua*

‘They went and performed a ceremonial dance at a place called
Unua.’ [NVKI05.43]

9.9.3. Ownership predicates

Ownership clauses, as distinct from possessive phrases, are normally expressed with the verb *tbbukh* ‘have’ in (9.181) to (9.182), meaning OWNER HAS OBJECT.

(9.181) *Nimkhut an Neverver adr tue*

man NMOD Neverver.lg PL long.ago

ati-tbbukh nokhos

3REAL:PL-have garden

‘The people of Neverver, in the past, they had gardens. [NVKI30.02]

(9.182) *Niterikh ang ati-tbbukh si nisin.*

child ANA 3REAL:PL-have NEG thing:INDEF

‘The children didn’t have anything.’ [NVCV03.28: 130.149]

It is also possible for the object that is possessed to function as the subject of the clause. In this case, ownership is expressed in a non-verbal clause or using the copula verb *ve* meaning OBJECT BELONGS TO OWNER. The non-verbal clause becomes verbal when marked for negative polarity with the inherently negative verb *skhen* ‘be not so’. The following examples were produced in elicitation

sessions but they reflect conversational usage. Example (9.186) is a natural text example.

(9.183) *Nitelmet anjakh, Henry titi i-skhen,*
truck this Henry 3PS-SG 3REAL:SG-not.so
Sevti titi.
Sefti 3PS-SG
‘This truck isn't Henry's, it's Sefti's.’ [NVE30.10]

(9.184) *Anjakh at-t-na;*
this PSPN-PSDT-1SG
anjakh i-ve at-t-na
this 3REAL:SG-COP PSPN-PSDT-1SG
‘This is mine.’ [NVE23.12.2]

(9.185) *Anjakh at-t-na i-skhen;*
this PSPN-PSDT-1SG 3REAL:SG-not.so
anjakh i-ve si at-t-na
this 3REAL:SG-COP NEG PSPN-PSDT-1SG
‘This isn't mine.’ [NVE23.12.3]

(9.186) *Nakhmal i-ve nimukhman titi,*
house 3REAL:SG-COP male 3PS:SG

nevanu *i-ve* *nimokhmokh* *titi*
 traditional.women's.abode 3REAL:SG-COP female 3PS:SG
 ‘‘Nakhmal’ is the man’s (dwelling), ‘nevanu’ is the woman’s
 (dwelling).’ [NVKI06.155]

9.9.4. Presentative clauses

Presentative clauses are used to assert the presence or existence of an entity. Presentative clauses consist minimally of the NP encoding the entity being presented, and the clausal exclamatory particle *ing*.

(9.187) *Vinang* *i-ver* *Ite!* *I-na* *ing.*’
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-say yes PSNPR-1SG EXCL
 ‘The woman said, ‘Yes, it’s me!’.’ [NVKS10.70]

(9.188) *M.m.* *Maxim* *ing*
 Agreement Maxim EXCL
 ‘Yes, it was Maxim!’ [NVCV01.23: 427.604]

The commonly occurring conversational expression ‘that’s it, that’s right’, illustrated in (9.189), also uses the presentative construction.

(9.189) *Ei* *ang* *ing*
 3SG ANA EXCL
 ‘That’s it/that’s right.’ [NVKI21.108: 448.209]

9.10. ‘Yes’, ‘No’, and other interjections

A small set of interjections can be heard in conversation, in response to the utterances of other conversational participants, and to initiate conversation.

(9.190)	<i>ite</i>	‘yes’
	<i>ave</i>	‘no’
	<i>yes</i>	‘yes’ Bis. <i>yes</i>
	<i>no</i>	‘no’ Bis. <i>no</i>
	<i>m.mm</i> [mʔm:]	‘AGREEMENT’
	<i>e! ~ a! ~ o!</i>	‘SURPRISE’
	<i>a</i>	‘um’
	<i>wi~wei</i>	‘wow’
	<i>ei!</i>	‘hey!’

The indigenous negative particle *ave* ‘no’, and the Bislama borrowing *no* require some further description. Both are used to express denial, but the situation that is denied may be expressed in the positive (9.191) or negative (9.192). The particle *ave* occurs once as a reduplicated form, expressing emphatic denial.

(9.191a)	<i>Gam</i>	<i>ibi-skham</i>	<i>im-te</i>	<i>na</i>
	2NSG	3IRR:SG-one	3IRR:SG-hit	1SG
	‘One of you (must) kill me.’			

(9.191b) *Mang i-ver 'Ave! ni-rosikh*
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-say No! 1REAL:SG-not.want
nim-te nida.'
 1IRR:SG-hit mother
 'The man said, 'No! I don't want to kill mother.'" [NVKS11.70, 72]

(9.192a) *tatan okh i-ver ij i-ver te*
 older.brother 2SG 3REAL:SG-say ANT 3REAL:SG-say COMP
kub-lav-lav si.
 2IRR:SG-DUP-get NEG
 'Your brother has said, you can't get it.'

(9.192b) *I-ver 'No! Nib-lav ing.'*
 3REAL:SG-say no 1IRR:SG-get EXCL
 'She said 'No! I'm going to get it!'" [NVKS09.74-75]

(9.193a) *I-ver 'ku-sorsor.'*
 3REAL:SG-say 2REAL:SG-lie
 'He said, 'You lie.''

(9.193b) *I-ver 'No, ni-vratn man(d) ing.*
 3REAL:SG-say no 1REAL:SG-true EMPH EXCL
 'He said, 'No, I'm really telling the truth!'" [NVKS06.38]

- (9.194) *Ave-ve-ve-ve!* *nim-sakh* *mo-si* *bbukhut*
no-no-no-no 1IRR:SG-go.up CONT-NEG inside
an i-jing
NMOD 3REAL:SG-be.there
‘No, no, no, no. I won't go inside that (house) any more.’
[NVKS01.28]

In the corpus, and in daily life, the borrowed particle *no* has almost fully replaced the indigenous particle. In addition to outright denial, it is also commonly used by speakers as a politeness device, to downplay the importance or intrusiveness of one's actions or opinions. Bislama *no* can function in the same way when used by the Neverver-speaking community.

- (9.195a) *'Ei!* *ku-lukh* *tnakh* *ku-ve* *tnakh?*'
Hey! 2REAL:SG-stay here 2REAL:SG-do here
‘Hey, what are you doing here?’

- (9.195b) *Niviturtur* *ang* *i-ver* *'no!* *ni-lukh* *me*
adolescent.girl ANA 3REAL:SG-say no 1REAL:SG-stay just
nakh ni-tokh ni-tev-tev
here 1REAL:SG-PROG 1REAL:SG-DUP-begin.to.grow
nivanbev il nida t-na'
Chinese.yam BENE mother PSDT-1SG
‘The young girl said ‘No, I'm just here cultivating Chinese Yams for my mother.’ [NVKS02.14]

Chapter Ten

Complex Nuclei

In this chapter, and in chapter eleven, constructions that fall into the category of Complex Predicates are considered. The category of complex predicates broadly includes those constructions that behave in some ways as a single clause, yet which contain more than one lexical morpheme jointly expressing an action, event or state. Using the layered clause structure described by Foley and Olsen (1985) as a starting point for this analysis, it is possible to distinguish between complex nuclei and complex cores in Neverver. A complex nucleus contains a contiguous sequence of a verb and some additional lexical material. This other material may be clearly nominal, clearly verbal, verb-like in meaning, or adverb-like in meaning. Regardless of the make-up of their component parts, complex nuclei share the feature of having just one subject/mood marker attached to the left-most element. Phonotactic rules apply exclusively to the left edge of the left-most element in the complex nucleus. In this analysis, constructions that contain material that is nominal in origin are treated as instances of object incorporation. Object incorporation is discussed in §10.1. All other complex nuclei are treated as instances of nuclear serialisation. Nuclear serialisation is discussed in §10.2. to §10.5.

In contrast, a complex core contains a non-contiguous sequence of verbs or verb-like elements, each with their own subject/mood marker. This non-contiguous sequence nonetheless displays mono-clausal properties. Complex cores are treated as instances of core serialisation, discussed in chapter eleven.

10.1 Object incorporation

Neverver, like many Oceanic languages (cf. Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:46), permits the patient argument of a transitive proposition to be incorporated into the verb stem, forming an intransitive verb. In her article ‘The evolution of noun incorporation’, Mithun (1984) describes four subtypes of noun incorporation. Neverver displays the most common of these four subtypes, which Mithun labels ‘lexical compounding’. Lexical compounding typically involves a transitive verb stem and its associated patient argument, which would normally appear in the position of grammatical object. When the object is incorporated into, or compounded with the verb, the resulting lexical compound is an intransitive verb. A verb form with an incorporated object is typically ‘the name of an institutionalised activity or state’ and such forms appear ‘in contexts without specific, individuated patients’ (Mithun 1984:856). In Neverver, verbs with incorporated objects are used to describe actions and events that are part of daily life.

Two morphological features are associated with incorporated objects. Constructions may display one or both of these features. Firstly, the incorporated noun appears without its common noun prefix *n(V)-*. The item *nevat* ‘stone’ thus appears as *-vat* when incorporated. The loss of the common noun prefix is diagnostic of an incorporated object and offers some evidence of the word-hood of such constructions, as common nouns must appear with their common noun prefix when occurring as independent heads. Secondly, in prototypical cases of compounding, transitive verb stems appear in a reduplicated form. This type of reduplication functions as a valency-decreasing device, used to produce intransitive verbs from transitive stems (see §8.2.1. for a

more general description of this process). The structure of prototypical object incorporation is presented below:



Figure 10.1. The structure of prototypical incorporated objects

A text example of a prototypical incorporated object construction is presented in example (10.1) below. It is highly lexicalised, referring specifically to the stage of readying stakes for giant yams in the process of yam gardening. The incorporated patient argument ‘wood’ from *nakha* is non-specific.

- (10.1) *Nat-uv* *nat-jal-jal-kha*.
 1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-DUP-scrape-wood
 ‘We went and prepared stakes for the yams.’ [NVDL07.4]

10.1.1. Prototypical incorporated objects

Incorporated objects that are prototypical exhibit both reduplication of the verb and the loss of the common noun prefix. The data set (10.2) displays prototypical incorporated objects that appear in the digital corpus. The intransitive compounds listed below are mostly used to describe common domestic, hunting, and horticultural activities.

- (10.2) *gaga-bat* ‘wear a head tie’ from *ga* ‘tie up, bind’; *nebatn*⁴¹
 ‘head’

⁴¹ Note the loss of the final *-n* from *nebatn*; in an earlier form of the language, this *-n* is argued in chapter five to have been the 3SG suffix of direct possession, deriving from proto-Oceanic **ñā*

<i>jaljal-kha</i>	‘prepare yam stakes (Limap variety)’ from <i>jal</i> ‘scrape, strip’; <i>nakha</i> ‘tree, wood’
<i>jamjam-kha</i>	‘prepare yam stakes (Lingarakh variety)’ from <i>jam</i> ‘scrape, strip’; <i>nakha</i> ‘tree, wood’
<i>jirjir-bat</i>	‘comb hair’ from <i>jir</i> ‘comb’; <i>nebatn</i> ‘head’
<i>lavlav-ran</i>	‘help’ from <i>lav</i> ‘get’; <i>nevran</i> ‘hand’
<i>lulu-ka</i>	‘shoot arrows’ from <i>lu</i> ‘shoot’; <i>nakha</i> ‘tree, wood’; also <i>nilukha</i> ‘cane dart’
<i>ppuppus-ran</i> ⁴²	‘be branched, forked’ from <i>ppus</i> ‘squeeze’ and <i>nevran</i> ‘hand’
<i>peppel-khabb</i>	‘wave a smoldering branch to make fire’ from <i>ppel</i> ‘shake’; <i>nakhabb</i> ‘fire, firewood’
<i>silsil-kha</i>	‘burn trees (in garden)’ from <i>sil</i> ‘burn’; <i>nakha</i> ‘tree, wood’
<i>sisir-io</i>	‘travel following a water course’ from <i>sir</i> ‘follow’; <i>nio</i> ‘water, river’
<i>sukhsukh-vat</i>	‘lift stones to find fresh water prawns’ from <i>sukh</i> ‘rise’; <i>nevat</i> ‘stone’
<i>veve-kka</i>	‘play string games’ from <i>ve</i> ‘do, make’; <i>nekka</i> ‘spider, spider’s web’

(see Lynch, Ross & Crowley (2002:76) for a description of direct possession in POc). Final *-n* is also lost from *nebaun* 'knee' which is realised as the incorporated form *-ba* in (10.4), but not from *nevran* 'hand'.

⁴² The morpheme *ran* is confirmed by language consultants to mean ‘hand’ as in *nevran*; the loss of *v-* is not regular. It may be explained by the anti-gemination effects of the Obligatory Contour Principle (cf. McCarthy 1986) which in Neverver, prohibit the formation of geminate sequences over lexical morpheme boundaries (see §8.1).

<i>verver-vut</i>	‘work up to the boundary of another’s garden’ from <i>ver</i> ‘work’; <i>nuvut</i> ‘boundary’
<i>khithit-bri</i>	‘dream’ from <i>khith</i> ‘see’; <i>nibri</i> ‘dream’

10.1.2. Less prototypical incorporated objects

Some examples incorporated objects in the corpus display both reduplication and the absence of the common noun prefix, yet are rather less prototypical for various reasons. Others display just one of the characteristic morphological features.

10.1.2.1. *verver-sal-ikh* ‘give s.o. directions’

The verb *verver-sal-ikh* ‘give directions to s.o.’ comprises *ver* ‘say’ and *nesal* ‘road’. It also carries the applicative suffix *-ikh* and is unattested without this suffix. When attached to the plain verb stem *ver*, this suffix licenses a recipient-like experiencer argument as in *ver-ikh* ‘tell s.o.’. Unaffixed, *ver* is transitive, requiring a sentential complement expressing what is said.⁴³ The reduplicated verb stem with an incorporated object creates an intransitive verb. The suffix *-ikh* then attaches to the end of the incorporated object form, licensing the recipient-type argument. Thus, this form undergoes both a detransitivising process and a transitivity process.

10.1.2.2. *jaljal-druk* ‘wear sash diagonally across chest’

The verb *jaljal-druk* ‘wear a sash diagonally across one’s chest’ appears to display the morphological characteristics of object incorporation; however, the

⁴³ The form *ver-ix* cannot be used ditransitively; a serial construction must be used to express both the dative argument and the sentential object. This construction is discussed in full in §11.3.1.4.

component parts of this verb are less than straightforward. It has already been shown that in Neverver, there may be no semantic relationship between a simplex verb stem and its phonologically reduplicated counterpart. Nor is there a necessary semantic connection between a bare verb stem and the phonologically matched form carrying the applicative suffix *-ikh*. (see chapter six for a detailed presentation of these points). The element *jaljal* derives from a verb *jaljal-ikh* ‘wear (a necklace)’ rather than *jal* ‘be sick’ or its homophone *jal* ‘scrape’. The suffix-bearing form *jal-ikh* is attested in the corpus with the meaning ‘be sick with/from s.t.’. We would predict that *druk* is derived from a noun of the form **nidruk/nudruk/nuruk* meaning ‘sash’. In fact, **druk* is not attested elsewhere in the corpus, either in a nominal form or compound, or as a verb. We might hypothesise that at some point in the past there was a noun with this form, but is no longer known by contemporary speakers.

10.1.3. Incorporated objects with intransitive bases

Not all the examples of object incorporation in the corpus involve transitive verbs and their associated object arguments. Some comprise reduplicated verbs that are intransitive in their simplex forms. The intransitive verb *kkil* ‘dig’ has a single agent argument and contrasts with the prototypical transitive verb *khil* ‘dig s.t.’ which has both agent and patient arguments. With an incorporated object, *kkil* ‘dig’ remains intransitive but the activity is narrowed to a particular type of digging. Two examples are attested in the corpus: *kikkil-vas* ‘wild yam-dig’ where *vas* derives from *nevas* ‘wild yam’; and *kikkil-vakh* ‘yam hole-dig’ where *vakh* derives from *nakhavakh* ‘yam hole, yam mound’. Again, the loss of the common noun prefix and reduplication of the verb stem both occur; however,

this reduplication is clearly not valency-decreasing, as the stem is already intransitive.

The form *kikkil-vakh* ‘yam hole-dig’ shows an interesting feature. In addition to losing the common noun prefix, the noun *nakhavakh* ‘yam mound’ has lost the syllable *kha*. Looking at other incorporated objects, we can observe a tri-syllabic structure. The *kha* syllable may have been dropped to fit with this syllable template.

A small number of other incorporated object constructions are formed from intransitive stems. Like *kkil* ‘dig’ discussed above, these intransitive stems undergo reduplication. The full list is presented in (10.3) below.

- (10.3)
- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>kikkil-vas</i> | ‘wild yam-dig’ from <i>kkil</i> ‘dig’; <i>nevas</i> ‘wild yam’ |
| <i>kikkil-vakh</i> | ‘yam hole-dig’ from <i>kkil</i> ‘dig’; <i>nakhavakh</i> ‘yam hole, mound’ |
| <i>drusdrus-mas</i> | ‘walk backwards’ from <i>drus</i> ‘shuffle’; <i>nakhalmas</i> ‘shin’ |
| <i>turtur-kha</i> | ‘carry firewood’ from <i>tur</i> ‘stand’; <i>nakha</i> ‘tree, wood’ |
| <i>kherkher-don</i> | ‘stir up silt in a river’ (archaic) from <i>?kher</i> ‘be strong’; <i>nidon</i> ‘muddy water’ |

10.1.4. Non-prototypical incorporated objects

There is a set of incorporated object forms where the object can clearly be identified as nominal in origin, but the verb stem either does not appear independently in the corpus or appears with an apparently unrelated meaning. The morphological features that characterise object incorporation are observable

with the expected loss of the common noun prefix and verb-stem reduplication.

We can add to these features the tri-syllabic template in almost all cases.

- (10.4) *dingding-ba* ‘kneel’ from **ding* ‘?bend, be not straight’; *dingber*
‘sleep crossways on mat’; *nebaut*⁴⁴ ‘knee’
- kuku-bat* ‘lay head on pillow’ from **ku*, **kuku*; *nebatn* ‘head’
- sisi-mul* ‘play orange-tossing’ from **si*; **sisi* ‘?roll, turn’;
nemul ‘orange’
- sisi-vat* ‘roll stones down slope’ from *nevat* ‘stone’
- sisi-kha* ‘leave a leaf/branch marker (by turning?)’ from *nakha*
‘tree, wood’
- sisi-yal* ‘warm up’ from *nial~niyal* ‘sun’
- sisi-yokh* ‘bow head’ from *iokh* ‘you?’
- soso-ka* ‘hunt with spears’ from **so*, **soso*; *nakha* ‘tree, wood’
- susu-ka* ‘stake (yams)’ from **su*; *nakha* ‘tree, wood’
- tata-bwet* ‘play target-shooting’ from *ta* ‘show’; *tata* ‘promise’;
nebwet ‘point’
- lislis-veru* ‘whistle by placing thumb pad under top teeth’ from
(*lis* ‘be afraid’); (*niveruan* ‘juvenile coconut’)

The last item in (10.4) is the archaic verb *lislis-veru* ‘whistle’ which has the apparent structure of an incorporated object. It comprises forms that are attested as separate morphemes elsewhere in the corpus; however, it should be noted that there is no apparent relationship between the hypothesised input parts and the

⁴⁴ The change from the diphthong *nibaun* to the low vowel in the incorporated *-ba* is unpredictable; the loss of final *-n* has been explained in Footnote 41 above (see also §5.1.1 for an hypothesis of the derivation of *-n*).

10.2. Nuclear serial verbs

In Neverver, the category of nuclear serial verbs encompasses all complex nuclei where the final element(s) is not derived from a noun and is therefore not an instance of noun incorporation. This includes sequences that are both highly productive and commonly occurring in the corpus, as well as one-of combinations.

A comprehensive account of serialisation needs to be language-specific and multifaceted. Such an account is attempted in the remainder of this chapter. The analysis employs contemporary typological frameworks for the discussion of serial verb constructions [SVCs]. Aikhenvald (2006), in her typological survey on serialisation draws together the range of constructions that I consider in this chapter, noting that ‘providing a general typological framework which encompasses multi-word and one-word SVCs helps breach the artificial (and unhelpful) terminological gap between what is traditionally known as ‘compounding’ ... and as ‘serialisation’” (Aikhenvald 2006:38).

Following Aikhenvald (2006), I adopt a broad typological framework for the analysis of complex predicates in Neverver. Like Margetts (1999) in her work on Saliba, I do not make a formal distinction between compound constructions and instances of serialisation:

I propose that the term ‘compound’ does not by definition contradict an analysis as serialisation. Rather, in the same way as I analyze certain noun-verb compounds as noun incorporation..., one can analyze certain verb-verb compounds as instances of verb serialisation. (Margetts 1999:101)

Prototypical SVCs contain a sequence of two (or more) verb stems that behave as a single predicate. While linguists differ in the terminology used to describe this general characteristic, most agree that SVCs have multi-verb mono-clausal properties. Typological work by Seeba (1987) reflects on the use of the term ‘serial verb’. Seeba (1987:2) says that “‘Serial Verb’ then has generally been used to refer to a surface string of verbs or verb-like or verb-phrase-like items which occur within what appears to be a single clause’. This usage of the term serial verb has evolved over recent decades, with linguists moving towards an understanding of SVCs as having more and less prototypical instantiations. There are no longer attempts to provide a definition that accounts for all data in all languages. The prototypical SVC is a mono-clausal construction which contains a sequence of verbs. Seeba’s (1987) ‘verb-like’ or ‘verb-phrase-like’ items account for less prototypical members of the SVC category.

Durie (1997:289-290) describes prototypical SVCs as consisting of ‘a sequence of two or more verbs which in various (rather strong) senses, together act like a single verb’. Crowley (2002a) and Aikhenvald (2006) follow this definition. Crowley (2002a:10) begins his discussion of SVCs by suggesting that SVCs can be viewed as ‘syntactic constructions involving what can be analysed at the surface level as single clauses, but which are nevertheless expressed by means of multiple predicates’. Likewise, Aikhenvald (2006:1) emphasises the verbal nature of prototypical SVCs, saying that ‘a serial verb construction (SVC) is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any other sort’.

In the case of Neverver, many SVCs fit the prototype ‘sequence of verbs’ definition; however, there are also numerous non-prototypical constructions. It

is sometimes the case that both of the elements in a complex predicate are clearly verbal in origin and are attested as independent verbs elsewhere in the corpus. In other cases, either the initial or non-initial element(s) is not attested outside the complex predicate. Crowley (2002:85) describes this latter phenomenon as a kind of functional restriction on the serial components. The phenomenon is not unique to Neverver, having been observed in a number of Central Vanuatu languages including Lewo (Early 1993), Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2007), Paamese, Avava, and Naman (Crowley 2002; 2006a; 2006b).

In descriptions of serial verb constructions in Oceanic languages, a distinction is frequently made between nuclear layer serialisation and core layer serialisation (cf. Early 1993; Hyslop 2001; Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002; Crowley 2002). This distinction is based on the layered clause structure described by Foley and Olsen (1985). Using Foley and Olsen’s (1985) layered clause structure, I identify both NUCLEAR SVCs and CORE SVCs in Neverver.

The basic structure of the nuclear SVC is as follows:

Subject/mood-	V			<i>(-ikh)</i>	(Aspectual markers)
	V1	-V2	(-V3)		

Figure 10.2. The structure of nuclear serial verbs

Two text examples of prototypical nuclear serial constructions are presented in example (10.6). Both forms are lexicalised in that they are formally intransitive and refer to actions carried out on coconuts (but not other objects) during copra production. The first SVC involves morphological reduplication of the V1 stem *te* ‘cut, hit’; the second SVC comprises the unduplicated stem *te*

‘cut, hit’ and the inherently reduplicated form *jevjev* ‘separate’.⁴⁵ The first nuclear SVC is part of a larger egressive core serial construction (see §7.2.4.3.; §11.3.3.2.).

- (10.6) *Ni-tete-bbur* *lu* *i-suvsuv*,
 1REAL:SG-DUP-cut-swell PERF 3REAL:SG-be.finished
 ni-te-jevjev.
 1REAL:SG-cut-separate
 ‘When I finish cutting open the coconuts, I split them apart.’
 [NVDL02.5]

10.2.1. Major properties of nuclear serial verbs

Nuclear serial verbs have a number of properties. These properties have been attested in other serializing languages (cf. Aikhenvald 2006; Crowley 2002 on Paamese; Early 1993 on Lewo; Hyslop 2001 on North-East Ambae; Lane 2007 and Pawley & Lane 1998 on Kalam; and Seeba 1987) and include the following:

- they form a single complex nucleus
- the component parts are absolutely contiguous
- there is only one subject argument
- there is no morphological or intonational marking of syntactic juncture
- they express single-scene propositions

⁴⁵ While this form appears reduplicated, the base form *jev* is not attested independently in the corpus and could not be elicited as an independent form. It is an example of inherent object reduplication (see §8.2.1.2).

The behaviour of a nuclear SVC as a single nucleus is evident in the type of grammatical morphology associated with the verb stems. All verbs in Neverver are marked with a subject/mood prefix. Nuclear SVCs, despite comprising more than one verb stem, have only one inflection per construction - they display single marking of grammatical categories, which precedes the left-most element. The distinction between single and concordant marking of grammatical categories is the key morpho-syntactic difference between nuclear and core SVCs in Neverver. Nuclear SVCs are also characterised by having only one negative morpheme per construction and one set of aspectual morphology. Negation and aspectual markers follow material that serialises in the nucleus, as illustrated in the example below:

- (10.7) *Na* *ni-ver* *te* *ei* *ib-lav-bir* *si*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-say COMP 3SG 3IRR:SG-get-break/win NEG
 ‘I said he didn’t return it.’ [NVKI05.34]

The component parts of a nuclear SVC display absolute contiguity. This means that there can be no intervening phonological material between the stems. The property of absolute contiguity is shared with incorporated object constructions where the common noun prefix is dropped to create absolute contiguity between the verb stem and incorporated noun.

A phonotactic process applies consistently to stem-initial consonant clusters when verb stems are inflected. This general process inserts an epenthetic [i] to break up consonant clusters so that a maximal CVC template is observed (see §2.5.; §2.6.3.5.; §6.1.1.). The process applies only to the left edge of the nuclear

SVC. Any medial clusters that form when stems are serialised are not broken up by epenthetic vowels and complex onsets are permitted.

The contiguity of elements in the nuclear serial construction permits a single left-hand core position to be filled by a subject argument, and a single right-hand core position to be filled by an object argument, should the construction be transitive. Nuclear serial constructions then, have just one subject argument. A key characteristic of all serial constructions is that there is no marking of syntactic juncture between elements. This means there is no subordinating or coordinating morphology in the construction. Nor is there any prosodic evidence that nuclear serial constructions contain internal word or clause boundaries. Serial constructions are articulated under a single intonation contour.

Semantically, nuclear serial verbs express propositions that involve Single Scenes. I follow Pawley and Lane (1998:204) in defining single scene constructions as referring to ‘a series of acts which take place at the same scene (or site)’. For example, *ga-gor* ‘tie closed’ from ‘tie up’ and ‘block’ is single-scene as the component events take place in one location. *Sien-mmav-ikh* ‘worry about’ also expresses a proposition that is single-scene. It encodes a single event, while *ga-gor* ‘tie closed’ involves elements that encode temporally related sub-events. Temporally-related sub-events are arranged according to an iconic ordering principle, with component parts reflecting the temporal order in which the sub-events occur. The tying up, for example, of a basket which contains a bundles of thatch, results in the basket being closed. The basket is not closed first and then tied – this would be very difficult for one person to achieve, given the design of the baskets in questions. Thus, we find that *ga* ‘tie’ precedes *gor* ‘block’ in the serial construction.

Pawley and Lane (1998:205) in their discussion of SVCs in Kalam, observe that ‘all serial verb sequences are probably lexicalised to some degree’. Crowley (2002a:84) makes a similar observation in regarding serial verbs in Paamese, commenting that ‘there is often semantic unpredictability in the meaning of the verb construction as a whole’. In Neverver, it is often the case that nuclear SVCs are used with meanings that are more than simply the sum of the input parts. Nuclear SVCs often relate to highly specific, culturally significant activities.

Numerous nuclear SVCs are attested in Neverver; however, the combinatorial possibilities are not open-ended. The notion of event-salience⁴⁶ is central in restricting combinations that count as well-formed serial constructions. For example, events that take place over-night are noteworthy. In (10.8) below, the serial verb *dran*, which is related to the independent intransitive verb *ran* ‘be daylight’, contributes the meaning of ‘all night’ or ‘until morning’ in each nuclear serial construction.

(10.8)	<i>ran</i>	‘be daylight’
	<i>sav-dran</i>	‘dance till daylight’ from <i>sav</i> ‘dance’
	<i>khas-dran-ikh</i>	‘bite s.t/s.o till dawn’ from <i>khas</i> ‘bite’
	<i>tom-dran</i>	‘cook overnight’ from <i>?tomtom</i> ‘lay eggs’
	<i>vov-dran</i>	‘rain all night’ from <i>vov</i> ‘rain’
	<i>jal-dran</i>	‘be ill all night’ from <i>jal</i> ‘be sick, ill’
	<i>tur-dran</i>	‘stand all night’ from <i>tur</i> ‘stand up’

⁴⁶ Events encoded in serial constructions are argued to be conceptualized as unitary by native speakers (cf. Aikhenvald 2006; Durie 1997; Early 1993) and involve event-types ‘that are salient, or communicatively in demand for the speech community’ (Durie 1997:321).

The second nuclear SVC above, *khas-dran-ikh*, displays concordant transitivity marking. The applicative suffix *-ikh* agrees with the transitivity of *khas* ‘bite s.t.’.

Further examples of prototypical nuclear SVCs that occur in the corpus are presented in (10.9) below.

- (10.9)
- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>te-te-bbur</i> | ‘cut open (coconuts)’ from <i>te</i> ‘cut’; <i>bbur</i> ‘swell’ |
| <i>khas-bbur</i> | ‘bite open’ from <i>khas</i> ‘bite’; <i>bbur</i> ‘swell’ |
| <i>lav-bal</i> | ‘get enough’ from <i>lav</i> ‘get’; <i>bal</i> ‘fill’ |
| <i>te-bir</i> | ‘cut down’ from <i>te</i> ‘cut’; <i>bir</i> ‘break, win’ |
| <i>rus-dri</i> | ‘wear inside out’ from <i>rus</i> ‘wear’; <i>dri</i> ‘turn’ |
| <i>khil-dvin</i> | ‘loosen soil in yam hole’ from <i>khil</i> ‘dig’; <i>dvin</i> ‘bury’ |
| <i>jang-jakh</i> | ‘add to load’ archaic, from <i>jang</i> ‘place over’; <i>jakh</i> ‘put up’ |
| <i>vavu-kkel</i> | ‘stagger’ from <i>vavu</i> ‘walk’; <i>kkel</i> ‘bend, curve’ |
| <i>matur-ling</i> | ‘sleep through s.t.’ from <i>matur</i> ‘sleep’; <i>ling</i> ‘leave’ |
| <i>bbu-sar</i> | ‘slip’ from <i>vu</i> ‘go’; <i>sar</i> ‘hang’ |

A number of combinations occur in which the element in V1 position is also attested as an independent verb with a related meaning, but the element in V2 position is either not attested as an independent verb with a demonstrably related meaning or is simply not attested outside of the particular serial construction. The meanings that these elements contribute to the serial construction appear to be verb-like; however, the V2 element does not productively combine with V1 stems. Such forms are small in number and are treated as peripheral nuclear serialisations that have become lexicalised.

- (10.10) *mas-driv* ‘be unconscious’ from *mas* ‘dead’; **driv*
tang-bbul ‘mourn late’ from *tang* ‘grieve’; *bbulbbul* ‘empty’⁴⁷
khas-glek ‘chew to taste’ from *khas* ‘bite’; **glek*
lav-pir ‘repay, return’ from *lav* ‘get’; **pir*, *bir* ‘break, win’

There are also combinations where the element in the V2 position is attested as an independent verb, but the element in the V1 position is not attested outside of the serial construction. Again, these peripheral nuclear serialisations are lexicalised.

- (10.11) *vil-gas*⁴⁸ ‘break legs off (prawns)’ from **vil*, *vgas* ‘shell (a prawn)’
kkur-bkhas ‘clean away waste’ from **kkur*, *bkhas* ‘clean’
gliv-gor ‘cover (doorway with coconut branches)’ from **gliv*, *gor* ‘block’
jos-gor ‘decorate (back of waistband with leaves)’ from **jos*, *gor* ‘block’
ding-ber ‘sleep perpendicular to length of a room’ from **ding* ‘?bend, be not straight’; *ber* ‘long’

⁴⁷ The connection between ‘empty’ and the serial verb meaning requires some explanation. After being displayed to mourners at home, bodies are generally buried within 24 hours. This is because of the rapid decomposition that occurs in the tropics. People who arrive late will not be able to weep over the body, thus, they grieve in an empty house.

⁴⁸ Like *vran* in *nevran* ‘hand’, *vgas* loses the initial *v-* in the formation of the nuclear SVC. In this case however, OPC effects (McCarthy 1986) cannot account for the difference in stem form when it is incorporated.

10.3. Grammaticalisation pathways

Nuclear SVCs appear to be a site for syntactic category change in Neverver. There is particular evidence of three major grammatical pathways from verb to membership of a different word class. Aikhenvald (2006) describes a number of typical grammaticalisation paths for the second element of serial constructions in SVCs. She notes that V2 may develop into tense-aspect or mood markers, directionals, valency increasing markers, adpositions, comparative and superlative markers, or conjunctions and complementisers. In Neverver, there is evidence that grammaticalisation is resulting in the development of prepositions, in the development of aspectual morphology, and in the development of a small class of adverbs. With regards to V1, there is also evidence of a category change from negation to verb.

10.3.1. From serial verb to preposition

Some V2 elements have prepositional characteristics. Durie (1988:1) argues for a general ‘diachronic drift from serial verb to preposition’ and offers a typological study of this phenomenon in Oceanic languages. Durie observes that many languages display some preposition-like forms ‘which bear no relation to any independently occurring verbs, and others which can occur independently as verbs’ (1988:1-2). Durie also proposes that inhibiting factors are present in languages, such as the prevalence of a particular serialised verb also occurring as an independent head, which prevent the reanalysis of certain serial verbs as prepositions. In Neverver, a number of items appear to be on the pathway from serial verb to preposition. Three key examples are presented below. The first item is at the verb-end of the pathway; the final item is much further along the

pathway moving towards reanalysis as a preposition. A full description of prepositional phrases is presented in §9.1.4.

10.3.1.1. *gwas* ‘cross’, ‘over’

At the verb-like end of the cline, there are forms like *gwas*, which is a commonly occurring independent transitive verb meaning ‘cross’. It also occurs as the second part of a serial verb construction meaning ‘over’, where it follows intransitive motion and posture verbs.

- (10.12) *gwas* V1 ‘cross’; V2 ‘over’
tokh-gwas ‘cross over’ from *tokh* ‘be’
vu-gwas ‘go over’ from *vu* ‘go’
vavu-gwas ‘walk over’ from *vavu* ‘walk’
yal-gwas ‘fly over’ from *yal* ‘fly’

(10.13) Independent use

Baga, i-gwas nio.
 then 3REAL:SG-cross river
 ‘Then he crossed the river.’ [NVKS06.5]

(10.14) Serialised in V2 position

Neman ttis ang ib-yal-gwas i-gang
 bird holy ANA 3IRR:SG-fly-cross 3REAL:SG-like.so
 ‘The holy bird was going to fly over like so (gesture overhead)’
 [NVKI28.132: 452.562]

(10.15) Serialised in V2 position with an object argument

Neman ang i-yal-gwas nio ang.

bird ANA 3REAL:SG-fly-cross river ANA

‘The bird flew over the river.’ [NVE21.62]

Durie (1988:5) observes that verbs which commonly occur as independent forms are less likely to undergo reanalysis as prepositions. This appears to be the case for *gwas*. While *gwas* expresses a preposition-like meaning in serial constructions, its ability to stand independently as a verb (it occurs nine times in the natural text corpus) makes it less open to re-analysis as a preposition.

10.3.1.2. *delvis* ‘go around’

Somewhat further along the pathway to re-analysis as a preposition is the form *delvis* ‘go around’. It has no existence as an independent verb and only occurs in a small number of serial constructions in V2 position.

(10.16) *delvis* V1*; V2 ‘around’

sav delvis ‘dance around s.t.’ from *sav* ‘dance’

dum delvis ‘run around s.t.’ from *dum* ‘run’

vavu delvis ‘walk around s.t.’ from *vavu* ‘walk’

vor delvis ‘sit around s.t.’ from *vor* ‘sit’

Although not attested in a negative construction in the corpus, language consultants report that the correct position for the negative morpheme is in the post-verbal slot after *delvis* as in (10.18) below. If *delvis* were behaving as a

preposition, we would find the negative marker preceding it as in the unacceptable (10.19) below.

- (10.17) *I-sav-delvis* *nibilkhe ang*
3REAL:SG-dance-around slitgong ANA
'She danced around the slitgong.' [NVKS17.150]

- (10.18) *sav delvis si*
dance around NEG
[NVKW06.1]

- (10.19) **sav si delvis*
dance NEG around
[NVKW06.2]

Like *gwas* 'cross', *delvis* is restricted to combinations with motion and posture verbs. Unlike *gwas*, it does not appear as an independent verb, but is restricted to V2 position. In this role, it increases the valence of the intransitive motion or posture verb in V1, adding a locational argument. The lack of an independent verb function for *delvis* means that it is potentially available for reanalysis as a preposition. However, the synchronic position of negation following *delvis* indicates that this form is still treated as being part of a nuclear serial construction, rather than as a separate preposition.

10.3.1.3. *sur* ‘near, along, by’

Compared to *gwas* ‘cross’ and *delvis* ‘around’, *sur* ‘near, along, by’ is much further along the pathway towards re-analysis as a preposition. On some occasions, *sur* is attested in the structural position of a preposition, following post-verbal modifiers and directly preceding a prepositional object. On other occasions, *sur* occurs inside post-verbal aspectual and emphatic modifiers, in the same position that V2 occurs in a nuclear serial construction.

Sur does not occur as an independent verb with a meaning that is demonstrably related to the prepositional meanings expressed in the constructions presented in examples below. There is a homophonic form *sur* which is an independent reflexive verb meaning ‘fall fatally’. It is attested twice in the corpus, always with the applicative suffix *-ikh*. With the meaning ‘fall fatally’, *sur(-ikh)* cannot fill V2 position.

Examples (10.20) and (10.23) display verb-like uses of *sur*. In (10.20), *sur* occurs inside the emphatic marker, which itself has concordant transitivity marking – morphology strongly associated with the nucleus. The core object argument follows this material. Durie (1988:5) claims that ‘the extent that the oblique coding verb bears overt morphological marking of its verbal status when serialised’ will inhibit its reanalysis as a preposition. Although these examples do not display affixation, they certainly occur inside the post-verbal modifiers that define the boundaries of the nucleus and this suggests a more verbal analysis of *sur*.

- (10.20) *At-lem* *nidam ang at-yakh-sur* *mad-ikh*
 3REAL:PL-carry yam ANA 3REAL:PL-follow EMPH-APPL

ar mil

3NSG again

‘They carried yams and followed after the men again.’ [NVKI12.25]

(10.21) *At-yakh-sur si ar*

3REAL:PL-follow NEG 3NSG

‘They didn’t follow them.’ [NVKW06.13]

(10.22) **at-yakh si sur ar*

3REAL:PL-follow NEG near 3NSG

[NVKW06.14]

(10.23) *Ale ar-savsav-sur nakha, ar-sakh arkha,*

then 3REAL:DL-climb-along tree 3REAL:DL-go.up up

‘Then they climbed along the tree, they went up to the top.’

[NVKS18.90: 460.499]

(10.24) *At-savsav-sur si nakha*

3REAL:PL-climb-along NEG tree

‘They didn’t climb along the tree.’ [NVKW06.15]

(10.25) **at-savsav si sur nakha*

3REAL:PL-climb NEG along tree

[NVKW06.16]

Examples (10.20) and (10.23) display highly lexicalised complex verbs⁴⁹ where *sur* can be treated as part of a nuclear serial construction. These constructions are similar to the construction in example (10.17) above involving *delvis*. The lack of an independent verb form suggests preposition-like behaviour, but this re-analysis is not supported by the position of negation.

Examples (10.26), (10.29), and (10.32) display uses of *sur* which are more preposition-like, following the action verbs *vlem* ‘come’, *sisial* ‘warm up’, and *vor* ‘sit down’. *Vlem* ‘come’ occurs frequently in the corpus as an intransitive verb, both with and without a locational adjunct. A text example of *vlem* followed by *sur* is displayed first; followed by the negated form provided by language consultants with the negative morpheme located between the verb and *sur*; and then the unacceptable placement of the negative morpheme following an hypothesised serial construction.

(10.26) *Ni-vusvus* *nani* *i-vlem* *sur* *nesal*
 1REAL:SG-DUP-carry coconut 3REAL:SG-come near road
 ‘I carry the coconut to the road.’ [NVDL02.08]

(10.27) *Nimkhut* *i-vlem* *si* *sur* *nesal*
 man 3REAL:SG-come NEG near road
 ‘The man didn’t come near the road.’ [NVKW06.4]

⁴⁹ *Yakh-sur* ‘follow’ and *savsav-sur* ‘climb along’ share phonetic form with some other morphemes in the corpus; however, the meanings of these other morphemes are quite distinct. For example, the reduplicated form *yakhyakh* means ‘strike something (with an arrow)’. The simple form *sav* is attested with the meaning ‘dance’ and the reduplicated form *savsav* is attested with the stative meaning of ‘be loose’. Combined with the completive aspect marker, *savsav-lu* (negated as *savsav-lu si*) forms a different nuclear serial verb meaning ‘cut thatch leaves’.

- (10.28) **i-vlem-sur* *si* *nesal*
 3REAL:SG-come-near NEG road
 [NVKW06.7]

Sisial ‘warm up’ occurs just twice in the text corpus. One natural occurrence is reproduced below in (10.29). Example (10.30) below displays the position of negation according to language consultants between the verb and prepositional *sur* while (10.31) displays the unacceptable nuclear serial verb sequence, followed by the negative morpheme.

- (10.29) *I-tokh* *i-sisial* *sur* *nutusu.*
 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-warm-up near sea
 ‘She was warming up by the sea.’ [NVKS14.25]

- (10.30) *I-sisial* *si* *sur* *nutusu*
 3REAL:SG-warm-up NEG near sea
 ‘She didn’t warm up by the sea.’ [NVKW06.8]

- (10.31) **i-sisial-sur* *si* *nutusu*
 3REAL:SG-warm-up-near NEG sea
 [NVKW06.9]

The commonly occurring intransitive stem *vor* ‘sit’ also can be followed by *sur* with the prepositional meaning of ‘near’ in (10.32); however, the elicited data for *vor* + *sur* suggests a serial construction, with negation following a serialised sequence, and post-verbal aspectual morphology in (10.33).

(10.32) *Nemat ang i-vu i-vor sur ij*
 snake ANA 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-sit near ANT

‘The snake had gone and sat there.’ [NVKS12.23: 173.301]

(10.33) *I-vor sur ij si*
 3REAL:SG-sit near ANT NEG

‘It hadn’t sat near it.’ [NVKW06.11]

(10.34) **i-vor si sur*
 3REAL:SG-sit NEG near

[NVKW06.12]

The inconsistent nature of the data presented above, particularly with respect to the placement of negation, suggests that *sur* is currently undergoing reanalysis from verb to preposition, and that this reanalysis is not yet complete.

10.3.2. From serial verb to aspectual marker

Aikhenvald (2006:30) observes that ‘stance and motion verbs tend to develop into markers of tense-aspect and mood’. Neverver displays a number of aspectual markers that occur in the V2 position of a serial construction. Almost all are attested as independent verbs in the speech of older community members, but the productive forms *lu* ‘completive aspect’ and *da* ‘partitive aspect’ most commonly occur with a semantically bleached aspectual function in the speech of younger community members. The table below is partially reproduced from §7.2.3., and displays aspectual meanings that are expressed through nuclear layer juncture.

Internal Aspectual Marker	Independent Verb	Aspectual Meaning	Transitivity Concordance	Corpus Status
<i>lu</i>	‘shoot’; ‘hurry’	Completive (Total)	no	Productive
<i>dan</i>	‘set, drown’	Completive (Plural)	yes	Rare
<i>da</i>	---	Partitive	no	Productive
<i>dor</i>	‘become thin, lean’	Partly Complete	no	Semi-Productive
<i>der</i>	‘pull apart’	Temporary (of states)	(yes)	Rare
<i>duvakh</i>	‘be first’	Past habitual (with reduplication)	no	Productive

Table 10.1. Internal aspectual markers

10.3.3. From serial verb to adverb

In addition to the development of prepositions and aspectual markers, there is evidence in the Neverver data that some V2s in serial constructions may be developing into a separate class of adverbs. While Aikhenvald (2006) does not list the development of adverbs from serial verbs as a major pathway of grammaticalisation in her typological study, Lord’s (1993) study *Historical change in serial verb constructions* contains a chapter on the development of adverbs and auxiliaries from verbs and in her account of North-East Ambae, Hyslop (2001:92) observes that certain adverbs appear to be historically derived from serial verb constructions. Crowley (2002a:117-119) also observes forms in Paamese that behave as serialised verbs in some instances and as post-verbal modifiers in others. In Neverver, there is a small class of items with adverbial-type meanings that productively combine with a range of semantically appropriate V1s. Some of these items are likely to be related to main verbs; others however are restricted to V2 position and bear no demonstrable relationship to any main verb in the corpus.

(10.35)	<i>bburvur</i>	*V1; V2 ‘totally’ (after a transitive V1))
	<i>bbutkha~bbutakh</i>	*V1; V2 ‘really, very’ (after an intransitive V1)
	<i>brong</i>	*V1; V2 ‘ordinary’ (after mostly intransitive V1s)
	<i>bkhas</i>	V1 <i>vkhas</i> ‘heap up/smooth out stones’; V2 ‘clean’
	<i>dring</i>	*V1; V2 ‘in a line’
	<i>duvakh</i>	V1 ‘be first’; V2 ‘first, before’
	<i>gor~kor</i>	V1 <i>gor?</i> ‘bang together (of plates, dishes, cutlery)’; V2 ‘block’
	<i>khiskhis ~ kiskis</i>	*V1; V2 ‘certainly, to excess(?)’
	<i>lakh lakh</i>	*V1; V2 ‘quietly’
	<i>tata</i>	V1 ‘promise’; V2 ‘tightly’
	<i>tetes</i>	*V1; V2 ‘quickly’

A text example of a serial verb/adverb construction is presented in example (10.36) below. It is lexicalised, referring to the act of strangling something through morphemes meaning ‘bite’ in V1 position and ‘tightly’ in V2 position. Like prototypical SVCs, in this adverbial-type construction there is no material intervening between V1 and the verb-like element in the V2 slot.

(10.36)	<i>I-rev</i>	<i>i-khas</i>	<i>(-)tata</i>	<i>nidlan.</i>
	3REAL:SG-pull	3REAL:SG-bite	(-)tight	neck
	‘He pulled and strangled its neck’ [NVKS06.68]			

10.3.4. From negative morpheme to serial verb

One potential lexicalisation pathway from grammatical morpheme to serial verb can be observed in the data. There is evidence that the negative morpheme *si* has serialised in some verbs. Neverver is alone among the documented central Malakula languages in having a simple post-verbal negative morpheme *si*. Discontinuous affixation is a widely (though not universally) distributed feature of Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:51), with one marker occurring in a preverbal slot and a second occurring post-verbally.

In Neverver, a small number of verbs contain an initial morpheme *si* in what may be analysed as V1 position. This position may reflect an older pre-verbal negative slot, as it is precisely where we find the first negative morpheme of the discontinuous affix in other central Malakula languages. Avava (Crowley 2006a:82) has a pre-verbal negative morpheme *sa-*; Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2007:51) and Naman (Crowley 2006b:108) both have a pre-verbal negative sequence *sV-*. The *si*-verbs in Neverver may reflect an earlier stage of the language when discontinuous negation was present.

There is a sense in which the forms in (10.37) below share a common semantic element of negation; however, all but one has lexicalised to the extent that it is no longer possible to analyse the component parts of the construction. *Pusel* ‘err, miss’ was produced productively in elicitation sessions as V2 in a range of serial constructions including *tuv-pusel* ‘cast (a round object at a target) and miss’ and *khab-pusel* ‘cast (a long object at a target) and miss’. The other forms only occur in these specific constructions although the form *bal* can function as an unrelated independent verb meaning ‘many, fill’.

- (10.37) *si-balbal* ‘be confused (not know)’
si-brik ‘let go (not hold)’
si-btakh ‘stumble (not walk)’
si-pusel ‘do accidentally (not do intentionally)’ from *pusel* ‘err,
miss’

10.4. Patterns of transitivity

An analysis of the transitivity patterns of two-part nuclear SVCs reveals that all four logically possible combinations of transitive and intransitive verbs are attested in the data. Constructions which only contain intransitive verbs are inevitably intransitive. Any construction that contains a transitive verb either in V1 or V2 position forms a transitive SVC. In one instance, a ditransitive SVC is formed.

- (10.38) Intransitive SVC comprising intransitive V1; intransitive V2
sav-dran ‘dance till dawn’ from ‘dance’; ‘be daylight’
tur-yadryadr ‘stand up straight’ from ‘stand up’; ‘be correct’
tete-bbur ‘cut open’ from ‘cut’⁵⁰; ‘split’
kher bbutakh ‘be too hard’ form ‘be hard’; ‘too much’
- (10.39) Transitive SVC comprising intransitive V1; transitive V2
vavu- gwas ‘walk across’ from ‘walk’; ‘cross’

⁵⁰ *Te* ‘cut, hit’ is normally transitive; it has been de-transitivised by the reduplication of the verb stem.

- (10.40) Transitive SVC comprising transitive V1; transitive V2
- khan-bir* 'saw' from 'bite'; 'break'
- te-bir* 'cut down' from 'cut'; 'break'
- lav-bal* 'get enough' from 'get'; 'fill'
- (10.41) Transitive SVC with concordance comprising transitive V1;
intransitive V2
- mi-tan-ikh* 'drink up' from *min* 'drink'; *dan* 'V2: be all'
- sien-mmav-ikh* 'worry' from 'consider'; 'be heavy'
- khitrokh-makkan-ikh* 'see properly' from 'see'; 'V2: be clear'
- (10.42) Transitive SVC without concordance comprising transitive V1;
adverb-like V2
- vrokh tata* 'hold tight' from 'hold'; 'tightly'
- te bburvur* 'beat to death' from 'hit'; 'completely'
- lav dring* 'heap up' from 'get'; 'be in line'
- sil bkhas* 'burn off' from 'burn'; 'clean'
- (10.43) Ditransitive SVC with applicative suffix comprising transitive V1 –
transitive V2
- vrokh-blev-ikh* 'hold x with y' from 'hold'; 'be with'

Concordant marking of transitivity is signaled by the applicative suffix *-ikh* attached to V2. It appears in sequences where V1 is transitive and V2 is intransitive. Those V2 forms which carry transitivity concordance also occur as independent intransitive verbs with clearly related meanings. In contrast, there

<i>V-dro-skhen</i>	‘(do) in vain’ from V (action); ? <i>tro</i> ‘old’; ‘not so’
<i>sas-ngar-bbur</i>	‘split (firewood, with axe)’ from * <i>sas</i> ; ‘tear’; ‘swell’
<i>rev-sur-kho</i>	‘escape with leash’ from ‘pull’; ‘along’; ‘vine’
<i>tokh-bbu-sal</i>	‘rest/sleep on a journey’ from ‘exist’; <i>vu</i> ‘go’; <i>nesal</i> ‘road’
<i>yal-da-lkha-kh</i>	‘jump over’ from ‘fly’; ‘PART’; <i>lkha</i> ‘step over obstacle’
<i>sav-bbu-sal</i>	‘dance along in a line’ from ‘dance’; <i>vu</i> ‘go’; <i>nesal</i> ‘road’

It was noted in §10.3.4. above that some two-part verbs display what appears to be the negative morpheme *si* in V1 position. The three-part nuclear serial verb *si-makh-il* ‘lose traditions’ also displays this same morpheme.

Chapter Eleven

Complex Cores

In chapter ten, complex nuclei were described; in this chapter, complex cores are considered. Most complex nuclei can be described as involving nuclear serialisation. The second type of serialisation found in Neverver is core serialisation. While nuclear and core SVCs share a number of characteristics, they are constructed rather differently, with core SVCs exhibiting some of the structural features of multi-clause constructions. A brief comparison of the two structures is presented in §11.1. to clarify differences. This is followed by a detailed account of the properties of core serial constructions in §11.2. A description of the various sub-types of core SVCs is given in §11.3., including same-subject SVCs (§11.3.1.), switch-subject SVCs (§11.3.2.), ambient SVCs (§11.3.3.), and inclusory SVCs (§11.3.4.).

11.1. Comparing nuclear and core serialisation

Key structural differences between nuclear and core SVCs can be observed in the marking of grammatical categories and in the contiguity of elements. Aikhenvald (2006:39-40) distinguishes between single marking and concordant marking of grammatical categories in serial constructions. In Neverver, a subject/mood marker is obligatorily attached to verbs which function as the nucleus of a clause. Nuclear SVCs have single marking as illustrated in (11.1), while core SVCs display concordant marking as illustrated in (11.2).

(11.1) Single subject/mood marking

Ni-tete-bbur

1:REAL:SG-DUP-cut-swell

‘I cut open (the coconuts)⁵²’ [NVDL02.4]

(11.2) Concordant subject/mood marking

Na nim-bbu nim-das lon nokhos

1SG 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go.down LOC garden

‘I’ll go down to the garden.’ [NVKS20.11: 55.822]

While example (11.1) displays concordant marking of both subject and mood categories, not all core SVCs share a subject argument. When the subject argument is not shared, only concordant marking of mood occurs, as can be seen in (11.3).

(11.3) Concordant mood marking only

kum-bbus nibobo im-bbulem

2IRR:SG-carry baby 3IRR:SG-come

‘Bring the baby!’ [NVKS24.56: 227.246]

Nuclear and core SVCs also contrast in the contiguity of their component parts. All nuclear layer SVCs display absolute contiguity. No phonological material may intervene between the component parts. This is illustrated in (11.1). above. Contiguity in core layer SVCs is never absolute. Minimally,

⁵² This intransitive nuclear SVC has an inherent object ‘coconuts’ and refers to a stage in the harvesting of coconuts for copra production (see §6.3.1.2 and §8.2.1.2).

there will be a subject/mood marker attached to the verb in V2 position which intervenes between the verb stems. There may also be aspectual markers following the verb in V1 position. In a number of subtypes of core SVCs, arguments are encoded in the object position following V1, and in other cases locative adjuncts intervene between the inflected verb stems. Such constructions, exemplified in (11.3) above, can be described as non-contiguous.

Core SVCs most commonly involve a sequence of two inflected verbs. This structure is illustrated in Figure 11.1. below.

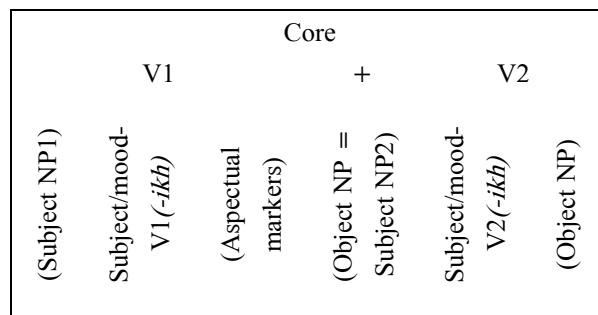


Figure 11.1. The structure of core SVCs

Longer strings of verbs are also attested in the corpus. These particularly involve sequences of intransitive motion verbs. Thus, we find sequences of three intransitive motion/direction verbs in the sequential SVC in example (11.4). below.

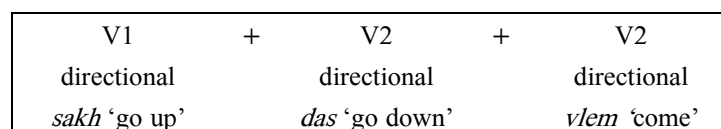


Figure 11.2. The structure of a three-part sequential core SVC

- (11.4) *Nani i-skham i-sakh arkha*
 coconut 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-go.up up
i-das i-vlem
 3REAL:SG-go.down 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘A coconut fell down from above.’ [NVCV06.01: 433.749]

Longer constructions are also attested where sub-types of different SVCs co-occur. The resulting structures are uttered under a single intonation contour.

Example (11.5) below takes the following form:

V1	+	V2	+	V2
aspectual		utterance		similitive
<i>tokh</i> ‘progressive’		<i>yer</i> ‘sing’		<i>gang</i> ‘be like that’

Figure 11.3. The structure of a mixed three-part core SVC

- (11.5) *Ba i-tokh i-yer i-gang,*
 when 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-sing 3REAL:SG-like.so
 ‘When she was singing like that, ...’ [NVKS24.45: 179.653]

Example (11.6) has a sequence of four serialised verbs with the following structure:

V1	+	V2	+	V3	+	V2
sequential		cumulative		motion		directional
<i>rev</i> ‘pull’		<i>blev</i> ‘be/go with’		<i>uv</i> ‘go’		<i>vev</i> ‘go to’

Figure 11.4. The structure of a multi-part core SVC

- (11.6) *I-rev* *i-blev* *ar-uv*
 3REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-be/go.with 3REAL:DL-go
 ar-ev *aiyem* *titi*
 3REAL:DL-go.to home 3PS:SG
 ‘He pulled her along with him to his home’ [NVKS14.29]

Sequences of more than four clearly serialised verbs that involve distinct sub-events of a larger complex event have not been identified in the corpus.

11.2. Mono-clausal properties of core SVCs

Because core SVCs involve a sequence of two or more inflected verbs, they are structurally rather like multi-clause constructions containing subordinate or coordinated clauses. In many ways, however, core SVCs behave like mono-clausal constructions. Core SVCs have a set of properties that allow them to be distinguished from multi-clause constructions, although no single characteristic is absolutely defining. The properties include:

- mono-clausal intonation;
- no overt marking of linkage;
- mono-clausal syntactic behaviour;
- mono-clausal semantic behaviour;
- concordant marking of mood;
- dependent marking of aspect and polarity;
- normally, some sharing of arguments.

Most core SVCs in Neverver display mono-clausal intonation. Aikhenvald (2006:6) notes that in many languages, clause boundaries are often marked by breaks in intonation, but that SVCs often are articulated as single clauses, with no pauses between elements. Hyslop (2001:276) observes that in the Lolovoli dialect of Ambrym, ‘as coordinated clauses are often merely juxtaposed, the intonation pattern is often the only means of distinguishing an SVC ... from two conjoined clauses’. In Neverver, the same observation can be made. When clauses are simply juxtaposed, the relationship between their propositions is open to various analyses. Intonational cues can help to identify the nature of the relationship between juxtaposed elements. Inside a clause, intonation never falls significantly between constituents. It does, however, rise in certain circumstances, including at the end of a relative clause that modifies a subject argument. It also rises to mark the boundary between main and subordinate clause. In core SVCs, intonation does not fall between inflected verbs, but only at the end of the entire construction. In most cases, the whole serial construction will be uttered under a single intonation contour, with no significant medial intonation peaks or troughs. An exception is found with ambient serialisation; there may be (but is not always) a slight rise marking the boundary of the first core, which is then followed by a second core with an adverb-like function. Clause-finally, intonation either rises or falls to a brief pause, depending on whether the clause is a terminal clause, or part of a larger construction.

Another mono-clausal characteristic of serial constructions that sets them apart from multi-clause constructions is the lack of any overt marker of linkage or of syntactic dependency (cf. Crowley 2002a; Aikhenvald 2006). In Neverver, the juncture between a matrix and subordinate clause, or between two coordinated clauses may be marked by a morpheme signalling the relationship

between the two clauses (see chapter thirteen). SVCs in Neverver by definition display no such marking.

SVCs are treated as a single syntactic unit in various constructions.

Aikhenvald (2006) identifies relativisation and subordination as constructions of interest. In addition, in Early's (1993) study of Lewo serial constructions, he identifies the discourse-motivated, tail-head linkage, a common feature of connected text in Oceanic languages, as another construction relevant to the mono-clausal syntactic analysis of SVCs. An examination of these three construction types in Neverver points to the mono-clausal syntactic nature of core SVCs.

When functioning as the predicate of a relative clause, SVCs take a single relative subordinator which precedes the construction as a whole. This is illustrated in the directional serial construction in (11.7) below:

- (11.7) *Nimkhut* [*an ar-uv ar-ev Queensland*
 man NMOD 3REAL:DL-go 3REAL:DL-go.to Queensland
ang], *iskham nikhijan Singonmal, iskham nikhijan*
 ANA INDEF.PN name Singonmal INDEF.PN name
Tom Nelson
 Tom Nelson
 'The men who went to Queensland, one was called Singonmal and
 one was called Tom Nelson.' [NVKI07.10]

Similarly, when an SVC appears in a subordinate purpose clause, the whole construction is marked only once as being subordinate:

- (11.8) *I-sir nesal i-vu sur Nionevat*
 3REAL:SG-follow road 3REAL:SG-go near Nionevat
i-das [il im-bbu ib-lav nivri.]
 3REAL:SG-go.down PURPOSE 3IRR:SG-go 3IRR:SG-get crab
 ‘He followed the path down Nionevat River to go catch crabs.’
 [NVKS22.03: 20.91]

In Lewo, Early (1993) observes that ‘the sentence-initial resumptive restatement of the final elements of the preceding sentence’ can help to establish whether a particular sequence is functioning as a serial construction or separate clauses. Early (1993) makes the following claim:

This “tail-head” linkage structure always operates over a single stress group, the phonological unit normally associated with a single-clause utterance, and so the appearance of a potential core layer serial construction in this situation does argue for its status as a single clause.
 (Early 1993:72)

Tail-head linkage is common in Neverver, and SVCs are consistently reproduced as a single unit as we see in example (11.9) below:

- (11.9) *I-vrok nisib lele ang [i-dum i-das].*
 3REAL:SG-hold knife small ANA 3REAL:SG-run 3REAL:SG-go.
[I-dum i-das], i-vu i-tur
 3REAL:SG-run 3REAL:SG-go.down 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-stand

tuan nakhmal titi bibi Ati tang.

LOCPSN house 3PS:SG maternal.uncle Ati there

‘She took the small knife and ran down. She ran down and went and stood at Uncle Ati’s house there.’ [NVCV02.72-73: 467.16 - 469.138]

A further mono-clausal characteristic of SVCs is that there is often a difference in meaning between serialised verbs and the same verbs when occurring in separate clauses. This characteristic is observed by Foley and Olsen (1985:20-21) in Yimas serial constructions and can be seen in Neverver also. Construction (11.10) below contains an SVC meaning ‘bring’ from with *lav* ‘get’ and *vlem* ‘come’. In this SVC, the object of V1 is also the subject of V2.

(11.10) *I-ver-ikh t-nam i-ver*
 3REAL:SG-say-APPL PSDT-1EX:NSG 3REAL:SG-say
nabir-lav nakhabb ang im-bbulem
 1:EX:IRR:DL-get fire ANA 3IRR:SG-come
 ‘He told us to bring the firewood’ [NVKS07.28: 171.308]

Construction (11.11) contains a subordinate clause which contrasts with the SVC in (11.10). *Lav* ‘get’ is in the subordinate clause (signalled by *ba* ‘when’), and *vlem* ‘come’ is in the main clause. In this example, both verbs have the same subject ‘she’.

(11.11) *Ba i-lav iskham, i-vlem i-sisil*
 when 3REAL:SG-get INDEF.PN 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-roast

i-khan.

3REAL:SG-eat

‘When she got one, she came and cooked and ate (the bird).’

[NVKS06.122]

In (11.11), the main clause involves a three-part core SVC comprising an intransitive directional verb, followed by the detransitivised action verb *sisil* ‘roast/cook’ and the transitive verb *khan* ‘eat (something)’.

A number of linguists working on serial constructions have proposed that SVCs encode propositions that are conceptualised as unitary by native speakers (cf. Aikhenvald 2006; Durie 1997; Early 1993). These propositions involve event-types ‘that are salient, or communicatively in demand for the speech community’ (Durie 1997:321). This is a rather problematic measure, as an evaluation of salience requires native-speaker intuitions, which linguists typically lack. However, the commonness of individual serial constructions within naturally occurring text suggests that the propositions that they encode may well be considered unitary notions for native speakers. It also suggests the importance of the SVC as a structural vehicle for representing such events in Neverver.

In the previous section, nuclear SVCs were described as encoding ‘single scene’ propositions. Pawley and Lane’s (1998) definition of ‘single-scene’ and ‘multi-scene’ propositions in their analysis of Kalam, is fully reproduced here:

Single scene SVCs have the semantic property that they refer to a series of acts which take place at the same scene (or site). Multi-scene SVCs

refer to a series of acts which take place at different scenes (or sites), i.e. the subject moves from one place to another. (Pawley & Lane 1998:204)

Aikhenvald (2006) uses these terms in a broader way, suggesting that ‘single scene’ propositions encode aspects of the same event while in ‘multi-scene’ propositions, sub-events are encoded by each element in sequence. Aikhenvald observes a structural distinction between single-scene and multi-scene SVCs.

‘Single-scene’ SVCs correlate with cohesive, tightly-knit structures with shared participants; they tend to be more fused in their surface realisation than ‘multi-scene’ SVCs. These correlate with less cohesive, less tightly bound constructions, and may even be reminiscent of clause sequences. (Aikhenvald 2006:55)

In Neverver, nuclear SVCs tend to be single-scene. The properties of immediate contiguity and single marking are iconic of a very tightly-knit semantic structure. Core SVCs encode a range of single and multi-scene propositions and are structurally more like multi-clause constructions. The concordant mood marking in non-contiguous core SVCs forms a much less tightly bound structure than the single-marking of mood in contiguous nuclear SVCs.

The marking of mood and aspectual distinctions, and the marking of polarity in core SVCs is distinct from that of nuclear serial constructions. The examples of core SVCs presented thus far illustrate concordant mood marking. This is a defining characteristic of core SVCs. Mood is marked in the obligatory subject/mood prefix attached to each verb element in core serial constructions.

In contrast to the concordant marking of mood, aspectual marking is indicated just once in core SVCs. Post-verbal aspectual markers follow the verb in V1 position and have scope over the entire serial construction.

- (11.12) *Ga [ni-sir ij i-vlem] ing*
 and 1REAL:SG-accompany ANT 3REAL:SG-come EXCL
im-tokh- tokh mo tang
 3IRR:SG-DUP-exist CONT there
 ‘And I’ve brought her to stay there.’ [NVKS01.31]

In (11.12) a purpose relationship is present between the two clauses, signalled by the change to irrealis mood in the second clause. Example (11.13) displays another example of aspectual morphology marked after V1, with scope over the entire serial construction.

- (11.13) *Ni-tvin mej i-sakh i-vlem arkha*
 1REAL:SG-fill.up IMM 3REAL:SG-go.up 3REAL:SG-come up
 ‘I just fill it up to the top.’ [NVDL08.27]

In relation to negation, an interesting observation can be made. When a verb encoded in V1 position is marked for realis mood and negative polarity, we might predict that any subsequent serialised material would carry irrealis marking as the event encoded in V2 did not actually occur. Such mood patterning would be dependent rather than concordant – the kind of mood marking that is found with many complement taking predicates (discussed in chapter twelve). The problem is that realis-irrealis sequences would flout the

requirement for concordant mood marking in core SVCs. In fact, there are no instances of core SVCs in the text corpus where V1 is realis and marked for negative polarity. We find only non-serialised verbs marked for both realis mood and negative polarity. There are very few instances in the text corpus where we can be reasonably certain that an independent verb of negative polarity and realis mood, if positive, would be realised as a core SVC. The serial construction *vu + vev* ‘go to (a location, of a human agent)’ is one such instance. *Vu + vev* is a common core serial construction in the corpus. The verb *vev* is rarely attested independently of this serial construction, but when a speaker wishes to say that a person didn’t go somewhere, we find *vev* rather than *vu* attested as in (11.14):

- (11.14) *Nimokhmokh i-vev si*
 female 3REAL:SG-go.to NEG
 ‘Women (generic) don’t go (to the place of circumcision).’
 [NVKI02.05]

The construction in example (11.14) was produced by one of the oldest speakers of Neverver. Younger speakers rejected (11.14) in elicitation sessions, claiming that it was ungrammatical. Example (11.15) provides their alternative, where V2 is suppressed in the first clause when the construction is negated, but reappears in the second clause which has positive polarity.

- (11.15) *Ni-vu si Limap; ni-vu me*
 1REAL:SG-go NEG Limap 1REAL:SG-go just

ni-vev *Lamap.*

1REAL:SG-go.to *Lamap*

‘I didn't go to Limap; (instead) I went to Lamap.’ [NVKW07.02]

Example (11.16) displays a parallel construction with the simple negated predicate *lav* ‘get’, followed by the serialised predicate *lav + vlem* ‘bring’.

(11.16) *Ni-lav* *si* *noto,* *ni-lav* *me* *nibarbar*

1REAL:SG-get NEG chook 1REAL:SG-get just pig

i-vlem

3REAL:SG- come

‘I didn't bring a chicken, (instead) I brought a pig.’ [NVKW07.01]

In the corpus of both naturally occurring and elicited material, negated core SVCs appear to be realised simply as a single verb followed by the negative marker *si*. For younger speakers, the single negated verb is V1 of a potential SVC and subsequent potential serialised verbs are suppressed. It seems that if the complex proposition encoded in the serial construction definitely did not occur, there is no point in presenting a complete event description.

In contrast to these potential SVCs which carry realis mood, core serial constructions in which V1 is marked for irrealis mood are readily negated. The negative morpheme *si* follows the irrealis V1. Subsequent serialised verbs also carry irrealis mood, thus meeting the requirement for concordant mood marking.

(11.17) *Ni-ver* *nim-sir* *si* *im-bbulem*
 1REAL:SG-said 1IRR:SG-accompany NEG 3IRR:SG-come
be *i-okh* *ku-ver* *ibi-skhen.*
 but PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-say 3IRR:SG-not.so
 ‘I said I wouldn’t bring her here but you said otherwise.’
 [NVKS01.30]

11.3. Sub-types of core SVCs

Prototypical serial constructions are defined as sharing at least one core argument (Aikhenvald 2006). A number of different types of argument-sharing possibilities have been identified in languages with serial constructions.

Neverver makes use of four argument-sharing patterns in the construction of core SVCs. These patterns are displayed in Table 11.1. below:

Same-subject	V1 Subject	V2 Subject
Switch-subject	V1 Object	V2 Subject
Ambient	V1 Proposition	V2 Subject
Inclusory	V1 Subject, Object	V2 Subject

Table 11.1. Argument-sharing patterns in core SVCs⁵³

In same-subject core SVCs, the argument that is encoded as the subject of V1 also serves as the subject of subsequent verbs. This is reflected in the identical subject/mood prefixes that occur with the verbs. These constructions are detailed in §11.3.1. below. In switch-subject core SVCs, the argument that

⁵³ I make use of Crowley’s (2002) terminology for describing different types of argument sharing. For comparison, Aikhenvald (2006) describes SWITCH-SUBJECT serialisation as switch-function SVCs, INCLUSORY serialisation as cumulative-subject SVCs, and AMBIENT serialisation as event-argument SVCs.

serves as the object of V1 also functions as the subject of V2. Thus, the person/number prefixes associated with V1 and V2 contrast in reference, although not always in form. Switch-subject SVCs are detailed in §11.3.2. In ambient core SVCs, the verb encoded in V2 provides modification to the entire proposition encoded in V1 (the event and its arguments). Ambient constructions are characterised by a third person singular person/number prefix attached to V2, regardless of the person and number categories associated with V1. These constructions are detailed in §11.3.3. In inclusory core SVCs, the subject and object arguments of V1 combine to function as the subject of V2. Inclusory constructions inevitably involve a non-singular person/number prefix attached to V2 which represents the sum of the arguments associated with V1. Inclusory SVCs are detailed in §11.3.4. below.

All core SVCs are asymmetrical rather than symmetrical. This means that at least one of the verbs that forms the serial construction belongs to a restricted sub-class of verbs (cf. Aikhenvald 2006:21). The sub-classes of serialised components provide a useful way of classifying the range of core constructions that occur in Neverver. The sub-classes are summarised in Table 11.2. below, and are described and illustrated in the following sections.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ In presenting the various types of core SVCs, I follow Hyslop (2001) and Aikhenvald's (2006) means of classifying structures by argument-sharing and then by the semantic sub-type of the restricted serial component.

Argument Sharing	Sub-Type of Core SVC	Restrictions on Verbs	
Same-subject	directional	INTRANSITIVE MOTION	V2 direction
	sequential	V1 motion <i>vu, vlem</i>	(Semantic Restrictions)
		V1 reflexive <i>dri</i>	
	limit	V1 motion	V2 limit <i>sber, jadr</i>
	utterance	V1 locution	V2 locution <i>ver</i>
	aspectual	V1 aspectual	(Semantic Restrictions)
modal		V1 motion	V2 intention <i>ver</i>
Switch-subject	directional	TRANSITIVE	V2 direction
	existential	TRANSITIVE	V2 posture
	recipient	TRANSITIVE	V2 recipient argument
Ambient	manner	(Semantic Restrictions)	V2 stative
	aspectual	(Semantic Restrictions)	V2 aspectual
	directional	(Semantic Restrictions)	V2 directional
	similitive	(Semantic Restrictions)	V2 similitive
Inclusory	cumulative	TRANSITIVE	(Semantic Restrictions)

Table 11.2. Sub-types of core SVCs classified by argument sharing patterns

11.3.1. Same-subject constructions

Same-subject core SVCs involve a sequence of two or more verbs which share a subject argument and which behave as a mono-clausal construction. A range of same-subject SVCs occurs in Neverver. In this section, directional, sequential, limit, simultaneous, utterance, aspectual and modal constructions are presented.

11.3.1.1. Same-subject directional SVCs

Same-subject directional SVCs involve an intransitive verb encoded in V1, followed by a directional verb in V2. The intransitive verb in V1 is normally a motion verb. The directional verb is a member of a small sub-class of verbs listed below and it provides the direction of the action encoded in V1 position.

The meanings that are associated with the verb's independent use and its use as a directional serial verb are clearly related and predictable in these directional SVCs.

(11.18)	Independent verb ⁵⁵	V2 direction
	<i>vu</i> 'go'	'away'
	<i>vlem</i> 'come'	'here'
	<i>das</i> 'go down, exit'	'down'
	<i>sakh</i> 'go up, enter'	'up'
	<i>vev</i> 'go to (a place), of a human agent'	'to'

(11.19) *I-trov* *lottan* *i-riv* *i-vu*
 3REAL:SG-jump ground 3REAL:SG-escape 3REAL:SG-go
 'He jumped down to the ground and he ran away.' [NVKS25.45:
 180.967]

(11.20) *Ale, i-dum* *i-vlem* *aiyem.*
 then 3REAL:SG-run 3REAL:SG-come home
 'And then she ran back home.' [NVKS24.54: 217.42]

(11.21) *Na nim-bbu* *nim-das* *lon* *nokhos*
 1SG 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go.down LOC garden
 'I'll go down to the garden.' NVKS20.11: 55.822]

⁵⁵ The meanings 'go down, exit' and 'go up, enter' derive from (a) going downhill towards the ocean and uphill to the interior, and from (b) entering and exiting traditional houses with raised floors.

- (11.22) *Ba ar-uv ar-sakh bbukhut lon*
 when 3REAL:DL-go 3REAL:DL-go.up inside LOC
nokhos ang,
 garden ANA
 ‘When they went into the garden, ...’ [NVKS05.9: 45.873]

The posture verb *vor* ‘sit’ is also attested in V1 position.

- (11.23) *I-vor i-vevlem kut an mil*
 3REAL:SG-sit 3REAL:SG-DUP-come LOCPN NMOD again
noron netavran i-vu e
 leaf branch 3REAL:SG-go RSPN
 ‘He sat facing the place where the leaves of the branches went...’
 [NVKS21.11: 125.565]

One commonly occurring directional SVC comprises the basic motion verb *vu* ‘go’ followed by *vev* ‘go to’. This SVC describes the motion of a human agent towards a particular destination. The expression of the destination, in a locational adjunct, follows the serialised construction.

- (11.24) *At-uv at-ev lon nidong*
 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go.to LOC mangrove.swamp
abit-lav nivri
 3IRR:PL-get crab
 ‘They went to the mangrove swamp to collect crabs.’ [NVKS15.05]

(11.25) *I-na mej nim-bbu nim-bbuev Arakhalav*
 PSNPR-1SG IMM 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-go.to Arakhalav
 ‘I’m going to Arakhalav.’ [NVKS02.48]

(11.26) *Ba adr at-uv at-ev aiyem,*
 when 3NSG 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go.to home
naus ivovov
 rain 3:REAL:SG-DUP-fall
 ‘When they went home, it rained and rained’ [NVKS14.17]

11.3.1.2. Same-subject sequential SVCs

Same-subject sequential constructions involve an initial motion verb, typically *vu* ‘go’, followed by a second verb expressing an action. This construction occurs commonly in the corpus, reflecting the character of village life where people go off in the mornings to conduct their business and return home at the end of the day.

(11.27) *Nat-uv nat-lav ni-kkan-ian*
 1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-get NPR-eat-NSF
 ‘We went and got food.’ [NVDL01.33]

(11.28) *At-uv at-lingling na lon lokhavre titi*
 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-farewell 1SG LOC village 3PS:SG

khavut t-na.

husband PSDT-1SG

‘They went and farewelled me in the village of my husband.’

[NVDL05.12]

(11.29) *Nim-bbu nibi-llang ni-kkan-ian git.*

1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-look.for.s.t. NPR-eat-NSF 1IN:NSG

‘I’m going to look for our food.’ [NVKS26.06: 32.067]

The motion verb *vlem* ‘come’ is also commonly attested in the sequential construction:

(11.30) *Jif prist i-skham i-vlem i-khitrokh*

high priest 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-see

‘A high priest came and saw him.’ [NVCT04.12: 59.676]

(11.31) *Nati-vlem nat-jik aiyem*

1EX:REAL:PL-come 1EX:REAL:PL-put home

‘We came and put (the manioc) at home [NVDL01.36]

(11.32) *Ei i-llang kut an ei im-bbulem*

3SG 3REAL:SG-look.for.s.t. LOC PN NMOD 3SG 3IRR:SG-come

im-lukh-da *e*

3IRR:SG-stay-PART RSPN

‘He is looking for the place where he can come and rest.’

[NVCT05.21: 347.676]

The verb *vlat* ‘go to (a human destination, of a human agent)’ can be encoded in the V1 position of a sequential SVC:

(11.33) *I-kher* *il* *nim-bbulat* *nibi-ssor*

3REAL:SG-difficult PURPOSE 1IRR:SG-go.dir 1IRR:SG-talk

blev i-okh

with PSNPR-2SG

‘It is difficult for me to go and talk with you.’ [NVDL03.13]

(11.34) *Baga kati-stop-da,* *i-nam*

then 2REAL:PL-stop-PART PSNPR-1EX:NSG

nari-vlat *nar-jang* *lon trak*

1EX:REAL:DL-go.to.pers 1EX:REAL:DL-get.on LOC truck

‘After that, then you pulled over and we went (to you) and got on the truck.’ [NVCV02.43: 239.071]

The verb *jadr-ikh* ‘pass s.t./s.o.’ is one of two transitive motion verbs that occur in the V1 position of the sequential SVC. The serial construction illustrated below involves two sequential SVCs. In the second of these, *jadr-ikh* is in V1 position, followed by the motion verb *vu* ‘go’. In this case, it is the

agent of ‘pass’ who then ‘goes’, rather than the patient of ‘pass’, who is lying unconscious by the road at this point in the story.

- (11.35) *I-vlem* *i-khitrokh,* *baga* *i-jadr-ikh*
3REAL:SG-come 3REAL:SG-see then 3:REAL:SG-pass-APPL
lakhlakh *i-vu*
quiet 3REAL:SG-go
‘He came and saw him, and then he passed him quietly and went.
[NVCV04.15: 66.010]

The reflexive verb *dri* ‘turn’, which is formally transitive, is the second transitive verb that can form a sequential SVC. It is attested with the motion verbs *vu* ‘go’ or *vlem* ‘come’. The resulting SVC does not encode motion in a direction, as we find with both same-subject directional SVCs (§11.3.1.1.) and switch-subject directional SVCs (described in §11.3.2.1. below). Instead, it encodes two sequential actions that, due to the mono-clausal characteristics of serial constructions, are presented as sub-events of a single action.

- (11.36) *Ale* *nat-dri* *nam* *nat-uv*
then 1EX:REAL:PL-turn 1EX:NSG 1EX:REAL:PL-go
‘Then we turned and went.’ [NVCV02.50: 278.899] (Not: ‘We turned away’)

(11.37) *Ale i-dri ei i-vu*
 then 3REAL:SG-turn 3SG 3REAL:SG-go
 ‘Then, he turned and went.’ [NVKS08.24] (Not: ‘He turned away’)

(11.38) *I-dri mil ei i-vlem*
 3REAL:SG-turn again 3SG 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘It turned around and came (back to its tree).’ NVKS19.27: 465.739]
 (Not: ‘It turned here’)

Other formally reflexive verbs, such as *dak* ‘fall down’, do not occur in serial constructions like this one.

A number of sequential serial verb constructions associated with the goal or destination of movement have become fixed expressions in Neverver. One frequently occurring expression is used to describe returning from a particular place. This expression comprises *vu* ‘go’ followed by *vlem* ‘come’:

(11.39) *Nar-uv Livusvus nari-vlem*
 1EX:REAL:DL-go Levusvus 1EX:REAL:DL-come
 ‘We came back from Levusvus’ [NVCV02.86: 585.03]

(11.40) *Ei! Okh ku-vu abi ku-vlem ang?*
 Hey! 2SG 2REAL:SG-go where 2REAL:SG-come ANA
 ‘Hey, where did you come from?’ [NVKS14.27]

This source-destination formula is also attested in a three-part core SVC referring to objects falling from above. The structure of this SVC is repeated from Figure 11.2. above.

V1	+	V2	+	V2
directional		directional		directional
<i>sakh</i> ‘go up’		<i>das</i> ‘go down’		<i>vlem</i> ‘come’

Figure 11.5. The structure of a three-part sequential core SVC

In the examples below, the speaker is describing an incident when a coconut fell onto a woman’s head. Prior to falling, the coconut was attached to a bunch growing up in the tree. It is certainly not the case that the coconut climbed the tree, or was thrown into the air before falling. Such a situation would require a human agent, as well as the casting verb *tuv* ‘cast (of round objects)’.

- (11.41) *Nani i-skham i-sakh arkha*
 coconut 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-go.up up
i-das i-vlem
 3REAL:SG-go.down 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘A coconut fell down from above’ [NVCV06.01: 433.749]

- (11.42) *Nani, ba i-sakh arkha i-das*
 coconut when 3REAL:SG-go.up up 3REAL:SG-go.down
i-vlem
 3:REAL:SG-come
 ‘the coconut, when it fell down...’ [NVCV06.28: 569.745]

11.3.1.3. Same-subject limit SVCs

Same-subject limit SVCs involve an intransitive motion verb in V1, followed by the verb *sber* ‘touch, reach’, which serialises as the limit verb ‘go all the way to’, or ‘until’. Crowley (2002a:76), in his description of verbs of limit in Paamese, observes that ‘when these verbs are used in a serial verb construction, they express the attainment of a spatial, temporal, or metaphorical limit, or exceeding a limit’. The semantic functions of attaining spatial and temporal limits are attested in Neverver, with the limit verb adding an argument that expresses the limit that is attained.

- (11.43) *Ar-das-das-das-das* *ar-uv* *ari-sber*
 3REAL:DL-DUP-DUP-DUP-go.down 3REAL:DL-go 3REAL:DL-reach
aiyem *ang*
 home ANA
 ‘They went down on and on all the way to the dwelling’.
 [NVKS18.99: 494.841]

- (11.44) *Ba* *nat-lem* *nati-sber* *aiyem*
 when 1EX:REAL:PL-carry 1EX:REAL:PL-reach home
 ‘When we carried them (the boys) all the way home...’ [NVCV02.57:
 350.725]

- (11.45) *Nio* *i-bbunbbun* *i-sesber* *nakhalmas*
 water 3REAL:SG-full.to.brim 3REAL:SG-DUP-reach shin

an nekhlen okh arkha, i-vlem
 NMOD leg 2SG up 3REAL:SG-come
i-sesber nibaun nekhlen git.
 3REAL:SG-DUP-reach knee leg 1IN:NSG

‘The water rose all the way up to your shins; it came up to our knees.’ [NV14.09: 58.165]

The attainment of spatial limits is strongly associated with realis mood, as (11.43) to (11.45) illustrate. The attainment of temporal limits can be associated either both realis and irrealis mood, as (11.46) and (11.47) illustrate.

(11.46) *Bibi ang i-lukh-lukh-lukh i-sber*
 maternal.uncle ANA 3REAL:SG-DUP-DUP-stay 3REAL:SG-reach
dran an i-sisien im-bbu, i-vu
 TMPPN NMOD 3REAL:SG-decide 3IRR:SG-go 3REAL:SG-go

‘Uncle stayed on and on, until the time when he decided to go, and then he went.’ [NVKI06.35]

(11.47) *Nabit-lukh-lakhlakh bbukhut im-bbu ibi-sber*
 1EX:IRR:PL-stay-quiet inside 3IRR:SG-go 3IRR:SG-reach
nimdanial tle
 time another

‘We were going to wait inside until another day.’ [NVDL01.18]

11.3.1.4. Same-subject utterance SVCs

The utterance SVC involves a sequence of two utterance predicates. The verb encoded in V1 position specifies the manner of utterance. This may be *ver* ‘say’, *sus* ‘ask’, *kke* ‘call out’, or *yer* ‘sing’. The first three verbs permit an experiencer argument to be attached, licensed by the applicative suffix *-ikh*. The verb encoded in V2 is always the utterance predicate *ver* ‘say’, which is typically followed by a sentential complement reporting the material that is uttered. The sentential complement is optionally introduced by the complementiser *t(e)*.

Utterance SVCs may be marked by a slight rise in intonation on the final syllable of the experiencer argument.

(11.48)	V1		V2	Complement
	<i>ver(-ikh)</i> ‘say (someone)’		<i>ver</i> ‘say’	(t(e)) COMP
	<i>sus(-ikh)</i> ‘ask (someone)’			
	<i>kke(-kh)</i> ‘call out (someone)’			
	<i>yer</i> ‘sing’			

(11.49)	<i>I-ver-ikh</i>	<i>khavut</i>	<i>t-na</i>	<i>i-ver</i>	<i>te...</i>
	3REAL:SG-say-APPL	husband	PSDT-1SG	3REAL:SG-say	COMP
	‘He said to my husband ...’ [NVDL04.19]				

(11.50)	<i>I-sus-ikh</i>	<i>adr</i>	<i>i-ver</i>	<i>[ar</i>	<i>amt-uv</i>
	3REAL:SG-ask-APPL	3NSG	3REAL:SG-say	3NSG	3IRR:PL-go

abi]

where

‘He asked them where they were going.’ [NVKS14.49]

- (11.51) *Ei i-vlem mil i-kke-kh mil*
3SG 3REAL:SG-come again 3REAL:SG-call-APPL again
i-na i-ver te...
PSNPR-1SG 3REAL:SG-say COMP

‘He came again and called out to me again, saying...’ [NVDL03.10]

Example (11.51) below displays the predicate *yer* ‘sing’ in an SVC. *Yer* does not permit a experiencer argument to be incorporated into the core. The suffixed form *yer-ikh* is attested in the corpus, but with the semantically unrelated meaning ‘foster (a child)’. *Yer* ‘sing’ is further illustrated in (11.52) inside an aspectual SVC with *tokh* marking progressive.

- (11.52) *At-tokh at-yer at-ver niterikh ang,*
3REAL:PL-PROG 3REAL:PL-sing 3REAL:PL-say child ANA
ar at-khan ij
3NSG 3REAL:PL-eat ANT

‘They were singing, saying that the child, they had eaten him.’

[NVKS03.56]

To express the meaning of ‘sing to someone’, the personal preposition *tuan* is used to mark a non-core argument. This construction was attested just once in the corpus and has biclausal intonation, with a pause following *tuan*.

- (11.53) *Nibo titi i-yer tuan i-ver*
 song 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-sing LOCPSN 3REAL:SG-say
 ‘Her song, she sang to (them), she said...’ [NVKS17.s168]

Where the experiencer argument is extractable from the context, it need not be encoded explicitly with any of the utterance verbs as in (11.54). If the manner of utterance is not salient, the proposition is realised as a simple verb rather than a serial construction as in (11.55).

- (11.54) *Ba i-vrok-tata nimokhmokh ang, ale*
 when 3REAL:SG-hold-tight female ANA then
i-sus i-ver
 3REAL:SG-ask 3REAL:SG-say
 ‘When he held the woman tight, he asked (her)...’ [NVKS16.89:
 389.334]

- (11.55) *Baga nida titi i-ver te Lesien*
 then mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-say COMP Lesien
at-uv lon nokhos
 3REAL:PL-go LOC garden
 ‘Then his mother said, ‘Lesien (and her friends) went to the garden.’
 [NVKS09.62]

11.3.1.5. Same-subject aspectual SVCs

Two types of phasal aspectual meanings can be expressed through core SVCs. The aspectual verbs occur in V1 position and the events that they modify are encoded in V2. The most commonly occurring type of phasal aspect in the corpus is progressive aspect, encoded in the verb *tokh* which is also an independent existential/locative verb ‘exist, be at’. A rather less common structure expresses ingressive aspect through the indigenous form *tabatn* ‘start’ or the borrowed form *stait(em)* ‘start’ (see also §7.2.4.2.).

- (11.56) *Nat-tokh* *natvor* *lappan* *mago* *ga*
 1EX:REAL:PL-PROG 1EX:REAL:PL-sit under mango and
Limei *im-tokh* *im-sisir-ikh*
 Limei 3IRR:SG-PROG 3IRR:SG-discuss-APPL
i-nam-ikh *nida*
 PSNPR-1EX:NSG-APPL mother
 ‘We were sitting under the mango and Limei was about to discuss
 with mum and I...’ [NVCV02.81: 521.91]

- (11.57) *I-tabatn* *i-ve* *niar* *an* *nokhos* *ang*
 3REAL.SG-start 3REAL.SG-make fence of garden ANA
 ‘He started making the fence of the garden’ [NVKS10.18]

11.3.1.6. Same-subject modal SVCs

Another pattern that is occasionally found in the speech of younger community members is a serial construction involving *ver* ‘want’ which appears to serve as a marker of intentional or premeditated action on the part of a human

agent. The serial construction takes the form of a two-part core SVC and is modal in meaning. The construction is associated with realis mood and indicates that the intended or premeditated action does in fact occur. In the example below, the entire intentional construction forms the second part of a sequential SVC where *vu* ‘go’ is encoded in V1 position.

- (11.58) *Nat-uv* *nat-ver* *nat-lukh* *lon*
 1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-want 1EX:REAL:PL-stay LOC
nokhos t-na, *ba nat-ver* *nat-uv,*
 garden PSDT-1:SG when 1EX:REAL:PL-want 1EX:REAL:PL-go
nat-khit...
 1EX:REAL:PL-see
 ‘We went to spend time in my garden, and when we went, we saw...’
 [NVCV02.18: 85.085]

- (11.59) *Ba ar-ver* *ar-uv,*
 when 3REAL:DL-want 3REAL:DL-go
 ‘When they went...’ [NVCV05.23: 1376.619]

This serial construction contrasts with the use of *ver* ‘want’ as a complement-taking predicate with the intended (and unrealised) action encoded in an irrealis complement (see §12.4.6. for a description of desiderative complement-taking predicates).

- (11.60) *Barnakh ni-ver nim-bbuer no-ssor-ian ang*⁵⁶
 now 1REAL:SG-want 1IRR:SG-say NPR-talk-Nsf ANA
tle an mil
 another NMOD again
 ‘Now I want to tell another story again.’ [NVKS09.03]

11.3.2. Switch-subject constructions

Switch-subject core SVCs involve an initial transitive verb encoded in V1. The object of this verb serves as the subject of the verb encoded in V2. Directional, existential, and recipient sub-types of switch-subject SVCs are presented in this section.

11.3.2.1. Switch-subject directional SVCs

Switch-subject directional SVCs involve an initial transitive verb in V1 position. The transitive verb is followed by an intransitive directional verb in V2. The agent argument of V1 moves the V1 patient argument. V2 specifies the direction in which the V1 patient is moved.

- (11.61) *Amti-gla mini-akh nitmasn im-das*
 3IRR:PL-bear.a.corpse man-here corpse 3IRR:SG-go.down
vere
 outside
 ‘They were going to bear this man’s corpse outside.’ [NVKI29.69:
 233.496]

⁵⁶ The anaphoric demonstrative occurs in this context because the speaker already has in mind a particular story.

(11.62) *I-jujuk* *nivinbbu ang i-das*
 3REAL:SG-push.through bamboo ANA 3REAL:SG-go.down
bistn
 downward
 ‘He pushed the bamboo down (into the water).’ [NVKS22.10: 85.17]

(11.63) *Ale, nitlele ang ar-dev nakhabb ang*
 then small.child ANA 3REAL:DL-carry fire ANA
i-vu
 3:REAL:SG-go
 ‘Then, the small children carried the fire away.’ [NVKS07.19:
 121.334]

(11.64) *Kum-bbus nibobo im-bbulem*
 2IRR:SG-carry baby 3IRR:SG-come
 ‘Bring the baby!’ NVKS24.56: 227.246]

The argument which has the V1 grammatical function P and the V2 grammatical function S/A need not be realised overtly when it is contextually retrievable. In example (11.65) below, the object argument is a hen’s egg. It is fully encoded in the immediately preceding clause.

(11.65) *I-jik i-sakh bbukhut lon nakhatkhat ang*
 3REAL:SG-put 3REAL:SG-go.up inside LOC basket ANA
 ‘She put it into the basket (of a hen’s egg).’ [NVKS19.12: 341.853]

The examples above all present transitive verbs encoded in V1, followed by an intransitive directional verb in V2. It is also possible to have a reflexive motion verb in V2 position.

- (11.66) *I-vuv* *nani* *i-dak* *ei*
 3REAL:SG-blow coconut 3REAL:SG-fall.over 3SG
 ‘It blew the coconut tree down.’ [NVDL01.28]

11.3.2.2. Switch-subject existential/locational SVCs

Switch-subject existential/locational SVCs involve a transitive verb in V1, and an existential/locational verb in V2. The existential/locational verb provides the position of the argument that is the patient of the verb encoded in V1. The two verbs *tokh* ‘exist, be at’ and *lukh* ‘stay, live’ occur in existential/locational SVCs. *Tokh* generally is used with non-human arguments while *lukh* occurs with human arguments. Hyslop (2001:302) describes a similar category of switch-subject positional SVCs in Ambae, where the posture verb ‘lie’ is used in a parallel way to these existential/locational verbs in Neverver; Crowley (2002a:70) observes the use of the existential verb in Paamese ‘when an action involves no motion or direction as such, and results in a state of rest’.

- (11.67) *At-ver-ikh* *nuag* *tokhtokh* *ang* *i-tokh*
 3REAL:PL-work-APPL boat big ANA 3REAL:SG-exist
lakha
 bush
 ‘They built the ark in the bush.’ [NVCT07.19: 89.128]

Example (11.67) appears in the bible story of Noah and the Ark. In the Neverver translation, the ark is built up in the bush, rather than down by the ocean where boats would ordinarily be crafted. There is no apparent means by which the ark will be transported down to the sea, thus it is built to stay up in the bush.

(11.68) *I-okh ku-solikh vinang i-lukh*
 PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-hide woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-stay
man bbukhut tang?
 EMPH inside there
 ‘Are you hiding the woman inside there?’ [NVDL04.20]

Example (11.68) involves a woman who has gone to her boyfriend’s house during the night. Once a woman takes this action, families must proceed with marriage arrangements. The woman has taken the first steps towards a permanent move into her future husband’s home.

11.3.2.3. Switch-subject recipient SVCs

One very important switch-subject SVC in Neverver is the expression used for the action of giving. Rather than having a ditransitive verb to express this meaning, a serial construction is used. The verb encoded in V1 supplies the agent and theme arguments, and the verb encoded in V2 supplies the recipient. The V1 position is filled by the transitive verb *lav* ‘get’ and the V2 position is filled by the transitive verb *lik* ‘pass to s.o.’.

- (11.69) *Ba nib-lav nidam ang nib-lik okh*
 when 1IRR:SG-get yam ANA 1IRR:SG-pass 2SG
 ‘When I give the yam to you...’ [NVKI04.46]

As in other constructions with contextually retrievable object arguments, the object does not need to be overtly expressed.

- (11.70) *Ba i-tn nidam ang i-lav*
 when 3REAL:SG-roast yam ANA 3REAL:SG-get
i-lik vinang
 3REAL:SG -pass woman:ANA
 ‘When he roasted the yam, he gave it to the woman. [NVKS10.104]

Among younger speakers, this form is undergoing change, with the following variations provided in an elicitation session:

- (11.71) *Dran nibobo lele ang im-ngar,*
 Tmppn baby small ANA 3IRR:SG-cry

- (11.71a) *kub-lav nio kub-lik ei*
 2IRR:SG-get water 2IRR:SG-pass 3:SG

- (11.71b) *kub-lav nio kub-lav-lik ei*
 2IRR:SG-get water 2IRR:SG-get-pass 3SG

(11.71c) *kub-lav-lik* *ei* *nio*
2IRR:SG-get-pass 3SG water

‘If the baby cries, give him water.’ [NVE16.35]

We can observe that in the final and most reduced form of the construction, where a nuclear SVC is used, the arguments are sequenced so that the human recipient is closest to the verb stem (the primary object), and the theme argument is further away (the secondary object). As with other ditransitive constructions, the recipient R precedes the theme (T) (see §9.1.).

11.3.3. Ambient SVCs

Ambient core SVCs differ from other SVCs in that there is no particular argument that is shared by the verbs encoded in V1 and V2. Instead, the entire proposition encoded in V1, including its arguments, is modified by V2. The verb in V2 position always carries the third person singular subject prefix. In this section, manner, aspectual, directional, and similitive ambient SVCs are presented.

11.3.3.1. Ambient manner SVCs

In this category of ambient SVCs, the verb encoded in V2 provides additional information about the state encoded in V1, or some description of the manner in which the action encoded in V1 is carried out.

(11.72) *Ba i-khatkhat i-rvikh, ale, ni-bing*
 when 3REAL:SG-dry 3REAL:SG-good then 1REAL:SG-roll
 ‘When they are really dry/nice and dry, I roll them.’ [NVDL13.04]

(11.73) *Ba ku-khit barnakh, at-tev mej*
 when 2REAL:SG-see now 3REAL:PL-begin.to.grow IMM
i-rvikh
 3REAL:SG-good
 ‘When you see (them) now, they begin to grow well.’ [NVDL18.20]

(11.74) *Ar-tokh ar-ver ni-maur-ian ang*
 IMPS:REAL-PROG IMPS:REAL-say NPR-live-NSF ANA
i-vu i-is
 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-bad
 ‘They are saying life went bad.’ [NVKI02.39]

(11.75) *Ni-rongil si nim-dum im-kher*
 1REAL:SG-can NEG 1IRR:SG-run 3IRR:SG-strong
 ‘I couldn't run strongly.’ [NVKI03.33]

11.3.3.2. Ambient aspectual SVCs

The ambient SVC is one means of encoding the aspectual category of egression. (Egressive aspect is also discussed in §7.2.4.3.) In this serial construction, the egressive verb *suvsvu* ‘be finished’ occurs in V2 position. This order is iconic with the temporal sequence of actions: the event must be underway first in order to be completed.

(11.76) *At-khan tomato t-na i-suvsuv*
 3REAL:PL-eat tomato PSDT-1SG 3REAL:SG-be.finished
 ‘They finished eating my tomatoes.’ [NVCV02.19: 92.975]

(11.77) *Ku-yel nevat i-suvsuv kum-jurjur*
 2REAL:SG-pick.up stone 3REAL:SG-be.finished 2IRR:SG-spread.out
 ‘You finish picking up the stones and you spread (the remaining
 stones) flat.’ [NVKI12.06]

(11.78) *Ba ari-lles lu i-suvsuv,*
 when 3REAL:DL-bathe PERF 3REAL:SG-be.finished
ari-vlem ar-rus adr
 3REAL:DL-come 3REAL:DL-wear 3NSG
 ‘When they had finished bathing, they came and dressed themselves.’
 [NVKS24.28: 104.607]

11.3.3.3. Ambient directional SVCs

Verbs that encode different types of vision form ambient SVCs. A directional verb in V2 specifies the direction in which the agent argument of V1 is looking.

(11.79) *Ba ni-tvis i-das, ni-khit ar*
 when 1REAL:SG-look.dir 3REAL:SG-go.down 1REAL:SG-see 3NSG
 ‘When I looked down, I saw them’ [NVCV02.70: 451.513]

- (11.80) *Asi kum-dri okh, kum-kaknga im-sakh*
 if 2IRR:SG-turn 2SG 2IRR:SG-DUP-search 3IRR:SG-go.up
arkha lon notvo arkha tang.
 up LOC Caster.oil.plant up there
 ‘If you turn around, look up at the Caster Oil tree up there.’
 [NVKS22.25:153.351]

A construction that is similar in function to the recipient SVC is used to express the meaning of giving thanks to someone, writing to someone, and speaking to someone. In each case, a directional verb is encoded in V2 position to indicate the movement of the activity towards another person. Unlike the switch-subject recipient SVC which involves a transitive verb in V1, the verbs that can fill V1 in this ambient construction may be transitive or intransitive. Like other ambient constructions, the directional verb in V2 always carries the third person singular subject prefix.

- (11.81) *Nim-bbuer me wallas im-bbu tuan vinang*
 1IRR:SG-say just thank-you 3IRR:SG-go LOCPSN woman:ANA
 ‘I’ll just say thanks to the woman...’ [NVKS01.77]

- (11.82) *Adr ar-totos i-vu tuan*
 3NSG 3REAL:DL-DUP-write 3REAL:SG-go LOCPSN
nimkhut titi-dr.
 person 3PS-PL
 ‘They wrote to their son.’ [NVE19.18a]

- (11.83) *Na ni-rongil nibi-ssor im-bbu*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-can 1IRR:SG-talk 3IRR:SG-go
tuan khavut t-na.
 LOCPSN husband PSDT-1:SG
 ‘I was able to speak to my husband.’ [NVE27.21]

11.3.3.4. Ambient similitive SVCs

The similitive construction is very common in the text corpus. Two verbs occur in this construction. The first is *gang* ‘be like that’. This similitive verb is anaphoric, pointing to something previously introduced in discourse. It can also point to something that represents prior knowledge of the speaker, as we find in example (11.86) below. Interestingly, this expression occurs at the beginning of many stories.

- (11.84) *Ba i-tokh i-yer i-gang,*
 when 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-sing 3REAL:SG-like.so
nida titi i-lukh lakha i-rodrokh
 mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-stay bush 3REAL:SG-hear
 ‘When she was singing like that, her mother was in the bush and heard.’ [NVKS24.45: 179.653]

- (11.85) *Ba ari-ssor i-gang, mang*
 when 3REAL:DL-talk 3REAL:SG-like.so man:ANA

i-tur *i-prok*
 3REAL:SG-stand.up 3REAL:SG-listen

‘When they spoke like that, the man stood up and listened.’

[NVKS15.15]

(11.86) *Nossorian ang i-vu* *i-gang*
 story ANA 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-like.so

‘The story went like that.’ [NVKS09.04]

The second similitive verb is *gen* ‘be like, be the same as’. This verb combines with immediate perception complement-taking predicates that are encoded in V1 position.

(11.87) *Dran kubi-tvas* *kum-khit* *i-gen*
 TMPPN 2IRR:SG-brush.off 2IRR:SG-see 3REAL:SG-like

i-susul
 3REAL:SG-shine

‘When you brush it off, it will look to you like it is glowing.’

[NVKS01.43]

(11.88) *Okh ku-rot* *i-gen* *naus ang im-bbuov?*
 2SG 2REAL:SG-sense 3REAL:SG-like rain ANA 3IRR:SG-fall

‘Does it feel to you like it is going to rain?’ [NVE25.46]

11.3.4. Inklusory constructions

In inklusory core SVCs, the arguments that serve as the subject and object of V1 combine to serve as the subject argument of V2. The most commonly occurring verb to fill V1 position is the transitive *blev* ‘be with’, though some other semantically appropriate transitive verbs are also attested in this SVC. A change in the subject/mood prefix on V2 signals the inklusory nature of these constructions.

- (11.89) *Ari-blev ar at-uv at-ev lakha*
 3REAL:DL-be.with 3NSG 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go.to bush
 ‘They (parents) went with them (children) together to the bush.’
 [NVKS24.08: 27.633]

- (11.90) *I-rev i-blev ar-uv*
 3REAL:SG-pull 3REAL:SG-be.with 3REAL:DL-go
ar-ev aiyem titi
 3REAL:DL-go.to home 3PS:SG
 ‘He pulled her along with him to his home’ [NVKS14.29]

- (11.91) *I-rev mokh nimkhut at-das tang*
 3REAL:SG-pull all person 3REAL:PL-go.down there
 ‘He persuaded all the men to go down there (and they went).’
 [NVKI07.48]

In each of the examples from (11.89) to (11.91), the inklusory argument-sharing pattern interacts with directional serialisation.

Chapter Twelve

Complement-Taking Predicates

Neverver has a class of verbs which take as their object a sentence-like complement. Sentence-like complements are described from §12.1. to §12.4. Complementisers optionally introduce sentence-like complements (§12.2.). The mood of a sentence-like complement interacts with the mood of various complement-taking predicate in predictable ways (§12.3.). Semantic sub-types of complement-taking predicates which share behavioural properties can be identified (§12.4.). Along with sentence-like complements, the process of nominalisation can be employed to derive a noun from a predicate. Nominalised complements are considered in §12.5.

12.1. Complementation in Neverver

In defining complementation, I follow Noonan's (1985:42, 2007:52) much quoted definition of complementation as 'the syntactic situation that arises when a notional sentence or predication is an argument of a predicate'. Noonan refers to predicates that take entire sentences as their arguments as 'complement-taking predicates' [CTPs].

Noonan (2007) distinguishes between a number of complement types on the basis of their morphology, identifying sentence-like complements with indicative and subjunctive subtypes, paratactic complements, infinitive complements, nominalised complements and participle complements. Among these types, Neverver makes use of just two: these are the sentence-like complement; and the nominalised complement. In sentence-like complements, the syntactic structure

and morphology of the complement is identical to the syntactic structure and morphology of the same clause when it functions independently. In nominalised complements, we can observe standard nominalising morphology which prototypically involves the common noun prefix *n(V)-* and the nominalising suffix *-ian*.

(12.1) Independent clause

Nida titi i-lukh lakha

mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-stay bush

‘Her mother was in the bush’ [NVKS24.45: 179.653]

(12.2) Sentence-like complement

I-khit [nida titi i-lukh man]

3REAL:SG-see mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-stay EMPH

‘He saw her mother was actually (there)’ [NVKS09.59]

(12.3) Nominalised complement

[Ne-matur-ian] i-tokh si

NPR-sleep-NSF 3REAL:SG-exist NEG

‘There was no sleep.’ [NVDL14.17: 105.828]

As illustrated in (12.2) above, sentence-like complements appear in the position of grammatical object. The distribution of sentence-like complements is constrained as they are not permitted to function as grammatical subjects. Trivially perhaps, we can make the observation that although CTPs take sentential objects, they do not require the applicative suffix *-ikh*. This supports

the analysis that certain verbs are inherently complement-taking in the same way that prototypical transitive verbs inherently require a nominal argument encoded in the object position. Nominalised complements contrast with sentence-like complements in their distribution. They appear in subject position as in (12.3), as well as in object and oblique positions.

In the corpus, a number of verbs are attested with either a sentential complement or a nominal object. In other cases, a given CTP will only permit a sentential object. There may be a separate lexical item which takes a nominal object. The form *(rong)rong* ‘want’ in example (12.4) below only ever occurs with a sentential complement. The morphologically related form *rongrok* ‘want’ (which derives from *rong* ‘want’ and *vrok* ‘hold’) almost always occurs with a nominal object. This is illustrated in (12.5). On a small number of occasions, it is attested with a sentential complement, as in (12.6).

(12.4) *(Rong)rong* ‘want’ + sentential complement

Be i-okh ku-rongrong [i-na nib-lav
 but PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-want PSNPR-1SG 1IRR:SG-get
i-okh]
 PSNPR-2SG
 ‘But do you want me to marry you?’ [NVKS02.20]

(12.5) *rongrok* ‘want’ + nominal object

I-git nit-rongrok nogovin nakhaj
 PSNPR-1IN:NSG 1IN:REAL:PL-want egg ant
 ‘We want rice’ [NVKI04.51]

(12.6) *rongrok* ‘want’ + sentential complement

Nat-rongrok [*nimkhut i-skham im-bbue*
 1EX:REAL:PL-want man 3REAL:SG-one 3IRR:SG-make
sukul tuan mam]
 church LOCPSN 1EX:NSG

‘We want a man to make church at our place’ [NVKI07.36]

12.2. Complementisers

Certain sub-types of complements are introduced by a complementiser. This complementiser can be optional. Of the complementisers that are attested in the corpus, only one functions primarily to introduce sentential complements. This is the complementiser *t(e)* which most often introduces complements of the utterance CTP *ver* ‘say’. Example (12.7) illustrates *ver* with the complementiser *te* and (12.8) illustrates the same verb with no complementiser.

(12.7) The CTP *ver* ‘say’ with the complementiser *te*

Khavut titi ang i-ver-ikh ei i-ver
 husband 3PS:SG ANA 3REAL:SG-say-APPL 3SG 3REAL:SG-say
te [*‘Kum-bbu kum-sir nida t-okh*]
 COMP 2IRR:SG-go 2IRR:SG-fetch mother PSDT-2SG

‘Her husband said to her ‘Go get your mother.’’ [NVKS02.35]

(12.8) The CTP *ver* ‘say’ with no complementiser

I-ver-ikh ei i-ver [*‘Kum-bbulem*
 3REAL:SG-say-APPL 3SG 3REAL:SG-say 2IRR:SG-come

bbukhut]

inside

‘She said to him ‘Come inside.’ [NVCT06.32: 150.427]

The other two forms that function as complementisers are more frequently attested introducing modifiers of verb phrases (adverbial clauses) and modifiers of noun phrases (relative clauses and certain possessive constructions). The subordinator *il* introduces adverbial purpose and reason clauses, as well as nominal benefactive arguments.

(12.9) *il* as a complementiser

Na ni-setvun il nib-lav nakhatkhat

1SG 1REAL:SG-forget COMP 1IRR:SG-get basket

t-na.

PSDT-1SG

‘I forgot to get my basket.’ [NVKW09.59]

(12.10) *il* as an adverbial subordinator marking purpose

Nimkhat i-skham i-lukh tang

man 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-stay there

il im-matmat-ikh adr.

PURPOSE 3IRR:SG-take.care-APPL 3NSG

‘A man stayed there to look after them.’ [NVKS03.4]

(12.11) *il* as a marker of a benefactive argument

Nibir-lav nobror an ibi-skham il na.

1IN:IRR:DL-get k.o.yam NMOD 3IRR:SG-one BENE 1SG

‘We will get one of those Nobror yams for me. [NVKI05.20]

The nominal modifying particle *an* introduces relative clauses with definite heads, as well as a range of possessive modifiers of nouns (see chapter five for a full description).

(12.12) *an* as a complementiser

Ei i-rongil an ei im-bbulem si.

3SG 3REAL:SG-know COMP 3SG 3IRR:SG-come NEG

‘He_i found out that he_i won’t/can’t come.’ [NVE05.13.1]

(12.13) *an* as a relative subordinator

nimkhut an i-tokh i-ve nokhos

man NMOD 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-make garden

t-na ang

PSDT-1SG ANA

‘the man who is making my garden’ [NVKS10.75]

(12.14) *an* as a marker of a possession

nokho an niberyev ang

vine NMOD k.o.fruiting.vine ANA

‘the vine of the niberyev plant’ [NVKS22.09: 66.816]

The co-opting of adverbial and relative subordinators as complementisers appears to be a recent innovation in Neverver. Constructions with co-opted complementisers are observed both in the more spontaneous recorded speech of younger community members, and in elicitation sessions with younger community members. This innovation may stem from contact with English and Bislama, where complementisers are obligatory in many contexts.

12.3. Complementation and mood

Noonan (2007:98) observes that ‘many languages that employ tense or mood morphology restrict in various ways the tense or mood categories allowable in complements.’ Because Neverver is a mood-prominent language, the distribution of mood marking in complements is central to their description. In Neverver, the mood of any given clause, whether it be an independent clause or a subordinate clause, is either realis or irrealis. The form of mood marking is invariant, regardless of the clause type involved.

The mood marking of complements is subject to CTP-specific restrictions. Three patterns of mood marking are attested. Firstly, the mood of the complement may pattern according to the mood of the CTP, and reflect the speaker’s belief about the reality of the event encoded (Polarity/Speaker-determined). In such cases, the polarity of the matrix clause is important, with negative polarity in the matrix clause producing irrealis mood in the complement. This is a dependent pattern of mood marking. Secondly, the mood of the complement may be restricted to irrealis, regardless of the mood or polarity of the matrix clause. This is also a dependent pattern of mood marking. Thirdly, the mood of the complement may be completely independent of the

mood of the matrix clause. In such cases, the polarity of the matrix clause also has no bearing on the mood of the complement. The mood patterns for complement constructions are summarised in Table 12.1. below.

Mood of Matrix	Polarity of Matrix	Mood of complement SPEAKER/POLARITY- DETERMINED	IRREALIS	INDEPENDENT
Realis	Positive	Realis/Irrealis		
Realis	Negative	Irrealis	Irrealis	Realis/Irrealis
Irrealis	Positive/Negative	Irrealis		

Table 12.1. Mood patterns for sentence-like complement constructions

Mood patterning provides a useful way of distinguishing between certain types of complement constructions and core serial verb constructions. Core SVCs require concordant mood marking on all verbs in the serial construction. CTPs with independent or dependent irrealis complements are easily distinguishable from core SVCs as there are multiple examples in the corpus where the mood of the complement differs from the mood of the CTP. In cases where a multi-verb sequence exhibits matched mood marking, as in a sequence of two verbs which are both marked for realis mood, there may be structural ambiguity between serial and complement analyses. This ambiguity can be resolved by altering the polarity of the construction. When a CTP with a polarity-determined complement is negated, the resulting mood of the complement is irrealis. One realisation of this pattern is a sequence of a negative realis CTP, followed by an irrealis complement. Such sequences are disallowed in core SVCs, which permit only concordant mood marking.

In example (12.15) below, the causative multi-verb construction with a sequence of two realis verbs is structurally ambiguous. In (12.16), this ambiguity has been resolved by altering the polarity of the initial verb. The

resulting negative-realis:irrealis sequence allows us to describe *ve* ‘make’ as a complement-taking predicate with polarity-determined mood marking rather than as V1 of a core serial construction.

(12.15) Realis + Realis

Nimkhut ttis i-ve naus i-voov
 man holy 3REAL:SG-make rain 3REAL:SG-fall
 ‘The holy person made the rain fall.’ [NVKI01.49]

(12.16) Negative-Realis + Irrealis

Mang i-ve si naus im-bbuov
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-make NEG rain 3IRR:SG-fall
 ‘He didn’t make the rain fall.’ [NVKW08.44]

12.4. The semantics of complementation

Semantically, CTPs encode one proposition, and their complements encode separate propositions. This is illustrated in (12.17), which displays the ability CTP *rongil*. The CTP *rongil* is followed by a complex sentence-like complement expressing the proposition BRING. The complement comprises a core switch-subject serial construction where the shared argument of the core SVC (the object of V1 and subject of V2) is itself a nominalised complement (see Chapter Eleven for a description of core serialisation).

(12.17) Proposition 1: BE ABLE

At-rongil

3REAL:PL-can

Proposition 2: BRING

abit-lav ni-kkan-ian im-bbulem

3IRR:PL-get NPR-eat-NSF 3IRR:SG-come

‘They were able to bring food’ [NVKI20.33]

Noonan (1985, 2007) identifies numerous CTP sub-classes on the basis of their semantic features. In Neverver, there are a number of lexical items that fit into Noonan’s semantic classes and function as CTPs⁵⁷.

As Table 12.2. shows, mood marking is dependent in almost all cases. Independent mood marking is associated only with utterance predicates. Of all the semantic categories of CTPs, these predicates are arguably the most distinct from their complements. This is because the act of saying can be temporally and spatially distinct, as well as distinct in terms of participants, from the event expressed in the complement.

CTP Class	Lexical Items	COMP	Mood Dependencies
1. Immediate perception	<i>rot</i> ‘sense’ <i>rodrokh</i> ‘hear’ <i>khit~(khi)trokh</i> ‘see’		Polarity-Determined
2. Knowledge & acquisition of knowledge ⁵⁸	<i>rongil</i> ‘know’ <i>rongil</i> ‘find out’ <i>rodrokh</i> ‘hear that’	te, (an) an	Polarity-Determined
3. Manipulative (Causative)	<i>ve</i> ‘make’		Polarity-Determined

⁵⁷ In addition to the classes listed in Table 12.2., Noonan (1985, 2007) lists pretence predicates, commentative predicates, and conjunctive predicates as semantic sub-classes. Members of these sub-classes are not attested as CTPs in Neverver.

⁵⁸ *khitrokh an* ‘see that’ occurs in the elicited data set but is not attested in the text corpus.

4. Propositional Attitude	<i>rokkamsukh</i> ‘believe’ <i>ver-bor</i> ‘think’ <i>rot igen</i> ‘feel that’(?)		Polarity-Determined
5. Modal	<i>rongil</i> ‘can, be able’		Irrealis
6. Desiderative	<i>ver</i> ‘want/intend’ <i>(rong)rong</i> ‘want’ <i>rongrokh</i> ‘want/like’		Irrealis
7. Anti-Desiderative	<i>rosikh</i> ‘not want’	(il)	Irrealis
8. Achievement	<i>sisien</i> ‘decide to’ <i>setta</i> ‘remember to’ <i>setvun</i> ‘forget to’ <i>kretikh</i> ‘try to make’ <i>dro-skhen</i> ‘do in vain’	(il) il il il CTP?	Irrealis
9. Phasal	<i>tabatn, stait(em)</i> ‘start’	il	Irrealis
10. Utterance ⁵⁹	<i>ver</i> ‘say’ <i>rot</i> ‘sense/think’ <i>ver-bor</i> ‘think’ <i>prok~prong</i> ‘listen-think’?	(t(e))	Independent

Table 12.2. Semantic classes of complement taking predicates in Neverver

In the following sections, each semantic sub-class of CTP will be described, along with its mood marking properties and interactions with negation.

12.4.1. Immediate perception predicates

Immediate perception predicates involve a CTP expressing some act of perception on the part of a human. This act of perception overlaps temporally with the perceived event that is described in the complement. Structurally, there is no overt complementiser. The complements of immediate perception CTPs have polarity-determined mood marking. When the CTP is marked for realis mood, the event that is perceived is also marked for realis. Positive verbs of perception presuppose the reality of the event that is perceived. When the CTP is negated, or marked for irrealis mood, this signals that the event encoded in the

⁵⁹ Direct and indirect statements, commands and questions are dealt with in §12.2.10 below.

complement either did not, will not, or has not yet occurred. The complement is then marked for irrealis mood.

A number of immediate perception predicates are attested in the corpus. The most important distinction between lexical items is found between predicates of sight and predicates used for other senses. The most general non-sight verb of perception is *rot*, which is loosely glossed as ‘sense’. This single predicate encompasses multiple sensory meanings including physical and emotional sensations of feeling. Physical sensations include hearing, smelling, and tasting things, as well as experiencing sensations of heat, cold, movement and heaviness among others. In each of these usages, mood marking is polarity-determined. This mood patterning is demonstrated in examples (12.18) to (12.21) with the meaning ‘hear’. Example (12.18) is a naturally occurring construction while (12.19) to (12.21) are elicited constructions.

(12.18) *I-rot* *niterikh ang i-ngar*
 3REAL:SG-sense child ANA 3REAL:SG-cry
 ‘He heard the child cry [NVKS08.14]

(12.19) *I-rot* *si niterikh ang im-ngar*
 3REAL:SG-sense NEG child ANA 3IRR:SG-cry
 ‘He didn’t hear the child cry.’ [NVKW08.73]

(12.20) *Ib-rot* *niterikh ang im-ngar*
 3IRR:SG-sense child ANA 3IRR:SG-cry
 ‘He will hear the child cry.’ [NVKW08.74]

(12.21) *Ib-rot si niterikh ang im-ngar*
 3IRR:SG-sense NEG child ANA 3IRR:SG-cry
 ‘He won’t hear the child cry.’ [NVKW08.75]

Other sensory meanings of *rot* attested in the text corpus are illustrated from (12.22) to (12.27).

(12.22) *At-rot nio an i-llum*
 3REAL:PL-sense water NMOD⁶⁰ 3REAL:SG-tasty
 ‘They felt its juice was tasty.’ [NVKS02.153]

(12.23) *Ar-rot nabbun nisin i-skham i-tokh*
 3REAL:DL-sense smell thing 3REAL:SG-one 3REAL:SG-exist
 ‘They smelt there was the smell of something.’ [NVKS07.23:
 146.861]

(12.24) *I-rot nibittan ang i-velvel we*
 3REAL:SG-sense ground ANA 3REAL:SG-DUP-shake AUGCO
i-velvel
 3REAL:SG-DUP-shake
 ‘He felt the ground shake violently.’ [NVKS10.52]

⁶⁰ In this construction, *an* is a nominal subordinator, marking a genitive relation between *nio* ‘water’ and the unrealised 3rd person singular pronoun ‘it’ referring to the coconut under discussion. It does not introduce a complement or a relative clause.

(12.25) *Ar-rot nemar i-khas ar*
 3REAL:DL-sense hunger 3REAL:SG-bite 3NSG
 ‘They felt hungry.’ [NVKS05.08: 40.858] (lit. ‘They felt hunger bite them.’)

(12.26) *I-rot i-masik*
 3REAL:SG-sense 3REAL:SG-be.tired
 ‘She felt tired.’ [NVKS02.40]

(12.27) *Be na ni-rot i-kher*
 but 1SG 1REAL:SG-sense 3REAL:SG-difficult
 ‘But I perceive it is difficult.’ [NVDL03.12]

Rot is also used with the meaning ‘think’, where it patterns as an utterance predicate, discussed in §12.4.10. below.

Alongside the predicate *rot*, which can be used for hearing among other sensory usages, there is separate lexical item *rodrokh* (also attested as *rodrok* and *drodrokh*) which is restricted to the aural sense. This additional sensory CTP also has polarity-determined mood marking, which is illustrated in the examples below.

(12.28) *Ba nat-rodrokh [ar-ver nilangrav im-bbulem]*
 when 1EX:REAL:PL-hear IMPS:REAL-say cyclone 3IRR:SG-come
 ‘When we heard them say the cyclone was going to come...’
 [NVDL01.22]

- (12.29) *I-drodrok si [niterikh ang im-ngar]*
 3REAL:SG-hear NEG child ANA 3IRR:SG-cry
 ‘He didn't hear the child sing.’ [NVKW08.85]
- (12.30) *Maran nim-rodrok [niterikh lele edr*
 tomorrow 1IRR:SG-hear child small PL
abit-yer]
 3IRR:PL-sing
 ‘Tomorrow, I will hear the young children sing.’ [NVKW08.86]
- (12.31) *Maran am-drodrok mo si niterikh ang*
 tomorrow IMPS.IRR-hear CONT NEG child ANA
abit-yer
 3IRR:PL-sing
 ‘Tomorrow they won't hear the children sing any longer.’ (e.g. of a cancelled performance) [NVKW08.87]

The sense of sight can be encoded in the verb *khit* or *(khi)trokh* ‘see (non-agentive)’, which occurs with both sentential complements and nominal objects.⁶¹ The main point of difference between the various forms of ‘see’ is that when it is reduplicated, the form *khitkhit* can be used intransitively whereas forms involving *trokh* are not attested with intransitive uses. The text examples show marking of realis mood in both the CTP and the complement, emphasising

⁶¹ The morphologically unrelated transitive form *tnga-kh* ‘look at (deliberate)’ takes only nominal objects.

the reality for the speaker of the things which are seen. Elicited constructions confirm the polarity-determined pattern of mood marking for these items.

- (12.32) *Ni-khit ei i-vlem mil i-kke-kh*
 1REAL:SG-see 3SG 3REAL:SG-come again 3REAL:SG-call-APPL
mil i-na
 again PSNPR-1SG
 ‘I saw him come again and call out to me again.’ [NVDL03.10]

- (12.33) *Ar-rot i-rvikh il ari-trokh*
 3REAL:DL-feel 3REAL:SG-good CAUSE 3REAL:DL-see
nidam i-tev lon nokhos ang
 yam 3REAL:SG-begin.to.grow LOC garden ANA
 ‘They felt good because they saw yams beginning to grow in the garden.’ [NVKS13.48]

- (12.34) *Ni-khitrokh nakhabb ang i-tel-tel*
 1REAL:SG-see fire ANA 3REAL:SG-DUP-smoke
 ‘I saw the fire smoking.’ [NVKS17.100]

- (12.35) *Ni-khitrokh niterikh lele ang edr ati-pleple*
 1REAL:SG-see child small ANA PL 3REAL:PL-play
 ‘I saw the small children playing.’ [NVKW08.88]

(12.36) *Ni-khitrokh si niterikh ang edr amti-pleple*
 1REAL:SG-see NEG child ANA PL 3IRR:PL-play
 ‘I didn’t see the children playing.’ [NVKW08.89]

(12.37) *nim-khitrokh niterikh amti-pleple*
 1IRR:SG-see child 3IRR:PL-play
 ‘I will see children playing.’ [NVKW08.90]

(12.38) *Nim-khitrokh si niterikh amti-pleple*
 1IRR:SG-see NEG child 3IRR:PL-play
 ‘I won’t see children playing.’ [NVKW08.88]⁶²

12.4.2. Predicates of knowledge and acquisition of knowledge

The verb *rongil* is used to express both knowledge ‘know that’ and the modal meaning of ability ‘be able, can’ discussed in §12.4.5. below. When used to express knowledge, *rongil* ‘know’ takes a sentence-like complement. In the corpus, the large majority of occurrences of *rongil* in this usage are positive constructions where both the CTP and the complement are marked for realis mood. ‘Knowing’ thus strongly presupposes the reality of what is known. In example (12.39), both the CTP and complement are marked for realis mood. The event in the complement ‘planting’ is a completed past event.

⁶² Note the absence of the definite/anaphoric determiner with *niterikh* ‘child(ren)’ from these last two constructions, where the event in the complement is located after the speech time – the speaker does not have any particular children in mind.

(12.39) *Be ei i-rongil na ni-khavukh nebror*
 but 3SG 3REAL:SG-know 1SG 1REAL:SG-plant k.o.yam
 ‘But he knows I planted Nebror yams.’ [NVKI05.18]

In some text material and in most of the elicited constructions, mood marking is polarity-determined. We find that the complements of negated CTPs and the complements of irrealis CTPs are marked for irrealis mood. In (12.40), the realis CTP is negated, and the complement is marked for irrealis mood. The event in the complement is unrealised at the reference time, which is located prior to the time of speech. In (12.41), the irrealis CTP takes an irrealis complement. Again, the event in the complement is unrealised at the reference time.

(12.40) *Nitabras ang i-rongil si niskhan im-bbue.*
 fruit.bat ANA 3REAL:SG-know NEG what 3IRR:SG-do
 ‘The fruit bat didn't know what to do.’ [NVKS05.18: 96.544]

(12.41) *Adr abit-rongil netan abit-ve*
 3NSG 3IRR:PL-know thing:DEF 3IRR:PL-do
 ‘They will know the thing to do.’ [NVKI30.36]

There are also constructions in the text corpus where negative polarity of the CTP does not predict irrealis mood in the complement. These constructions are of the ‘know why’ type, rather than the ‘know that’ type. ‘Know why’ constructions, regardless of their polarity, involve the presupposition that ‘something’ is known, thus requiring realis encoding. Example (12.42) has a

negated CTP marked for realis mood, which is followed by a complement also marked for realis mood. In this case, the event in the complement is actually occurring at the reference time.

- (12.42) *Vinang i-ver 'I-na ni-rongil si*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-say PSNPR-1SG 1REAL:SG-know NEG
nitlele ang i-ngar il niskhan ing'
 small.child ANA 3REAL:SG-cry CAUSE what EXCL

‘The woman said ‘I don't know why the little one cries/is crying.’

[NVKS20.29: 142.848]

In the corpus, there are a small number of constructions where *rongil* takes a complementiser. This is most frequently *te*, although *rongil* is also attested with *an*. While other examples of *rongil* display a stative usage, examples with complementisers can be interpreted as more inchoative, meaning ‘come to know’ rather than simply ‘know’. The constructions in examples (12.43) and (12.44) were produced by two of the oldest speakers of Neverver while (12.45) and (12.46) were produced in an elicitation session by a much younger speaker.

Example (12.43) displays an irrealis CTP, and a realis complement introduced by the complementiser *te*. This mood patterning is not attested with the stative usage of *rongil*. The event in the complement, where a man brought two children fire, occurred prior to the reference time and was one of the key events in a traditional narrative. The children’s parents are absent at the time of this event, but later smell food cooking and thus find out about the discovery of fire.

- (12.43) *Nida titi-r abir-rongil te ei i-lav*
 mother 3PS-PL 3IRR:DL-know COMP 3SG 3REAL:SG-get
nakhabb ang i-vlem.
 fire ANA 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘Their mother was going to come to know that he brought the fire.’
 [NVKS07.36: 224.823]

Example (12.44) displays an irrealis CTP, and an irrealis complement introduced by *te*. The event in the complement is unrealised at the reference time and refers indirectly to a woman’s menstrual time, when she is forbidden to enter a garden area.

- (12.44) *Dran gam kabir-rongil te kabr-ev si*
 Tmppn 2NSG 2IRR:DL-know COMP 2IRR:DL-go.to NEG
lon niar
 LOC garden
 ‘When you come to know that you won’t/shouldn’t go to the garden...’ [NVKS13.28]

In example (12.45) both the CTP and complement are marked for realis mood. This time, the complementiser *an* introduces the complement clause. In this elicited construction, *rongil* can also be interpreted as inchoative.

- (12.45) *Vinang i-rongil an ei*
 woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-know COMP 3SG

i-lavpinokh *nibissav.*

3REAL:SG-take.without.permission bread

‘She came to know that he stole the bread.’ [NVE29.1]

In (12.46) the complement is marked for irrealis mood and is negated, indicating that the event ‘come’ is unrealised at the reference time and will continue to remain unrealised. The relationship between complement and CTP is similar to example (12.44) above.

(12.46) *Ei i-rongil an ei im-bbulem si.*

3SG 3REAL:SG-know COMP 3SG 3IRR:SG-come NEG

‘He_i came to know out that he_i won't/can't come.’ [NVE05.13.1]

Because both examples (12.45) and (12.46) were produced in elicitation sessions, it is possible that the complementiser *an* is an artifact of the elicitation process itself, influenced by the use of *that* in English or *se* in Bislama. However, the spontaneous examples in (12.43) and (12.44) with the complementiser *te* lend support to the analysis of *rongil* having both a stative-knowledge function and an inchoative-acquisition of knowledge function.

The verb *rodrok* ‘hear’, described in §12.4.1. as an immediate perception predicate, is also attested as an acquisition of knowledge predicate meaning ‘hear that’ or ‘learn through talk’. In this function, it occurs with the nominal modifying particle *an* functioning as its complementiser. The unmarked sentence-like complement described above is far more common; however, this construction does appear five times in the corpus and importantly, it is a spontaneous rather than elicited construction.

(12.47) *Ba i-rodrokh an Jenny i-dam bbukhut*
 when 3REAL:SG-hear COMP Jenny 3REAL:SG-shout inside
 ‘When he heard (directly) that Jenny shouted inside...’ [NVCV05.33:
 1428.143]

(12.48) *Nat-rodrokh an ar-ver-da nilangrav*
 1EX:REAL:PL-hear COMP IMPS:REAL-say-PART cyclone
im-bbulem
 3IRR:SG-come
 ‘We heard (indirectly) that they mentioned a cyclone was coming.’
 [NVDL01.2]

12.4.3. Manipulative predicates

The form *ve* ‘make’ is a manipulative CTP and is used to encode the syntactic causative⁶³ in Neverver. A similar syntactic causative construction has been identified in other Vanuatu languages including Naman (Crowley 2006a:203) on Malakula, and Lolovoli (Hyslop 2001:303-304) on Ambae. In Lolovoli, non-productive morphological causatives also occur. The Lolovoli prefix *vaga-* (Hyslop 2001: 335), which appears on ten stems deriving a transitive verb, is cognate with the relic *vakh-* in Neverver which appears in just two items. The syntactic causative is the productive means of forming causative constructions in both Neverver and Lolovoli.

⁶³ I follow Song (2001) in describing the Neverver causative construction as a syntactic causative; Kemmer and Verhagen (1994) use the term Analytic Causative, while Hyslop (2001:303), in her analysis of Lolovoli, uses the term Peraphrastic Causative in passing for a similar construction.

Mood marking in manipulative constructions is polarity-determined, as illustrated in examples (12.49) to (12.52) below. If the causing event encoded in CTP is marked for realis mood and positive polarity, there is an implication that the caused event actually occurred. Examples (12.49) and (12.50) are repeated from (12.15) and (12.16) above.

(12.49) *Nimkhut ttis i-ve naus i-vov*
 man holy 3REAL:SG-make rain 3REAL:SG-fall
 ‘The holy person made the rain fall.’ [NVKI01.49]

(12.50) *Mang i-ve si naus im-bbuov*
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-make NEG rain 3IRR:SG-fall
 ‘He didn’t make the rain fall.’ [NVKW08.44]

(12.51) *Mang im-bbue naus im-bbuov*
 man:ANA 3IRR:SG-make rain 3IRR:SG-fall
 ‘He will make the rain fall.’ [NVKW08.48]

(12.52) *Mang im-bbue si naus im-bbuov*
 man-ANA 3IRR:SG-make NEG rain 3IRR:SG-fall
 ‘He won’t make it rain.’ [NVKW08.51]

12.4.4. Propositional attitude predicates

Propositional attitude predicates are used to express ‘an attitude regarding the truth of the proposition expressed as their complement’ (Noonan 2007:124).

Three items with this function are attested in Neverver. These are *rokkamsukh*

‘believe’, *ver-bor* ‘think’, and *rot i-gen* ‘feel like’. The patterns of mood marking are varied and complex in this sub-category of CTPs, reflecting the speaker’s epistemic judgement about the reality of event in the complement.

The propositional attitude predicate *rokkamsukh* ‘believe’ is attested with complements that refer either to events in the past, or to the current state of affairs. It is marked for realis mood and in each occurrence the complement is also marked for realis mood. This implies that if one believes something, then that something is real. It does not appear to be possible to encode one’s beliefs with irrealis mood, to say for example ‘I will believe...’.

(12.53) *Ni-rokkamsukh i-vu me i-gang*
 1REAL:SG-believe 3REAL:SG-go just 3REAL:SG-like.so
 ‘I believe it went like so.’ [NVKI24.57]

(12.54) *Ni-rokkamsuk ar-rongil si abi-tbbukh si*
 1REAL:SG-believe IMPS:REAL-know NEG IMPS.IRR-have NEG
 ‘I believe they don't know they haven't got it.’ [NVKI23.60]

The CTP *rokkamsukh* also appears once in the corpus in a serial construction with the utterance predicate *ver* ‘say’. Like the other examples with positive polarity, the complement is marked for realis mood, signalling the reality for the subject of *rokkamsukh* that the proposition encoded in the complement is real. In fact in this case, the belief was false as the child in question had been swept away by flood waters. Thus, we might argue that this construction encodes quotative evidence for that which is ‘believed’ rather than some other form of evidence that might lead to a firmer belief.

- (12.55) *Adr at-rokkamsukh at-ver [niterikh ang*
 3NSG 3REAL:PL-believe 3REAL:PL-say child ANA
i-dum i-vu-vev aiyem]
 3REAL:SG-run 3REAL:SG-go-go.to home
 ‘They believed that the child ran back home.’ [NVKS14.14]

Two elicited constructions were produced with the CTP negated and an irrealis complement; in each case a complementiser was also present even though complementisers are not attested with *rokkamsukh* in the text corpus.

- (12.56) *Ni-rokkamsukh si an nibarbar ib-yal*
 1REAL:SG-believe NEG COMP pig 3IRR:SG-fly
 ‘I don't believe that pigs fly.’ [NVKW08.2]

- (12.57) *Ni-rokkamsukh si ei il im-bbulem maran*
 1REAL:SG-believe NEG 3SG COMP 3IRR:SG-come tomorrow
 ‘I don't believe that he will come tomorrow.’ [NVKW08.11]

The CTP *ver-bor* ‘think’ is a nuclear serial verb comprising the utterance predicate *ver* ‘say’ and the epistemic modifier *bor* ‘maybe’. When used independently, *bor* occurs in the periphery of the clause, rather than in a post-verbal position. The mood of the complement of *ver-bor* is dependent on the belief of the speaker. When the speaker is describing an event that she believes to be real at the time of speech, realis mood is assigned to the complement; when the speaker is describing an event that she believes to be potential at the time of speech, irrealis mood is assigned to the complement. This construction is rather

rare in the text corpus, but was explored in detail with different language consultants, who confirmed the analysis that epistemic judgments motivate the marking of the mood of the complement.

In examples (12.58) and (12.59), the speakers strongly believe that the events in the complements took place, although they are not completely certain.

(12.58) *Ni-ver-bor ei i-vu ij*
 1REAL:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3REAL:SG-go ANT
 ‘I think/assert that she has gone.’ [NVE24.36]

(12.59) *Ni-ver-bor ei i-vlem*
 1REAL:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘I think/assert that he came.’ [NVKW08.14]

In examples (12.60) the speaker is less certain about the reality of the event in the complement. This reduction in certainty is reflected in the irrealis encoding of CTP, though the event in the complement retains its realis mood, reflecting the potential for the event to have been completed at the reference/speech time.

(12.60) *Nim-bbuer-bor ei i-vlem*
 1IRR:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘I think it possible/I suggest that he has come.’ [NVKW08.20]

The examples (12.61) to (12.63) involve complements that encode potential future events rather than past events. In (12.62) the use of the reduplicated verb

stem in the complement combined with the negative morpheme is the same structure that is used to express prohibition. In this context, it seems to indicate the speaker's belief the event in the complement is undesirable. In (12.63) the speaker is uncertain about the future possibility of the event. This uncertainty is encoded in the irrealis mood marking on the CTP.

(12.61) *Na ni-ver-bor ei im-bbulem ing.*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3IRR:SG-come EMPH
 'I think it likely/assert that he will come.' [NVE16.16]

(12.62) *Ni-ver-bor ei im-bbuvu si*
 1REAL:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3IRR:SG-DUP-go NEG
 'I think that he must/should not go.' [NVE24.37]

(12.63) *Nim-bbuer-bor ei im-bbulem*
 1IRR:SG-say-maybe 3SG 3IRR:SG-come
 'I possibly think that he will come.' [NVKW08.21]

The core serial verb construction *rot + i-gen* comprises the immediate perception predicate *rot* 'sense' and the similitive verb *gen* 'be like'. As a propositional attitude predicate, it means 'feel like/think'. When the matrix clause is marked for realis mood and carries positive polarity, it requires a realis complement, patterning in the same way as *rokkamsukh* 'believe'.

(12.64) *Na ni-rot i-gen ni-rodrok-da.*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-sense 3REAL:SG-like 1REAL:SG-hear-PART
 ‘I feel as though I just heard a little (of the story).’ [NVCV05.14:
 1349.482]

(12.65) *Ni-rot i-gen ar-ver nobrormet*
 1REAL:SG-sense 3REAL:SG-like IMPS:REAL-say k.o.yam-dark
 ‘I think/feel as though they say Nobrormet.’ [NVKI21.109: 452.600]

When the event in the complement refers to a potential future event, it is then marked for irrealis mood as (12.66) illustrates.

(12.66) *Ei i-jal we i-jal i-rot*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-sick AUGCO 3REAL:SG-sick 3REAL:SG-feel
i-gen im-mas
 3REAL:SG-like 3IRR:SG-dead
 ‘He was very ill and he felt as though he was going to die.’
 [NVE16.08]

12.4.5. Modal predicates

The verb *rongil* has already been described as having knowledge-based functions: it expresses both the state of knowing, and the action of coming to know (the acquisition of knowledge). A further knowledge-based function of *rongil* is to introduce complements of ability – ‘know how’. The dual function of *rongil* to express knowledge and ability is common in central Malakulan languages, and cognate forms appear in Naman, Avava, and Neve‘ei.

(12.67)	‘know, be able’	
	<i>rongil</i>	Neverver
	<i>rongdur</i>	Naman (Crowley 2006b:)
	<i>rokut</i>	Avava (Crowley 2006a:165)
	<i>rogulel</i>	Neve‘ei (Crowley & Musgrave 2004:144)

There is some evidence that historically, the verb *rongil* was a nuclear serial construction. The most plausible V1 input parts are either *rong* ‘want’ or *rot* ‘sense’. The contemporary *-il* most likely derives from *lel* ‘be wise’. It should also be observed that a homophone of *il* functions as an adverbial subordinator and sometimes as a complementiser in Neverver. An alternative analysis could be that *-il* represents a lexicalisation of an older grammatical morpheme. Items in the corpus displayed in Table 12.3. below suggest that both analyses have some merit:

Hypothesis: <i>il</i> derived from <i>lel</i> ‘be wise’		Hypothesis: <i>il</i> derived from the grammatical subordinator <i>il</i>	
<i>rong-il</i>	‘know that, be able to’ either from <i>rong</i> ‘want’ or <i>rot</i> ‘sense’	<i>sas-il</i>	‘rush (doing something)’ also attested <i>sas-ikh</i> ‘do quickly’
<i>khit-il</i>	‘recognise (be able to see)’ from <i>khit</i> ‘see’	<i>dan-il</i>	‘want everything’ from <i>dan</i> ‘all’ which is now a V2/aspectual morpheme
<i>khan-il</i>	‘be able to eat’ from <i>khan</i> ‘eat’		
<i>ve-il</i>	‘be able to make/do’ from <i>ve</i> ‘do’		

Table 12.3. Verbs which appear to exhibit an older nuclear serial construction

In ability constructions, the subject of the complement is co-referential with the subject of the matrix clause. The complement is obligatorily marked for irrealis mood, regardless of the mood or polarity of the ability CTP.

(12.68) *Ni-rongil me nib-lav nitvilam ang*
 1REAL:SG-can just 1IRR:SG-get mat ANA
 ‘I could just get the mat’ [NVKI04.45]

(12.69) *Ni-lele, ni-rongil si nim-dum im-kher*
 1REAL:SG-small 1REAL:SG-can NEG 1IRR:SG-run 3IRR:SG-strong
 ‘I was small, I couldn’t run strongly.’ [NVKI03.33]

When the CTP is marked for irrealis mood, it readily occurs with negative polarity as illustrated in (12.70). Only once in the text corpus does it appear with positive polarity; language consultants were unwilling to reproduce the mood pattern exemplified in (12.71) below, preferring the mood pattern of (12.68) to refer to acts of ability located after the reference/speech time.

(12.70) *Ib-rongil si im-bbuv-lu niat*
 3IRR:SG-can NEG 3IRR:SG-blow-COMPL Sago.Palm
 ‘It was not able to blow away the Sago Palm thatch.’ [NVDL01.08]

(12.71) *I-rongil im-bbuorvor im-siskham me*
 3IRR:SG-can 3IRR:SG-sit 3IRR:SG-individually just
 ‘He will be able to sit by himself.’ [NVDL09.37]

12.4.6. Desiderative predicates

There are three predicates that appear in the corpus with the meaning ‘want’. These are *ver*, *rongrong* and *rongrokh*. All three predicates take complements marked for irrealis mood. There are no instances of the desiderative predicates

with negative polarity in the corpus. The meaning ‘not want’ is expressed with a separate lexical item *rosikh* discussed in §12.4.7. below.

The first desiderative predicate, *ver*, is also employed as an utterance predicate meaning ‘say’. A similar pairing of functions is shared with other central Malakula languages. Pearce, (pers. comm.) describes the form *vra* used to express both ‘say’ and ‘want’ in Unua. Crowley (2006b) notes the form *ver* used to express both ‘say’ and ‘intend to’ in Naman. *Va* has the same dual function in Avava (Crowley 2006a:174) and *vwer* is the cognate form in Neve‘ei (Crowley & Musgrave, unpublished manuscript:158). Foley (pers. comm.) notes that the same pairing of functions is common of Papuan languages also.

When *ver* is used as a desiderative predicate, it does not permit a nominal object. It is only found with sentence-like complements exclusively marked for irrealis mood. Example (12.72) displays an example with separate subject arguments in the matrix clause and complement; (12.73) displays a complement with a subject argument that is co-referential with the subject argument of the matrix clause.

(12.72) *Ga i-ver netas abit-leb ei ing.*
 and 3REAL:SG-want fish 3IRR:PL-carry 3SG EXCL
 ‘And he wanted the fish to carry him!’ [NVKS04.21: 130.989]

(12.73) *Mang i-ver me im-delmus ar*
 man:ANA 3REAL:SG-want just 3IRR:SG-whip 3NSG
 ‘The man just wanted/intended to whip them.’ [NVKS05.27: 151.299]

The predicate *(rong)rong* is also used desideratively. This predicate is quite rare in the corpus, attested primarily in the speech of Limap community members. It is a feature of younger speakers from this village. With this meaning, the predicate *(rong)rong* is not attested with a nominal object and like the desiderative *ver* ‘want’, it only occurs with sentence-like complements marked for irrealis mood.

(12.74) *Be i-okh ku-rongrong i-na*
 but PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-DUP-want PSNPR-1SG
nib-lav i-okh
 1IRR:SG-get PSNPR-2SG
 ‘But do you want me to marry you?’ [NVKS02.20]

(12.75) *An an i-rong me i-mdas*
 DEMSPN NMOD 3REAL:SG-want just 3IRR:SG-go.down
vere, i-das vere
 outside 3REAL:SG-go.down outside
 ‘The one who just wanted to go outside went outside.’ [NVKI28.30:
 111.684]

The third desiderative form is *rongrok* (also attested as *rongrokh*). This form is most commonly attested with a nominal object ‘want s.t.’, although it can also occur with a sentence-like complement.

(12.76) *At-rongrok abit-khitkhit netval-bratn*
 3REAL:PL-want 3IRR:PL-DUP-see cloth-real
 ‘They wanted to see traditional woven cloth.’ [NVKI22.8]

(12.77) *Khavut tro i-git tuan git*
 husband old PSNPR-1IN:NSG LOCPSN 1IN:NSG
i-rongrok ib-lav nibbwas
 3REAL:SG-want 3IRR:SG-get male.pig
 ‘A man from our area/village wanted to get a pig.’ [NVKI25.74:
 456.995]

12.4.7. Anti-desiderative predicates

The anti-desiderative CTP *rosikh* ‘not want’ is the antonym of the desiderative verbs described in §12.4.6. As with almost all forms marked morphologically for negative polarity, this lexical negative requires an irrealis complement. It is incompatible with overt negative morphology.

(12.78) *Ave! Na ni-rosikh kub-lav na*
 No! 1SG 1REAL:SG-not.want 2IRR:SG-get 1SG
 ‘No! I don’t want you to marry me.’ [NVKS02.21]

(12.79) *Mang i-ver ‘Ave! Ni-rosikh*
 man-ANA 3REAL:SG-say No! 1REAL:SG-not.want

nim-te nida.'

1IRR:SG-hit mother

'The man said, 'No! I don't want to kill mother.'" [NVKS11.72]

Although the CTP *rosikh* is not attested in the text corpus with irrealis mood, language consultants provided the following construction demonstrating irrealis mood in the matrix clause.

(12.80) *Maran nib-rosikh nim-te nibarbar ang.*

tomorrow 1IRR:SG-not.want 1IRR:SG-hit pig ANA

'Tomorrow, I won't want to kill the pig.' [NVKW08.39]

The anti-desiderative CTP is most commonly attested with a sentence-like complement and no complementiser; however, it is also attested in the text corpus with the complementiser *il*, illustrated in (12.81) below. In this particular example, the subject of the CTP is different from the subject of the complement. Because both are third person singular, it may be that the complementiser functions iconically to separate out the arguments of the CTP and its complement and thus to avoid ambiguity. Another switch-subject construction is presented in (12.78) above, but in that example, there is a contrast of person which prevents ambiguity from arising.

(12.81) *I-rosikh il im-khan ei*

3REAL:SG-not.want COMP 3IRR:SG-eat 3SG

'He didn't want it to eat him.' [NVKS12.64]

12.4.8. Achievement predicates

The positive achievement predicates *setta* ‘remember’ and *sisien* ‘decide’, along with the negative achievement predicates *setvun* ‘forget’ and *kretikh* ‘try to make’, take an irrealis complement introduced by a complementiser. The achievement predicates in Neverver are typical of conversational language; they occur infrequently in the text corpus. The commentary below is based on elicited material.

Setta ‘remember’ is a positive achievement predicate that appears to share its morphology with its negative counterpart *setvun* ‘forget’. **Set* however, does not appear independently in the corpus and is not considered to be separable from the remainder of the verb by language consultants.

Setta ‘remember’ is attested only with nominal objects in the text corpus. In elicitation sessions however, language consultants produced instances of *setta* in a complement construction of the form ‘remember to do x’. Constructions with the meaning ‘remember that ...’ with past time reference could not be elicited. In elicited complement constructions, the complement of *setta* is introduced by *il*, followed by a complement marked for irrealis mood.

(12.82) *Na ni-setta il nib-lav nisib*
1SG 1REAL:SG-remember COMP 1IRR:SG-get knife
‘I will remember to take the knife.’ [NVE21.33]

(12.83) *Na ni-setta il nim-khalkhal nimdali ang*
1SG 1REAL:SG-remember COMP 1IRR:SG-close door ANA
‘I will remember to close the door.’ [NVE21.34]

In example (12.82), the CTP is marked for realis mood and the complement is marked for irrealis. According to language consultants, when the speaker utters this construction, they are not yet in possession of their knife. Likewise, in (12.83) the door in question is still open at the time of speech.

- (12.84) ?*Na ni-setta si il nib-lav*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-remember NEG COMP 1IRR:SG-get
nisib t-na.
 knife PSDT-1SG
 ‘I did not/will not remember to take the knife.’ [NVKW08.66]

Example (12.84) was suggested as a way of negating *setta* in one elicitation session, but it is unclear whether this is actually a possible construction for a native speaker of Neverver. The construction was not duplicated by other speakers on separate occasions, and there is an issue of temporal ambiguity. It appears to be the case that *setta* ‘remember to’ is inherently forward-looking in temporal reference and inherently positive in meaning. Negative meanings are expressed with the antonym *setvun* ‘forget’.

Constructions with *setta* marked for irrealis mood were also proposed, although these invariably involved nominal objects rather than sentential complements as in (12.85) below. Example (12.86), with a nominal object rather than a sentential complement, readily accepts negative polarity.

(12.85) *Kum-setta mad-ikh kaliko t-na*
 2IRR:SG-remember EMPH-APPL cloth PSDT-1SG
 ‘Remember my cloth!’ [NVKW08.68]

(12.86) *Ei i-kkan i-setta si na.*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-eat 3REAL:SG-remember NEG 1SG
 ‘He ate without thinking of me.’ [NVE20.19]

Sisien ‘decide’ is the second positive achievement predicate in Neverver.
 Like *setta* ‘remember’, *sisien* takes an irrealis complement. It is attested in the
 text corpus both with and without the complementiser *il*.

(12.87) *Baga i-sisien mej il im-bbu im-tav*
 then 3REAL:SG-decide IMM COMP 3IRR:SG-go 3IRR:SG-spear
nakhavikh ang.
 Malay.apple ANA
 ‘Then, she decided to go and spear the Nakhavikh fruit.’
 [NVKS26.16: 77.233]

(12.88) *I-sisien im-bbu, i-vu*
 3REAL:SG-decide 3IRR:SG-go 3REAL:SG-go
 ‘He decided to go and he went.’ [NVKI06.35]

As a CTP, *sisien* can carry irrealis mood, as (12.89) and (12.90) illustrate.

- (12.89) *ibi-sber dran an... im-sisien il*
 3IRR:SG-reach TMPPN NMOD 3IRR:SG-decide COMP
im-bbuer te im-bbue-bir
 3IRR:SG-say COMP 3IRR:SG-do-win
 ‘...until the time when... he will decide to say that he has to repay
 (the ceremony).’ [NVKI05.56]

- (12.90) *Kum-bbue niskhan kum-sisien kum-bbue*
 2IRR:SG-do what 2IRR:SG-decide 2IRR:SG-do
 ‘Do whatever you decide to do.’ [NVKI12.77]

The negative achievement predicate *setvun* ‘forget’ is quite consistently attested with the subordinator *il* serving as a complementiser. When *setvun* has positive polarity, its complement is marked for irrealis mood.

- (12.91) *Na ni-setvun il nib-lem navuj ang*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-forget COMP 1IRR:SG-carry banana ANA
lon nokhos ang
 LOC garden ANA
 ‘I forgot to get the bananas from the garden.’ [NVE21.01]

Setvun can also occur in clauses with negative polarity. Although the proposition encoded in the complement did actually occur, the complement is marked for irrealis mood.

- (12.92) *Na ni-setvun si il nib-lav nakhatkhat*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-forget NEG COMP 1IRR:SG-get basket
t-na
 PSDT-1SG
 ‘I didn’t forget to get my basket.’ [NVKW08.60]
 (= ‘I got my basket’)

Setvun ‘forget’ is attested with irrealis mood in the matrix clause in a number of elicited constructions.

- (12.93) *Na nim-setvun il nib-lav nakhatkhat t-na.*
 1SG 1IRR:SG-forget COMP 1IRR:SG-get basket PSDT-1SG
 ‘I will forget to get my basket.’ [NVKW08.62]

- (12.94) *Na ni-rongil si nim-setvun il nim-bbuer-ikh.*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-can NEG 1IRR:SG-forget COMP 1IRR:SG-say-APPL
 ‘I won't forget to tell him.’ [NVE21.30]

The second negative achievement predicate *kretikh* ‘try to make’ fits semantically into the category of manipulative or causative predicates discussed in §12.4.3. above. The focus of *kretikh* is on failed causation while the focus of *ve* ‘make’ is on successful causation. In Neverver however, *kretikh* patterns as an achievement predicate with an irrealis complement introduced by the complementiser *il*. For this reason, it is included the achievement sub-category.

Although *kretikh* occurs in daily conversation, there are no spontaneous text examples in the recorded material. The example constructions below were

produced during separate elicitation sessions. Attempts to elicit constructions with *kretikh* marked for irrealis mood were unsuccessful. The CTP is inherently irrealis in meaning.

- (12.95) *Na ni-kretikh ei il im-khan*
 1SG 1REAL:SG-try.to.make 3SG COMP 3IRR:SG-eat
nivri ang
 crab ANA
 ‘I tried to make him eat the crab.’ [NVE28.38]

- (12.96) *Ei i-kretikh si na il nim-khan nivri*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-try.to.make NEG 1SG COMP 1IRR:SG-eat crab
 ‘She didn’t try to make me eat crab.’ [NVKW08.56]

In constructions with *kretikh*, the argument that serves as the subject of the complement clause is co-referential with the object of the matrix clause. This co-referential argument is overtly expressed in the matrix clause and then encoded in the subject/mood prefix of the complement. There are no examples of an overt pronominal subject in the complement, following the complementiser. This patterning is shared with propositional attitude predicates.

12.4.9. Phasal predicates (ingression)

The Bislama form *stait(em)* ‘start’ appears frequently alongside the indigenous form *tabatn* with the same meaning, to express ingression. Both forms of the ingressive CTP are attested in a complement construction with an optional complement, as well as being attested in nuclear serial verb

constructions. One option is for the CTP to take the complementiser *il* with an irrealis complement. Example (12.97) displays the indigenous CTP in this construction, while (12.98) displays the borrowed form.

(12.97) *Ga i-tabatn il im-bbue niar*
 then 3REAL:SG-start COMP 3IRR:SG-make fence
 ‘Then, he started to make the fence.’ [NVKS10.17]

(12.98) *Ba nidam i-stait il im-tokh*
 when yam 3REAL:SG-start COMP 3IRR:SG-PROG
im-tev
 3IRR:SG-begin.to.grow
 ‘When the yams begin growing,...’ [NVDL07.12]

Example (12.99) below displays a complement construction without the complementiser *il*. Mood marking in the complement however, remains irrealis.

(12.99) *Baga i-stait im-sisil*
 then 3REAL:SG-start 3IRR:SG-DUP-burn
 ‘Then he started burning (his garden).’ [NVKS10.21]

The ingressive verbs are attested more frequently in core serial verb constructions with concordant mood marking, as illustrated in (12.100).

- (12.100) *Ni-ssor-ian ang i-tabatn i-gang*
 NPR-talk-NSF ANA 3REAL:SG-start 3REAL:SG-like.so
 ‘The story started like so.’ [NVKS10.03]

12.4.10. Utterance predicates

Utterance predicates form a distinct sub-class of CTPs in Neverver, displaying two important characteristics. Firstly, in the class of utterance predicates, the mood of the complement is completely independent of the mood of the matrix clause. The category of utterance predicates is the only CTP category with independent mood marking in the complement. All others involve dependent mood marking of some sort. Secondly, utterance CTPs optionally carry the complementiser *t(e)*. The use of the complementiser varies in the speech of individuals but there is a general tendency for older speakers to use *t(e)* more frequently than younger speakers.

The most commonly attested utterance predicate is the verb *ver* ‘say’. This predicate functions to report speech, introducing direct and indirect statements, commands and questions. In examples (12.101) to (12.104), declarative constructions with and without complementisers are illustrated. Realis mood is found in both the CTP and complement in this set of constructions.

- (12.101) Direct declarative statement with complementiser
- | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| <i>Baga</i> | <i>nida</i> | <i>titi</i> | <i>i-ver</i> | <i>te</i> |
| then | mother | 3PS:SG | 3REAL:SG-say | COMP |

‘Lesien at-uv lon nokhos.’

Lesien 3REAL:PL-go LOC garden

‘Then his mother said ‘Lesien and them went to the garden.’’

[NVKS09.62]

(12.102) Direct declarative statement with bare complement

Barnakh man Vajarikh at-ver ‘Kat-te

now man Vajarikh 3REAL:PL-say 2REAL:PL-hit

mokh ij mam

all ANT 1EX:NSG

‘Now, the men of Vansarikh said ‘You have beaten us all.’’

[NVKI10.18]

(12.103) Indirect declarative statement with complementiser

Ei i-ver te i-khitrokh mang

3SG 3REAL:SG-say COMP 3REAL:sg-see man:ANA

adr ati-vkhal

PL 3REAL:PL-fight

‘He_i said that he_i saw the men fight.’ [NVKW08.6]

(12.104) Indirect declarative statement with bare complement

I-ver-ikh na i-ver nimokhmokh ang

3REAL:SG-say-APPL 1SG 3REAL:SG-say female ANA

i-vu ij.

3REAL:SG-go ANT

‘He told me that the woman has gone.’ [NVE24.35]

In examples (12.101) to (12.103) above, there is no (recipient-like) experiencer argument encoded explicitly. In order to express an experiencer, core serial construction is used with the form V1-UTTERANCE + EXPERIENCER + V2-UTTERANCE. This construction is illustrated in (12.104) above and in (12.105) below.

(12.105) *Ga ni-ver-ikh ei ni-ver ‘O! Na*
and 1REAL:SG-say-APPL 3SG 1REAL:SG-say Oh 1SG
ni-rongil si’
1REAL:SG-know NEG

‘Then I said to him, ‘Oh, I don’t know.’’ [NVDL03.05]

The utterance predicate *ver* can also be used to report direct and indirect commands. Imperative constructions have obligatory irrealis mood, independent of the mood of the CTP.

(12.106) Direct imperative with complementiser

Ar-ver te ‘Kum-bbu kubi-tn nidam anjakh
3REAL:DL-say COMP 2IRR:SG-go 2IRR:SG-roast yam this

kum-khan adr'

2IRR:SG-eat 3NSG

'They said 'Go and roast these yams and eat them.' [NVKS15.36]

(12.107) Direct imperative with bare complement

I-ver 'Ale, kum-bbus im-bbulem!'

3REAL:SG-say alright 2IRR:SG-carry 3IRR:SG-come

'She said 'Okay, you bring him.' [NVKS08.41]

No example of an indirect imperative with a complementiser has been identified in the corpus as yet.

In the example below, an utterance serial construction appears, with the experiencer argument expressed as the object of V1, and the sentential complement expressed as the object of V2.

(12.108) Indirect imperative with bare complement

Ei_i i-ver-ikh ei_{ii} i-ver ei_{ii}

3SG 3REAL:SG-say-APPL 3SG 3REAL:SG-say 3SG

im-bbuvu si.

3IRR:SG-DUP-go NEG

'He told him not to go.' [NVE24.33]

Additionally, *ver* 'say' is used to report direct and indirect questions. A range of realis and irrealis encodings are found in the examples below.

(12.109) Direct interrogative with complementiser

I-sus *adr* *i-ver* *te* ‘*Gam*

3REAL:SG-ask 3NSG 3REAL:SG-say COMP 2NSG

kat-uv *abi* *kati-vlem* *ang?’*

2REAL:PL-go where 2REAL:PL-come ANA

‘He asked them, ‘Where did you come from?’’ [NVKS14.41]

(12.110) Direct interrogative with bare complement

Nar-rodrok *nida* *tokhtokh* *i-ver* ‘*Ei!*

1EX:REAL:DL-hear mother big 3REAL:SG-say Hey!

kabr-uv *abi?’*

2IRR:DL-go where

‘We heard our aunty say ‘Hey, where are you going?’’ [NVCV02.39:
224.325]

(12.111) *I-ver* ‘*Ga* *nim-bbuer* *niskhan?’*

3REAL:SG-say then 1IRR:SG-say what

‘He said, ‘Then what will I say?’’ [NVKI06.31]

As was the case with indirect imperatives, no example of an indirect interrogative with a complementiser has been identified in the corpus as yet. This suggests that there is a restriction that prohibits complementisers from occurring with indirect imperative and interrogative constructions. According to language consultants, this restriction does not extend to indirect declaratives such as that presented in (12.103).

(12.112) Indirect interrogative with bare complement

I-sus-ikh *adr* *i-ver* *ar*
3REAL:SG-ask-APPL 3NSG 3REAL:SG-say 3NSG
amt-uv *abi*
3IRR:PL-go where

‘He asked them where they were going.’ [NVKS14.49]

In addition to supplying the experiencer argument, the utterance serial construction can also be used to provide more information about the specific nature of the utterance. *Sus* ‘ask’, *kke* ‘call out’, and *yer* ‘sing’ can all fill the V1 position. None of these predicates is complement-taking; each must serialise in order to express direct or indirect speech. Example (12.112) displays a construction of this kind with *sus* ‘ask’ followed by *ver*, and an indirect question. (12.113) displays the verb *kke* ‘call out’ with an indirect command while (12.114) displays the verb *yer* ‘sing’. This final example is followed by a song in the recording.

(12.113) *Ari-kke-kh* *ar-ver* *im-das*
3REAL:DL-call-APPL 3REAL:DL-say 3IRR:SG-go.down
‘They called him to come down.’ [NVKS27.39: 230.479]

(12.114) *Ba* *mang* *adr* *ati-vlem,* *at-yer*
when man:ANA PL 3REAL:PL-come 3REAL:PL-sing

at-ver *i-gang*

3REAL:PL-say 3REAL:SG-like.so

‘When the men came, they sang like so...’ [NVKI19.22: 93.665]

In addition to *ver* ‘say’, there are two other CTPs that are used to report speech. They are restricted to reporting direct internal speech or thoughts. These additional CTPS are *rot* ‘sense’ and *prok* ‘listen’. *Rot* is most commonly used as a sensory perception predicate, but can also be used to report the internal thoughts of person who is encoded as its grammatical subject.

(12.115) *At-rot* ‘*O! I-rvikh*’.

3REAL:PL-sense Oh 3REAL:SG-good

‘They thought ‘Oh! It’s good.’’ [NVKS02.158]

(12.116) *I-rot* ‘*Nimbbue ibi-tmakh?*’

3REAL:SG-sense 1IRR:SG-do 3IRR:SG-how

‘He wondered ‘How can I do this?’’ [NVKS12.37]

Prok (also attested as the reduplicated form *poprok*) is generally used as an intransitive verb meaning ‘listen’. Like *rot* ‘sense’, it is also attested as an utterance predicate followed by a complement encoding the direct speech (or thoughts) of the speaker. Like other utterance predicates, the mood of the complement is independent of the mood of the matrix clause, with irrealis mood assigned to complements that encode events following the reference time, and realis mood assigned complements that encode actions concurrent with or prior to the reference time.

- (12.117) *I-vor i-prok ‘O! Mang adr*
 3REAL:SG-sit 3REAL:SG-listen Oh man:ANA PL
ati-vlem mej ing’
 3REAL:PL-come IMM EXCL
 ‘He sat and thought ‘Oh! The men have just come!’ [NVKI06.57]

12.5. Nominalised complements

Nominalised complements, where a noun is derived from a verb stem with the addition of nominalising morphology (see §3.7.), occur in a range of positions in the clause. They contrast with sentence-like complements, which are restricted to object position.

- (12.118) Nominalisation as subject
Dran i-skham tue, ne-maur-ian i-is
 TMPPN 3REAL:SG-one before NPR-live-NSF 3REAL:SG-bad
bbutakh
 too.much
 ‘One time before, life was terrible. [NVCT07.05: 18.228]

- (12.119) Nominalisation as object
Nim-bbu nibi-llang ni-kkan-ian git.’
 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-look.for.s.t. NPR-eat-NSF 1IN:NSG
 ‘I’m going to look for some food for us/our food.’ [NVKS26.06:
 32.067]

(12.120) Nominalisation as prepositional object

Nib-ruv lon ne-maj-ian ang

1IN:IRR:DL-go LOC NPR-perform.ceremony-NSF ANA

il nibir-sav

PURPOSE 1IN:IRR:DL-perform.dance

‘We'll go to the dancing ground to perform a dance.’ [NVKS23.07:

44.236]

Nominalisations behave like other nominal heads and can take a range of post-nominal modifiers. They do not however, nominalise with any post-verbal modifiers.

(12.121) Nominalisation modified by NMOD

ni-kkan-ian an i-mrekh ‘food that was raw’

ni-jal-jal-ian an netas ‘sickness of (caused by) fish’ from *jal*

‘be sick’

(12.122) Nominalisation modified by quantifier

ni-kkan-ian balian ‘all the food’ from *kkan* ‘eat’

(12.123) Nominalisation modified by number relative clause (indefinite)

ni-si-sien-ian i-skham ‘an idea, decision’ from *sien* ‘think’,

sisien ‘decide’

(12.124) Nominalisation modified by lexical modifier (stative verb)

<i>ne-maur-ian</i>	<i>viva</i>	‘new life’ from <i>maur</i> ‘live’; <i>viva</i> ‘new’
<i>no-ssor-ian</i>	<i>lele</i>	‘short story’ from <i>ssor</i> ‘speak’; <i>lele</i> ‘small’

(12.125) Nominalisation modified by demonstrative determiner

<i>ne-ver-ian</i>	<i>anjing</i>	‘that work’ from <i>ver</i> ‘work’
<i>ne-ver-ian</i>	<i>ang</i>	‘the work’

The only argument that may occur with a nominalised complement is the agent. It is expressed as a possessor, following the nominalised head. Person and number features (and where relevant gender) of the possessor are usually also copied to the front of the complement, so that the agent is expressed as a pronoun or pronominal-noun preceding the nominalisation. The fronting of possessor copies is a common pattern in Neverver, noted also in §5.1.1. Examples of fronted possessors in nominalised complements are displayed in examples (12.126) to (12.128).

The examples of nominalisations presented in this section (and also in §3.7) typically involve intransitive verb stems. Transitive verb stems undergo detransitive reduplication when nominalised. Nominalisation thus involves low or reduced transitivity. Patient arguments that may be associated with a transitive stem are always suppressed in a nominalised complement.

(12.126) *I-rongil si mang no-ssor-ian titi.*
 3REAL:SG-know NEG man:ANA language 3PS:SG
 ‘She didn’t know the man, his language.’ [NVKS14.28]

(12.127) *Ar-khan mang ni-kkan-ian titi er.*
 3REAL:DL-eat man:ANA NPR-eat-NSF 3PS:SG PL
 ‘They ate all the man, his food.’ [NVKS05.09: 45.873]

(12.128) *Ei ni-rongrok-ian titi i-ve netan*
 3SG NPR-want-NSF 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-make thing:DEF
i-rvikh aran git ne-maur-ian git.
 3REAL:SG-good LOC.on 1IN:NSG NPR-live-NSF 1IN:NSG
 ‘He, his love makes/does good things in us, our lives.’ [NVCT04.43:
 159.028]

Chapter Thirteen

Clausal Juncture and Inter-Propositional Relations

In this section, complex constructions containing two distinct clauses that bear some relationship to each other are described. The relationships that clauses may bear are explored in §13.1.; the morpho-syntactic and prosodic features of these relationships are described in §13.2. Syntactically, one clause may depend on another or it may stand independently. Subordinating constructions include adverbial subordinate clauses, presented in §13.3., and subordinating tail-head linkage, presented in §13.4. Two independent clauses may combine through coordination, described in §13.5., or through simple juxtaposition (labelled prosodic conjunction in this work), described in §13.6. The intersections between forms of juncture and meanings expressed by those forms are summarised in §13.7.

13.1. Relationships between clauses

Two clauses can stand in a syntactic relationship. This may involve a tight syntactic relationship between the clauses, or a looser syntactic relationship. In Neverver, three main relationships can be observed. These relationships comprise subordination, including adverbial subordination and subordinating tail-head linkage, syndetic coordination, and prosodic conjunction. The three relationships reflect a continuum of juncture between clauses.

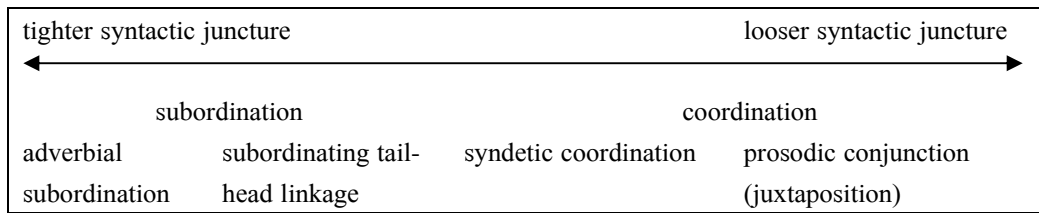


Figure 13.1. Continuum of syntactic juncture in Neverver

The language-specific continuum of syntactic juncture proposed for Neverver in Figure 13.1. above is similar to more general continua of syntactic integration proposed for example, by Payne (1997:307; 2006:289), and Crowley (2002a:18). In Neverver, the continuum can be extended to include other tight syntactic junctures. Complement constructions (chapter twelve), core serial verb constructions (chapter eleven), and nuclear serial verb constructions (chapter ten) all display increasingly tight syntactic junctures. The relative clause, another type of subordinate clause, is discussed in an earlier section on nominal modification (see chapter five).

When two clauses are joined in one of the constructions above, they are related syntactically and/or prosodically. At the same time, the propositions (events, actions or states, and their participants) encoded in the two clauses are related semantically (cf. inter-propositional semantic relations as described by Beekman and Callow (1974) and Crombie (1985)). There is not necessarily a one-to-one relationship between syntactic structure and inter-propositional semantic relation. A given syntactic structure can be employed to express a range of inter-propositional semantic relations. For example, Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007, a development of Thompson and Longacre (1985)), in their typological survey of adverbial subordinate clauses, list multiple relations encoded with adverbial subordination. While many individual inter-propositional semantic relations are associated with individual subordinating

morphemes, a single subordinator may also express several different inter-propositional relations.

It is equally possible for a given inter-propositional semantic relation to be encoded in a range of syntactic structures. Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007) also arrive at this conclusion with respect to the various relations that may be encoded in adverbial clauses cross-linguistically:

We are by no means claiming that a relationship which may be signaled by an adverbial subordinate clause in one language must be so signaled in every other language... For example, where one language may signal consecutivity by means of time adverbial clauses, another may do so by means of constructions involving not subordination but coordination or juxtaposition. (Thompson, Longacre & Hwang 2007:240)

Longacre (1985; 2007), in his analysis of the sentence as a unit consisting of multiple clauses, describes a range of semantic notions (for example contrast, causation and conditionality) encoded by several different formal devices, including sentence-medial conjunction, juxtaposition and complementation. In Neverver, each of the syntactic constructions described in this section can encode one or more inter-propositional relation. At the same time, we can observe that there are multiple ways of encoding some of the attested inter-propositional relations.

In keeping with traditional descriptive approaches to language analysis, this chapter is organised around the four sub-types of syntactic juncture evident in Neverver, these being adverbial subordination, subordinating tail-head linkage, syndetic coordination and prosodic conjunction. Each formal structure is then

analyzed in terms of the inter-propositional semantic relations that may be expressed through it.

13.2. Morpho-syntactic features of clausal juncture and intonation

The different types of clausal juncture in Neverver can be identified by their morpho-syntactic features. Adverbial subordinate clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions and may be pre-posed or post-posed to their main clause. Subordinating hail-head linkage is characterised by the repetition of an entire clause, and is often augmented by the use of subordinating morphology and markers of perfect, completive and egressive aspect. Coordinated clauses are linked by a medial conjunction. Prosodic conjunction stands apart because it lacks any overt morpho-syntactic features beyond those associated with independent clauses.

Along with the morpho-syntactic characteristics of clausal juncture, intonation plays an important role in signalling that two clauses stand in a particular relationship. In the case of prosodic conjunction, prosody is the only way of determining that two clauses are connected. Two main types of clausal intonation are relevant to the analysis of clausal juncture. Strongly falling terminal intonation (indicated by \searrow) encompasses at least the final constituent of a given clause and signals the completion of an idea, as well as the termination of a structural unit. Terminal intonation is generally followed by a pause. Non-terminal intonation signals that a proposition encoded in a clause should be interpreted as bearing a relationship to the following clausal unit. Non-terminal intonation involves either rising non-terminal intonation (indicated by \nearrow) or level/falling non-terminal intonation (indicated by \rightarrow). Intonation at the end of

any of the constructions discussed in this chapter depends on whether the clause in question is part of a larger set of ideas as in (13.1) and (13.2), or completes a set of propositions as in (13.3) and (13.4).

(13.1) Adverbial Subordination

Ba i-tn nidam ang i-lav
 when 3REAL:SG-roast yam ANA 3REAL:SG-get
i-lik vinang ↗ vinang i-khan
 3REAL:SG-pass woman:ANA woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-eat
nidam ang i-skham ↗
 yam ANA 3REAL:SG-one

‘When he roasted yams and gave them to the woman, the woman ate one of the yams...’ [NVKS10.104-5]

(13.2) Subordinating tail-head linkage

Ale ni-vu ni-vev lakha ↗, ni-te
 then 1REAL:SG-go 1REAL:SG-go.to bush 1REAL:SG-cut
niat \. Ni-te niat ↗, ni-bir ↗...
 Sago.Palm 1REAL:SG-cut Sago.Palm 1REAL:SG-break

‘I go to the bush and cut Sago Palm leaves. I cut Sago Palm leaves, and then I break them...’ [NVDL06.13-14]

(13.3) Syndetic coordination

Nimkhut lele anjing i-lele me ↗
 man small that 3REAL:SG-small only

be i-vkhal we ↘
but 3REAL:SG-fight AUGCo

‘That wee man is just little but he really fights!’ [NVCV01.28:
438.782]

(13.4) Prosodic conjunction

Nat-tav nibet ↗, nat-khan ↘.
1EX:REAL:PL-spear breadfruit 1EX:REAL:PL-eat

‘We speared breadfruit and ate it.’ F[NVKS07.6: 30.386]

13.3. Adverbial subordination

Relative clauses (chapter five), complement clauses (chapter twelve) and adverbial clauses are all types of subordinate clause in Neverver. Relative clauses occur within a noun phrase and function to modify the head noun; complement clauses function as noun phrases; and adverbial subordinate clauses, function as modifiers of entire propositions (Thompson, Longacre & Hwang 2007). Adverbial subordinate clause can be either pre-posed or post-posed to the main clause. Subordinate clauses are not marked by special verb forms, and they are attested with the same range of aspectual and emphatic markers that occur in main clauses. There is no special word order indicating that a clause is subordinate. Instead, subordinate clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions which provide information about the semantic relationship between the propositions encoded in the main and subordinate clauses.

Most subordinate clauses are separated from main clauses by a slight rise in intonation. When the subordinate clause is located in the left periphery,

intonation rises on the final element of the subordinate clause and there is often a brief pause (signaled by ‘,’) between the subordinate and main clause. When the subordinate clause occurs in the right periphery, non-terminal intonation occurs on the final element of the main clause and any pause between main and subordinate clause is usually very brief.

Subordinating conjunctions, which signal the beginning of a subordinate clause, signal a range of semantic relations between the main and subordinate clause. Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007) group adverbial clauses of time, place and manner together as clauses that may be replaced by an adverb and that share properties with relative clauses. In Neverver, time can be encoded in an adverbial subordinate clause, while place is encoded in a relative subordinate construction (§3.6.; §5.2.6.2.). Manner is not expressed through subordination but rather in the tighter juncture of core verb serialisation (§11.3.3.1.).

13.3.1. Time

There are a number of subordinating conjunctions that signal a temporal relationship between two propositions. Temporal sequence and overlap clauses are introduced with the subordinator *ba* ‘when’. Clauses introduced by *ba* are most often preposed to the main clause, although they are also attested following the main clause. Example (13.5) below displays a temporal adjunct with a nominal head, while examples (13.6) to (13.9) display temporal adverbial subordinate clauses.

(13.5) Temporal sequence

Mitabbukh sakhsakh ↗, *mang i-tur* ↘

morning every man:ANA 3REAL.SG-wake.up

‘Every morning, the man got up’ [NVKS02.3]

(13.6) *Ale, ba i-vu i-khit nida titi*

So when 3REAL:SG-go 3REAL:SG-see mother 3PS:SG

adr-ikh mama titi ↗, *nemat lele ang*

3NSG-APPL father 3PS:SG snake small ANA

i-vu-vor sur ↘

3REAL:SG-go-sit near

‘So, when he went and saw his mother and his father, the small snake went and sat beside him.’ [NVKS12.17: 117.058]

(13.7) *I-ver-ikh i-gang sakhsakh* ↗

3REAL:SG-work-APPL 3REAL:SG-like.so FREQ

ba at-uv Letvur ↘

when 3REAL:PL-go Letvur

‘He always did that when they went to Letvur.’ [NVKS12.13: 87.475]

The temporal sequence subordinator is also attested in the sequence *ba-ver*. *Ba-ver* is optionally followed by the subordinator *t(e)*, which normally introduces complements of the utterance predicate *ver* ‘to say’. This suggests that *ver* in the construction *ba-ver* derives from the utterance predicate, although it is no longer functioning as a verb as it does not take the obligatory

subject/mood prefix. There are no obvious semantic or syntactic differences between clauses introduced by *ba* and those introduced by *ba-ver (t(e))*.

- (13.8) *Ale ba-ver-t i-gang ↗, i-rev-lu*
 so when-say-COMP 3REAL:SG-like.so 3REAL:SG-pull-COMPL
nivinbbu berber ang ↗
 bamboo long ANA
 ‘So, when it was so, he pulled out the long bamboo pole...’
 [NVKS22.27: 168.898]

- (13.9) *Ba-ver-t ar-lav nudukhabb ari-ppul ↗,*
 when-say-COMP 3REAL:DL-get burning.branch 3REAL:DL-wave
ar-khit nias i-jing man ↘
 3REAL:DL-see Tahitian.chestnut 3REAL:SG-lie.down EMPH
 ‘When they got a burning branch and shined it around, they saw the chestnut lying there.’ [NVKS14.33]

- (13.10) Temporal Overlap
Ba i-matur-ling ↗, niterikh ang i-vlem
 when 3REAL:SG-sleep-leave child ANA 3REAL:SG-come
lakhlakh ↗
 quiet
 ‘When he was fast asleep, the child came quietly and...’
 [NVCT06.47: 244.442]

- (13.11) *Ba i-tnga i-sakh arkha ↗, i-khit*
 when 3REAL:SG-search 3REAL:SG-go.up up 3REAL:SG-see
niterikh ang i-vor man arkha ↘
 child ANA 3REAL:SG-sit EMPH up
 ‘When she looked up to the top, she saw the child sitting in the (tree)
 top.’ [NVKS25.16: 61.244]

- (13.12) *Nio ba i-lab→, i-deng*
 river when 3REAL:SG-many 3REAL:SG-pull.out.s.t
nias ang→
 Tahitian.chestnut ANA
 ‘The river, when it was full, it pulled out the Tahitian chestnut
 tree...’ [NVKS14.20]

In most cases when *ba* ‘when’ introduces a subordinate clause, the main clause is unmarked. There are also some instances of the main clause being introduced by the coordinator *be* ‘but’. The morpheme *be* in such constructions seems to be associated with the description of a key narrative event, particularly one that is unexpected or undesirable. Examples (13.13) and (13.14) come from the same story. In (13.13), the octopus is introduced as a malevolent character; in (13.14), the same octopus acts vengefully against the woman who catches it. Like other examples with the subordinator *ba*, *ba...be* constructions express the inter-propositional semantic relation of temporal sequence.

(13.13) *Ba... be...* for unexpected/undesirable events

Nida titi ↗ ba i-ver i-tvis
 mother 3PS:SG when 3REAL:SG-want 3REAL:SG-look.DIR
i-vu, ↗ be i-khitrokh nokhowit i-skham
 3REAL:SG-go but 3REAL:SG-see octopus 3REAL:SG-one
i-tokh man lon nitusu ang
 3REAL:SG-exist EMPH LOC sea ANA

‘Her mother, when she looked around, she saw an octopus right there in the sea.’ [NVKS20.22: 110.665]

(13.14) *Ba nida i-ver ibi-vles lon*

when mother 3REAL:SG-want 3IRR:SG-fill.laplap LOC
nolong ang ↗ be nokhowit ang i-lav nida ↗
 laplap ANA but octopus ANA 3REAL:SG-get mother
i-jik mej ang lon nolong, ↗ i-yas
 3REAL:SG-put IMM ANA LOC laplap 3REAL:SG-bake
lon nevat ↘.

LOC stone

‘When the (child’s) mother wanted to put the meat on the laplap, the octopus grabbed the mother and put her on the laplap and baked her on the stones.’ [NVKS20.57: 266.557]

The *ba... be* construction is associated with temporally sequenced narrative events in (13.13) and (13.14). Interestingly, we find that this same construction can be used with actions marked for progressive aspect. Example (13.15)

displays the overlap between two events presented as being underway or in progress.

- (13.15) *Ba i-tokh i-patel i-gang ↗*
 when 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-paddle 3REAL:SG-like.so
be nibisbokh ang tu ↗, i-tokh i-khan
 but rat ANA too 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-eat
nauj ang ↘.
 pawpaw ANA
 ‘When he was paddling like so, the rat too was eating the pawpaw.’
 [NVKS04.11: 77.458]

Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007:244) observe that time adverbial clauses, along with manner and place clauses, ‘tend to take the form of, or share properties with, relative clauses’. A relative clause construction with the temporal pronominal-noun *dran* ‘time’ as its head can also indicate temporal sequence and temporal overlap. In examples (13.16) and (13.17), the temporal pronominal-noun *dran* serves as the head of an adverbial phrase. In (13.16), *dran* is modified by a number relative clause with *i-skham* ‘one’.⁶⁴

- (13.16) *Dran i-skham ↗, nimokhmokh ang khavut titi*
 TMPPN 3REAL:SG-one female ANA husband 3PS:SG

⁶⁴ An embedded amplification relation is also present in this example, in the utterance complement construction, where the reported speech amplifies the utterance predicate.

(13.18) Temporal sequence marking ‘before’

Varikh nibit-khan ↗ git ngatian nimti-vlem
 TEMPPROX 1IN:IRR:PL-eat 1IN:NSG many 1IN:IRR:PL-come
nibit-khit-khit nokhon git lon mira an na
 1IN:IRR:PL-DUP-look face 1IN:NSG LOC mirror NMOD 1SG
ni-vul tjakh
 1REAL:SG-buy here

‘Just before we eat, all of us will come and look at our faces in the mirror that I bought here.’ NVCT02.29: 137.404]

13.3.2. Event/state location

When the location of an event or state is expressed, a relative subordinate construction can be used. Place phrases are headed by the locative pronominal-noun *kut* ‘the place’ and display the resumptive pronoun *ye* in the position where a local noun would typically appear in a main clause. The construction is terminated with the anaphoric determiner *ang*. There is no separate adverbial subordinator of place. When the place phrase is pre-posed to the main clause, it is separated by rising non-terminal intonation. When the place phrase is post-posed to the main clause, it is uttered within the intonation contour of the main clause.

(13.19) *Kut an ar ar-lukh ye ang, ↗ noto*
 LOCPN NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:DL-live RSPN ANA chook

at-ve *nigovin* *ar*

3REAL:PL-make egg PL

‘At the place where they(2) lived, hens laid their eggs.’ [NVKS19.4:
283.499]

(13.20) *Nar-uv* *kut* *an* *okh* *ku-ver*

1EX:REAL:DL-go LOCPN NMOD 2SG 2REAL:SG-say

nabr-uv-uv *si* *ye* *ang*

1EX:IRR:DL-DUP-go NEG RSPN ANA

‘We went to the place where you said we mustn't go!’ [NVKS20.55:
260.351]

13.3.3. Reason/purpose

In Neverver, the subordinating conjunction *il* introduces clauses of reason and purpose. The dual function of *il* in Neverver fits with Thompson, Longacre and Hwang’s (2007:251) observation that in many languages, reason and purpose share the same morphology. Beekman and Callow (1974:300; also Crombie 1985:19-20) suggest an explanation for this, by way of their categorisation of reason (Reason-Result) and purpose (Means-Purpose) as two subtypes of the general cause-effect semantic relation. Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007) claim that the main difference between reason and purpose clauses relates to their realisation:

They differ in that the purpose clauses express a motivating event which must be *unrealized* at the time of the main event, while reason clauses express a motivating event which may be *realized* at the time of the main

clause event. In most languages, even those that use the same morphology for signalling purpose and reason, then, there will be different marking to signal the unrealized status of the purpose clause versus the realized status of the reason clause. (Thompson, Longacre & Hwang 2007:250-1)

In Neverver, purpose clauses carry obligatory irrealis mood marking, while reason clauses are generally marked for realis mood.

Subordinate *il*-reason clauses are generally post-posed to their main clause. Intonation is not always a salient feature of these constructions. Some subordinate clauses are uttered within the same intonation contour as the main clause (as in example (13.25)); some main clauses have non-terminal rising intonation (example (13.26)); and other main clauses carry non-terminal falling intonation (examples (13.27) and (13.28)). When the main clause is marked with falling intonation, there are cases where the reason is clearly added as an afterthought, and terminal falling intonation on the afterthought subordinate clause involves a significant drop from the falling intonation of the main clause (example (13.28)).

(13.21) Result *il*-Reason

<i>Niterikh</i>	<i>lele</i>	<i>ang</i>	<i>i-salgar</i>	<i>we</i>
child	small	ANA	3REAL:SG-be.glad	AUG.CO

i-salgar *il* *i-khit* *i-maur.*
 3REAL:SG-be.glad CAUSE 3REAL:SG-see 3REAL:SG-live
 ‘The child was so glad because he saw it lived.’ [NVKS31.10:
 64.425]

(13.22) *Ei i-vus* *man(d)-ikh* *nisvis-bratn* *titi* ↗ *il*
 3SG 3REAL:SG-carry EMPH-APPL bow-REAL 3PS:SG CAUSE
i-lis-ikh *dran* *nevkhal* *im-lav* *ei.*
 3REAL:SG-afraid-APPL TMPPN fight 3IRR:SG-get 3SG
 ‘He had to carry his bow and arrow, because he was afraid if a fight
 would overcome him.’ [NVKS02.55-6]

(13.23) *Niterikh* *adr-ikh* *nida* *titi* *ar-mas*
 child 3NSG-APPL mother 3PS 3REAL:DL-dead
i-krut → *il* *adr* *ar-uv*
 3REAL:SG-two.together CAUSE 3NSG 3REAL:DL-go
ar-ev *kut* *ttis* *ang.* ↘
 3REAL:DL-go.to LOCPN holy ANA
 ‘The child and her mother both died, because they went to the
 forbidden place.’ [NVKS26.45: 206.909]

(13.24) *Be* *niterikh-vidro* *ang* *i-ssor* *si* ↘ *il*
 but pre-adolescent.girl ANA 3REAL:SG-talk NEG PURPOSE

i-rongil *si* *mang* *no-ssor-ian* *titi*. ↘ ↘
 3REAL:SG-know NEG man:ANA NPR-talk-NSF 3PS:SG
 ‘The girl didn't talk (because she didn't know the man's language).’
 [NVKS14.28]

Subordinate *il*-purpose clauses can also be post-posed to their main clause. The main clause is quite consistently marked with rising non-terminal intonation, as examples (13.25) to (13.29) below show. Examples (13.26) and (13.27) each display two subordinate *il*- purpose clauses.

(13.25) Means *il*-purpose

Ati-vlem *lon* *nidong* ↗ *il* *abit-lav*
 3REAL:PL-come LOC mangrove.swamp PURPOSE 3IRR:PL-get
nivri ↘
 crab
 ‘They came to the mangrove swamp to get crabs.’ [NVKS17.80]

(13.26) *Ale, at-lav* *mej* *nakharevran* *adr* ↗ *il*

then 3REAL:PL-get IMM wing 3NSG PURPOSE
abit-jik ↗ *il* *abit-yal* *mej* *ing*
 3IRR:PL-put PURPOSE 3IRR:PL-fly IMM EXCL

‘They got their wings to put on to fly away.’ [NVKS18.18: 87.724]

(13.27) *Nida* *titi* *i-vlem* *mej* ↗ *il* *ib-lav*

mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-come IMM PURPOSE 3IRR:SG-get

nokhowit ang ↗ il ibi-vles lon
 octopus ANA PURPOSE 3IRR:SG-fill.laplap LOC
nolong ang.
 laplap ANA

‘Her mother came to get the octopus to put it on the laplap.’

[NVKS20.41: 193.080]

In addition to *il*, Neverver also displays a distinct purpose marker *gat*. It does not have the dual reason/purpose function of *il*. It is rather rare in the corpus, with *il* being the preferred purpose marker.

(13.28) Means *gat*-purpose

Ga i-tokh i-llang an an
 and 3REAL:SG-exist 3REAL:SG-look.for.s.t. DEMSPN NMOD
nakharevran ib-lablab gat ei ib-lav
 wing 3IRR:SG-big so.that 3SG 3IRR:SG-get
im-bbu im-solikh
 3IRR:SG-go 3IRR:SG-hide

‘And he was looking for the one whose wings were big so that he could get them and go hide them.’ [NVKS18.11-12: 55.816-61.981]

(13.29) *I-yer nobo ang ↗ gat i-gen mama*
 3REAL:SG-sing song ANA so.that 3REAL:SG-like father
titi niterikh ang adr, nida titi-r abir-rongil
 3PS:SG child ANA PL mother 3PS-PL 3IRR:DL-know

te ei i-lav nakhabb ang i-vlem.
 COMP 3SG 3REAL:SG-get fire ANA 3REAL:SG-come
 ‘He sang the song so that like⁶⁵, the children's father, and their
 mother would know that he brought the fire.’ [NVKS07.36: 224.823]

(13.30) *At-ver at-ve me i-gang gat*
 3REAL:PL-say 3REAL:PL-do just 3REAL:SG-like.so PURPOSE
im-khitl
 3IRR:SG-recognise
 ‘They said they just did it like that so that he would realise.’
 [NVKS07.36: 589.952]

13.3.4. Condition-consequence

The condition-consequence relation is classified by Beekman and Callow (1974; also Crombie 1985:19-20) as a type of cause-effect relation. It involves one proposition that serves as the causing event (the condition) for the occurrence of another event (the consequence). One subordinator functions exclusively as a conditional marker in Neverver. This is *besi* ‘if’ and the variant form *asi*. The morphology of the conditional subordinator is interesting as it involves the negative particle *si*.⁶⁶ We might assume that the initial *be-* derives from the adversative conjunction *be* ‘but’ (described in §13.5.2. below); however, there are conditional subordinators in related Malakula languages that

⁶⁵ The verb *gen* ‘be like’ functions as a hedge in Neverver, just as *like* does in contemporary New Zealand English.

⁶⁶ While *besi* ~ *asi* may have indigenous origins, it is also possible that the *besi* form derives from the combination of Bislama *be* ‘but’, from colloquial French *bais* ‘but’ (see §13.5.2.), and French *si* ‘if’, or even French *si* ‘yes’, as an answer to a question with negative polarity).

display the initial sequence *bV-* so this morpheme could equally have indigenous origins. In Avava for example, the conditional subordinator is *ba(na)* ‘if’ (Crowley 2006a:134-5).

In Neverver, the conditional subordinator *besi ~ asi* combines with irrealis mood in both the main and subordinate clause. This formal structure is usually employed for conditionals which are potentially realisable, or predictive; however, it is also possible to express counterfactual conditionals in the same structure. Contextual clues allow the hearer to disambiguate between these two broad types of conditional constructions.

The conditional construction can be used to express clauses with future time reference such as imperatives, and future consequences.

(13.31) Imperative

Besi kabir-rong-rong kabir-khan mit ↗, kabir-khan me
 if 2IRR:DL-DUP-want 2IRR:DL-eat meat 2IRR:DL-eat just
nimjal an at-tokh lakha. ↘
 meat NMOD 3REAL:PL-exist bush

‘If you want to eat meat (i.e. for dinner tonight), only eat meat that is in the bush.’ [NVKS20.7: 28.621]

(13.32) Future with main clause marked by *ga* ‘then’

Besi ib-rong-rong ↗ ga im-bbu me
 if 3IRR:SG-DUP-want then 3IRR:SG-go just

ib-lukh-da *tang*↘

3IRR:SG-stay-PART there

‘If he wants, then he can go and rest there.’ [NVCT05.27: 377.093]

The same construction can also be used to express counterfactual conditionals with past time reference. The following example describes an incident where a woman was struck on the head by a falling coconut. The woman was not injured badly. The conditional construction describes what might have happened.

(13.33) Past Counterfactual

Besi im-dak *ei lon nakhsan i-gen*

if 3IRR:SG-fall.over 3SG LOC base.of.s.t. 3REAL:SG-like

kut an im-gal ei ang O!↗

LOCPN NMOD 3IRR:SG-stuck 3SG ANA Oh

im-ngot ing.

3IRR:SG-be.broken EXCL

‘If it had fallen on the base, like on the place where it struck, oh, it would have broken for sure!’ [NVCV06.36: 593.557]

The temporal pronominal-noun *dran*, which can be used to introduce subordinate clauses of time, serves as a marker of condition when associated with irrealis mood. The pairing of time/condition morphology has been observed in other languages, particularly when the condition clause is predictive (Thompson, Longacre & Hwang 2007:258-9). In Neverver, *dran* introduces predictive conditions, along with habitual/generic conditions.

(13.34) Imperative

Dran kabit-ver kamt-uv kamti-llav→,

TMPPN 2IRR:PL-want 2IRR:PL-go 2IRR:PL-go.for.food

kam-tuv ale→

2IRR:PL-go far.away

‘When you want to go gather food (today), go far away...’

[NVKS01.36]

(13.35) Habitual/generic

Dran kabit-rot kabit-sakh si lon niar ↗,

TMPPN 2IRR:DL-feel 2IRR:DL-go.up NEG LOC garden

kabit-sakh si lon niar ↘.

2IRR:DL-go.up NEG LOC garden

‘Whenever you feel that you shouldn't enter the garden, don't enter the garden.’ [NVKS13.30]

(13.36) Predictive

Dran am-khan i-ttokh ↗, barnakh ↗ nitusu

TMPPN IMPS.IRR-eat 3REAL:SG-rip.a.hole now sea

im-sakh bbukhut ↗

3IRR:SG-go.up inside

‘When it is eaten through, then the sea will come inside...’

[NVKS04.12: 82.022]

(13.37) Past habitual/Generic

Dran ibi-ttekh nisib aran ↗, abit-trokh

TMPPN 3IRR:SG-strike knife LOC.on 3IRR:PL-see

nimokhmokh ibi-skham ibi-ttekh nisib aran ↗

female 3IRR:SG-one 3IRR:SG-strike knife LOC.on

am-te nibbwas ↘

IMPS.IRR-hit male.pig

‘If she struck a knife on it, (if) they saw a woman strike a knife on it, they would kill a pig.’ [NVKS11.62]

The variant form *asi* also appears as a conditional subordinator. Often though, when this subordinator is used, only the condition of a condition-consequence pair is mentioned. The consequence, which would normally be encoded in the main clause, is left unstated. In the first three examples, the consequence is known by the speaker and will result from the conditional act of seeing by the hearer. In the fourth case, the consequence is unknown by the speaker, and will only be revealed upon the performance of the conditional event by the hearer. These condition-only clauses are translated as ‘if only’, and are the only optative constructions attested in the corpus.

(13.38) *Asi kum-dri okh kum-ka-knga*

if 2IRR:SG-turn 2SG 2IRR:SG-DUP-search(visually)

im-sakh arkha lon notvo arkha tang ↘
 3IRR:SG-go.up up LOC Caster.oil.plant up there
 ‘If only you’ll turn around and look up in the Caster Oil tree (you’ll see the fruit).’ [NVKS22.25: 153.351]

(13.39) *Asi kum-bbulat git nibr-uv*
 if 2IRR:SG-go.dir(2) 1IN:NSG 1IN:IRR:DL-go
nibri-tvis mo. ↘
 1IN:IRR:DL-look.dir CONT
 ‘If only you’ll come and we go to see them (then you’ll know they are your sons).’ [NVKS18.128: 671.985]

(13.40) *Niskhan ing, asi kabir-lav-bbulem i-na*
 what EXCL if 2IRR:DL-get-come PSNPR-1SG
nim-khitkhit ↘
 1IRR:SG-look
 ‘If only you’ll bring them for me to look at (then I’ll know what they are).’ [NVKS18.63: 316.292]

(13.41) *Asi okh-b-yer mo nobo an nida t-okh*
 if 2SG-IRR-sing CONT song NMOD mother PSDT-2SG
i-tokh i-yer ↘
 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-sing
 ‘If only you’ll sing the song that your mother is singing (then I’ll see what happens).’ [NVKS25.34: 139.286]

Besi is also attested in an optative condition-only clause. In the example below, the speaker is lamenting the burden of cake-making for an upcoming wedding that has been placed on the local Pastor. This is another counterfactual condition.

- (13.42) *Besi abit-lav-lav si kek ang im-bbu*
 if 3IRR:PL-DUP-get NEG cake ANA 3IRR:SG-go
tuan ei
 LOCPSN 3SG
 ‘If only they hadn’t assigned the cake (making) to him.’
 [NVCV10.90: 449.371]

A small number of counterfactual conditionals were produced in elicitation sessions with language consultants. Like the spontaneous conditional constructions, the condition clause is introduced with the conditional subordinator *besi* or *asi*. The subordinator is then followed by an irrealis form of the verb *ver* ‘to say’, which appears to signal the counter-factuality of the entire construction. In the first example below, the conditional event (the phone call) actually did take place, as did the consequential event:

- (13.43) *Besi im-bbuer Julie im-ringim si nam*
 if 3IRR:SG-say Julie 3IRR:SG-ring NEG 1EX:NSG
lon Fraedae, nam nabr-uv si New Zealand
 LOC Friday 1EX:NSG 1EX:IRR:DL-go NEG New Zealand

lon Satete.

LOC Saturday

‘If it (is said that) Julie hadn't rung us on Friday, we wouldn't have gone to NZ on Saturday.’ [NVKW04.16]

In the second example, the person in question did not actually have any money, and was therefore unable to secure transport to attend a village event.

(13.44) *Abbung, asi im-bbuer nevngan-nevas titi*
yesterday if 3IRR:SG-say money 3PS:SG
im-tokh, ei imbbulem ij.
3IRR:SG-exist 3SG 3IRR:SG-come ANT

‘Yesterday, if only (it is said that) he had had some money, he would have come already.’ [NVE16.25]

13.4. Subordinating tail-head linkage

Tail-head linkage is a dominant feature of procedural texts, such as descriptions of the gardening process or cooking instructions. It also appears in narrative texts, linking sequential narrative events. Tail-head linkage can only be identified by looking beyond the unit of the clause, as it involves the repetition of an entire clause to signal the temporal relation of sequence to the subsequent clause. There is an initial statement of an event, followed by a restatement of that event, followed by the second event. The structural unit is thus larger than a single complex clause.

Clause 1 ↘.	Clause 1 ↗, Clause 2.
-------------	----------------------------

Figure 13.2. Tail-head linkage

Intonation falls on the first occurrence of the initial clause. When the clause is repeated, it is marked with rising intonation, like an adverbial subordinate clause, to signal the juncture between subordinate and subsequent main clause.

Tail-head linkage may be simple, where a clause is repeated verbatim to indicate temporal sequence. Tail-head linkage can also be augmented. Morphology appears on the repeated clause to reinforce the completion of the first event before the second takes place. The post-verbal marker *lu*, the discourse perfect, only ever appears in tail-head linkage. The serial verb *suvsvuv* ‘be finished’ also commonly occurs in augmented constructions. Supporting the analysis of tail-head linkage as a kind of subordination, the temporal subordinator *ba* ‘when’ can introduce the tail of a tail-head linkage.

Simple tail-head linkage is displayed in examples (13.45) and (13.46) below.

(13.45) *Ale ni-vu ni-vev lakha ↗,*

then 1REAL:SG-go 1REAL:SG-go.to bush

ni-te niat ↘.

1REAL:SG-cut Sago.Palm

Ni-te niat ↗, ni-bir ↗...

1REAL:SG-cut Sago.Palm 1REAL:SG-break

‘I go to the bush and cut Sago Palm leaves. I cut Sago Palm leaves, and then I break them.’ [NVDL06.13-14] (repeated from (13.2 above))

- (13.46) *Ga ale ni-khilkhilih nakhmal ang* ↘.
 then then 1REAL:SG-dig-foundations house ANA
ni-khilkhilih nakhmal ang ↗
 1REAL:SG-dig-foundations house ANA
ni-tur-ikh mokh nibalbal i-suvsvuv ↗,
 1REAL:SG-stand-APPL all house.post 3REAL:SG-to.be.finished
 ‘Then I dig foundations for the house. I dig foundations for the
 house and I finish standing up all the posts...’ [NVDL06.5-6]

Augmented tail-head linkage is displayed in examples (13.47) to (13.50) below.

- (13.47) Discourse perfect
Ale ku-yas ↘. *ku-yas*
 then 2REAL:SG-cover.with.stones 2REAL:SG-cover.with.stones
lu ↗ *ku-skhav* ↗, *ku-tvin-ikh nibittan* ↗
 PERF 2REAL:SG-cover 2REAL:SG-bury-APPL soil
 ‘Then you cover it with stones. Having covered it with stones, you
 cover it with leaves and bury it with soil...’ [NVDL12.9-10]

In example (13.48), the first mention of the event is the consequence of a condition-consequence relation. It then becomes the first event in a temporal sequence.

(13.48) Discourse perfect *lu*; egressive serial verb

Ba nat-ver nabit-ve nokhos ↗,

when 1EX:REAL:PL-want 1EX:IRR:PL-make garden

nat-uv nat-rakh. ↘

1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-clear.ground

Nat-rakh-lu i-suvsuv ↗,

1EX:REAL:PL-clear.ground-PERF 3REAL:SG-to.be.finished

nat-tekha.

1EX:REAL:PL-cut.trees

‘Whenever we want to make a garden, we go and we clear the ground. Having finished clearing the ground, we cut down the trees.’

[NVDL07.1-2]

(13.49) Temporal subordinator *ba*; discourse perfect *lu*; egressive serial verb

Nat-uv nat-jaljalkha. ↘

1EX:REAL:PL-go 1EX:REAL:PL-prepare.stakes

Ba nat-jaljalkha lu i-suvsuv, ↗

when 1EX:REAL:PL-prepare.stakes PERF 3REAL:SG-to.be.finished

nat-sil nokhos ↘

1EX:REAL:PL-burn garden

‘We go and prepare stakes. When we have finished preparing the stakes, we burn the garden.’ [NVDL07.4-5]

(13.50) Temporal subordinator *ba*; quantifier *mokh*; discourse perfect *lu*;

egressive serial verb

ni-vu *ni-te* *nibalbal.* ↘ *Ba* *ni-te*
 1REAL:SG-go 1REAL:SG-cut house.post when 1REAL:SG-cut

mokh *lu* *nibalbal* *i-suvsuv,* ↗

all PERF house.post 3REAL:SG-to.be.finished

ni-vus *ni-vlem* *aiyem* ↗

1REAL:SG-carry 1REAL:SG-come home

‘I go and cut house posts. When I have finished cutting all the house posts, I carry them and come home...’ [NVDL06.2-3].

The intonation pattern associated with tail-head linkage, in combination with the option to augment the repeated clause, particularly with subordinating morphology, indicates that the repeated clause is dependent on the main clause, and therefore involves a juncture of subordination. The first occurrence of the initial clause however, is syntactically independent of the second clause. The larger tail-head structure then, is somewhat less subordinate than the basic adverbial subordination described in §13.3.

13.5. Syndetic coordination

Haspelmath (2007:1) describes ‘syntactic constructions in which two or more units of the same type are combined into a larger unit and still have the same semantic relations with other surrounding elements’ as involving coordination. In this section, the focus is on the juncture between two independent, though semantically related clauses (see §4.6. for a description of coordination between

noun phrases). Following Haspelmath (2004, 2007), I identify three main types of coordinating conjunction in Neverver, these being the ‘and’ relation of conjunctive coordination, the ‘but’ relation of adversative coordination, and the ‘or’ relation of disjunctive coordination. A fourth type of coordinating conjunction can also be seen in the Neverver corpus. Augmentative conjunction (Haspelmath 2007:25) involves the combination of identical elements to express emphasis.

Coordination in Neverver is distinguished from tail-head linkage and prosodic conjunction by its syndetic nature. In coordinating conjunction, the relation between two clauses is signaled by an overt coordinator which occurs between the conjoined clauses.

13.5.1. Conjunctive coordination

The Malakula languages Avava and Naman (Crowley 2006a; 2006b) and Neve’ei (Musgrave 2007) display a single coordinating morpheme which expresses both conjunctive and adversative meanings. In Neverver, there is no basic morpheme with this joint function; however, *ga* ‘and, then’ is found as an inter-clausal marker of conjunctive coordination. It typically expresses temporal sequence.

The prosodic characteristics of clauses marked by *ga* vary. In some cases, the coordinator is uttered within the intonation contour of the first clause, and carries non-terminal rising intonation as in (13.55). Haspelmath (2007:6) describes this pattern as medial postpositive, where the coordinator is attached to the initial clause. In other cases, non-terminal intonation is carried by the final element of the initial clause, and the coordinator is uttered with the intonation contour of the second clause as in example (13.56). This pattern is medial

prepositive (Haspelmath 2007:6) and it is the same pattern found in clauses introduced by the other coordinators discussed in this section.

Additionally, *ga* ‘and, then’ can stand alone as a clausal adjunct in the left periphery of a clause. When standing alone, it is articulated with non-terminal intonation, followed by a pause (like adverbial clauses of time §13.3.1.). In this position, it also signals a relationship of temporal sequence between the preceding and following clause, but the clauses in question are syntactically and prosodically independent. The three attested patterns are as follows:

Medial postpositive	Clause 1- <i>ga</i> ↗	Clause 2
Medial prepositive	Clause 1 ↗	<i>ga</i> -Clause 2
Adjunct	Clause 1 ↘	<i>Ga</i> ↗ / → Clause 2

Table 13.1. Conjunctive coordination structures

(13.51) Clause 1-*ga* Clause 2

I-vu *ga* ↗ *i-khit* *nemat* *ang*
 3REAL:SG-go and 3REAL:SG-see snake ANA
ati-llong *ati-llong* *ati-llong*
 3REAL:PL-slither 3REAL:PL-slither 3REAL:PL-slither

‘He went and then he saw the snakes slithering and slithering all around.’ [NVKS12.63: 474.071]

(13.52) Clause 1 *ga*-Clause 2

Ar-matmat-ikh *buluk* *ang* *i-lablab* ↗,
 3REAL:DL-take.care-APPL cow ANA 3REAL:SG-big

ga nida titi i-ver-ikh nimkhut titi
 and mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-say-APPL man 3PS:SG
 ‘They reared the cow, and then the mother said to her son...’
 [NVCT06.6: 26.149]

(13.53) Clause 1. *Ga*, Clause 2

i-khitrokh vinang i-tokh i-ngar ↘
 3REAL:SG-see woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-cry
Ga→, *i-ver-ikh vinang i-ver*
 and 3REAL:SG-say-APPL woman:ANA 3REAL:SG-say
te ‘i-okh kungar il niskhan?’ ↘
 COMP PSNPR-2SG 2REAL:SG-cry CAUSE what
 ‘He saw the woman crying. Then he said to the woman, ‘Why are
 you crying?’ [NVKS18.29-30: 136.780-142.268]

The commonly occurring adverbial subordinate clause with the similitive predicate *gang* ‘be like so’, which is used to signal temporal sequence, is uttered with the same intonation contour. The reduced form of this clause *baga* ‘then’, patterns in the same way as *ga* ‘and, then’. The verb *gang* may well be the source of both *ga* ‘and, then’ and also its reduplicated form *gaga* ‘on and on, until’ described below.

(13.54) *Ba i-gang* ↗ *mang i-sakh bbukhut*
 when 3REAL:SG-like.so man:ANA 3REAL:SG-go.up inside
 ‘When it was so, the man went inside (the house).’ [NVKS15.22]

- (13.55) *at-ver* *adr* *ati-trox* *si* ↘
 3REAL:PL-say 3NSG 3REAL:PL-see NEG
 (*ale* ↗) *baga* ↗ *ati-llang* ↘
 then then 3REAL:PL-look.for.s.t.
 ‘They said they hadn't seen (them). Then they looked (for them).’
 [NVKS18.21-22: 109.125-111.986]

The coordinator *ga* has the reduplicated form *gaga* which can be used to emphasise the terminal boundary of one event before another takes place. When *ga* is reduplicated, it indicates that the event or state in the initial clause was of considerable duration, prior to its termination, suggesting the translation of ‘until’. Further reduplication can emphasise the duration of the first event. The initial clause is marked for non-terminal intonation and the coordination pattern is medial post-positive, with *gaga* falling inside the intonation contour of the initial clause. This position displays the same iconic positioning as the egressive serial verb *suvsvuv* ‘to be finished’, which also attaches to the end of a clause to signal that the event in question has ended.

- (13.56) Temporal Sequence marking terminal boundary ‘until’
Ga *i-tokh* *i-matmat-ikh* *nibet*
 then 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-take.care-APPL breadfruit
lele *titi* *ang* *gaga*→ *i-maur* *i-lablab* ↗
 small 3PS:SG ANA until 3REAL:SG-live 3REAL:SG-big
 ‘Then he was looking after his small breadfruit until it grew big...’
 [NVKS31.11: 71.126]

(13.57) *I-tokh* *i-ve* *sakhsakh* *ga-gaga* ↗
 3REAL:SG-PROG 3REAL:SG-do FREQ DUP-until
nibet *ang* *i-tro* ↘
 breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG-ripe
 ‘He was doing that all the time until the breadfruit was ripe.’
 [NVKS31.15: 96.612]

(13.58) *I-ngar* *ga-ga-ga-ga-gaga* → *naut* *i-met*.
 3REAL:SG-cry DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-until place 3REAL:SG-dark
 ‘He cried on and on until it was dark.’ [NVKS31.38: 226.719]

(13.59) *I-lles* *ga-ga-ga-ga-gaga* ↗ *i-vu*
 3REAL:SG-swim DUP-DUP-DUP-DUP-until 3REAL:SG-go
i-trokh *netas* *edr*
 3REAL:SG-see fish PL
 ‘He swam on and on, until he went and saw some fish.’
 [NVKS04.20: 127.324]

13.5.2. Adversative coordination

Adversative coordination is signaled with the morpheme *be* ‘but’. This morpheme also occurs in Bislama meaning ‘but’ (Crowley 2003:46). In Bislama, it is a borrowing from colloquial French *bais* ‘but’ (Crowley 1990:342). With the meaning ‘but’, *be* is also attested in the neighbouring Naman language (Crowley 2006b:193) and it may be that *be* is a borrowing from Bislama in both Naman and Neverver. The semantic relation most commonly expressed by *be*

‘but’ is Concession–Contra-expectation, where *be* is used to introduce an unexpected event. It can also be used when the event is considered to be unwelcome. Intonation generally rises on the initial clause as in (13.57) to (13.60), though level/falling non-terminal intonation on the first clause is also associated with this relation as in (13.61).

In the first example, the speaker is looking for a small bag, the kind needed for a crabbing expedition.

(13.60) Concession-Contra-expectation

Ni-llang *bak* ↗ *be* *ni-khitrokh* *si* *bak*
 1REAL:SG-look.for.s.t. bag but 1REAL:SG-see NEG bag
an *ib-lele* *ibi-skham* ↘ *ni-lav* *me*
 NMOD 3IRR:SG-small 3IRR:SG-one 1REAL:SG-get just
bak tokhtokh i-skham ↗ ...
 bag big 3REAL:SG-one

‘I looked for a bag but I didn't see a bag that was small; I just got a big bag...’ [NVCV02.68: 437.822]

(13.61) *I-vis-lu* *lu* *nakhavakh* *titi-r* *er* ↗
 3REAL:SG-take.out-COMPL PERF yam.mound 3PS.PL PL
be i-khan *si* *nidam* *ang* →
 but 3REAL:SG-eat NEG yam ANA

‘It (an escaped pig) had dug out all their yam mounds but it didn't eat the yams...’ [NVCV03.17: 97.020]

(13.62) *Kabir-lukh* ↗ *be*, *kabr-uv-uv* *si* *lon* *nitusu*
 2IRR:DL-stay but 2IRR:DL-DUP-go NEG LOC sea
avev *tang*.
 seaward there
 ‘You two stay here, (but) don't go to the ocean down there.’
 [NVKS20.5: 21.996]

(13.63) *Git* *nibir-ve* *nolong* *livrav* ↗ *be* *nimjal*
 1IN:NSG 1IN:IRR:DL-make laplap afternoon but meat
an *nibir-jik* *lon* *nolong* *ang* *i-tokh* *si*.
 NMOD 1IN:IRR:DL-put LOC laplap ANA 3REAL:SG-exist NEG
 ‘You and I are going to make laplap for dinner, but there isn't any
 meat that we can put on the laplap.’ [NVKS20.14: 71.389]

(13.64) *Ati-rkhov* *tata* *mang* ↗, *at-te* →
 3REAL:PL-hold tight man:ANA 3REAL:PL-hit
be *at-te* *bburvur* *si*.
 but 3REAL:PL-hit completely NEG
 ‘They grabbed the man tightly and beat him but they didn't kill him.’
 [NVCT04.8-9: 40.601-45.429]

13.5.3. Disjunctive coordination

Disjunctive coordination is signalled by *si* ‘or’, a morpheme which shares its shape with the post-verbal negative particle. It is associated with the general semantic relation of Alternation (Crombie 1985:22-23). As well as conjoining clauses, *si* ‘or’ can conjoin noun phrases (see §4.6.4.).

(13.65) Contrastive Alternation (a choice between antitheses)

I-na nim-bbu nib-jek nim-bbuer
PSNPR-1SG 1IRR:SG-go 1IRR:SG-check 1IRR:SG-say
nim-tuv↗ si nim-tuv si mo↘
1IN:IRR:PL-go or 1IN:IRR:PL-go NEG CONT

‘I’ll go and check if we are going or not going anymore.’

[NVCV02.70: 451.513]

(13.66) Supplementary Alternation (non-antithetical choices)

Ku-llang nisib t-okh si
2REAL:SG-look.for.s.t. knife PSDT-2SG or
ku-llang nevat t-okh?
2REAL:SG-look.for.s.t. money PSDT-2SG

‘Are you looking for your knife or your money?’ [NVE07.23.1]

13.5.4. Augmentative coordination

Haspelmath (2007:25) proposes the term ‘augmentative conjunction’ for structures which involve ‘the combination of several identical elements to express intensity of an action or a high degree of a property’. In Neverver, emphasis can be expressed by the combination of identical predicates. The second occurrence is introduced by the coordinator *we*.

(13.67) *Ba lile abr-uv aut↗, nibisbokh ang*
when near 3IRR:DL-go ashore rat ANA

i-irav↗ *we* *i-irav*↘
 3REAL:SG-laugh AUGCO 3REAL:SG-laugh

‘When they were nearly ashore, the rat laughed and laughed.’

[NVKS04.29: 161.937]

The next example has a subordinate reason clause, for which the augmentative construction serves as the temporally-sequenced result.

(13.68) *Baver nibet ang i-maur, niterikh lele ang*
 when breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG-live child small ANA
i-salgar↗ *we* *i-salgar*↘
 3REAL:SG-be.glad AUGCO 3REAL:SG-be.glad

‘When the breadfruit grew, the child was really glad.’ [NVKS31.10: 64.425]

(13.69) *Nibatn okh i-ttaj*↗ *we* *i-ttaj*↘.
 head 2SG 3REAL:SG-bald AUGCO 3REAL:SG-bald

‘Your head is so bald!’ [NVKS02.43: 213.564]

The final example involves three occurrences of the predicate. Additional tense/aspect morphology, in the form of the anterior marker, is attached to the third occurrence. Intonation rises on the first occurrence of the predicate, falls slightly on the second and falls strongly on the third and final occurrence.

(13.70) *Be nibet ang i-tro ↗ we i-tro →*
 but breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG-ripe AUGCO 3REAL:SG-ripe
we i-tro ij ing ↘
 AUGCO 3REAL:SG-ripe ANT EXCL
 ‘But the breadfruit was already really really ripe!’ [NVKS31.26:
 168.284]

13.6. Prosodic conjunction

Asyndetic coordination, or juxtaposition, is the coordination of clauses without any overt morphological marking (Haspelmath 2007). Haspelmath (2007:7) observes that asyndesis is widespread in the languages of the world, and that in such constructions ‘intonation is the only means by which the coordinated structure can be indicated.’ In Neverver, juxtaposition is commonly employed to conjoin clauses and intonation is used to signal that hearers should infer a relationship between two clauses. Because intonation plays such an important role in clausal juncture in Neverver, the juxtaposition of two clauses is labeled ‘prosodic conjunction’.

Prosodic conjunction can be used to signal a wide range of inter-propositional semantic relations. Some of these semantic relations can also be signaled by overt morphology; others are only attested in constructions marked by prosodic conjunction. Two patterns of intonation are associated with prosodic conjunction. The first involves non-terminal rising intonation on the initial clause. The second involves level or non-terminal falling intonation on the initial clause. Different semantic relations are associated with each intonation pattern.

13.6.1. Semantic relations signaled by rising intonation on the initial clause

(13.71) Temporal sequence

Nattav *nibet*↗, *nat-khan*↘.

1EX:REAL:PL-spear breadfruit 1EX:REAL:PL-eat

‘We speared breadfruit and ate it.’ [NVKS07.6: 30.386]

(13.72) *At-lukh-lukh-lukh* *i-sber* *dran* *an*

3REAL:PL-live-live-live 3REAL:SG-reach TMPPN NMOD

nidam *i-yaj*↗, *at-uv* *at-ev*

yam 3REAL:SG-ripe 3REAL:PL-go 3REAL:PL-go-to

Letvur.

Letvur

‘They stayed until the time when the yams were ready, and then they went to Letvur.’ [NVKS12.7: 34.578]

Example (13.73) displays interesting features in terms of the introduction and continuity of arguments in connected text. *Nimokhmokh-tro* ‘woman/wife’ is the agent and subject of the first clause and is fully encoded in subject position. The same woman is also the agent and subject of each subsequent clause; however, she is only marked on the subject/mood prefix and is not encoded as an overt NP in subsequent clauses. In contrast, *nakhatkhat titi* ‘her basket’ appears initially as the locative destination of the first proposition. It is a non-core argument encoded as an optional adjunct. In the second clause, the same argument appears with the semantic role of patient. It is restated in the object position, with the anaphoric determiner *ang*.

- (13.73) *Nimokhmokh-tro ang i-sse niterikh ang*
 female-old ANA 3REAL:SG-pull child ANA
i-sngon lon nakhatkhat titi ↗ i-tabrik
 3REAL:SG-fill LOC basket 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG-pick.up?
nakhatkhat ang ↗ i-vu-vev aiyem ↘.
 basket ANA 3REAL:SG-go-go.to home
 ‘The woman pulled the child (by his arms) into her basket, picked up
 the basket, and went home.’ [NVKS25.30: 111.915]

- (13.74) Simple Contrast
ale, i-okh kum-bbuor-vor lakhlakh ↗,
 alright PSNPR-2SG 2IRR:SG-DUP-sit quiet
na nim-tokh nim-patel ↗...
 1SG 1IRR:SG-PROG 1IRR:SG-paddle
 ‘Okay, you sit quietly; I’m going to paddle...’ [NVKS04.10: 64.608]

- (13.75) *Niterikh titi-r ar-tokh-tokh ↗, adr ar-uv*
 child 3PS.PL 3REAL:DL-DUP-exist 3NSG 3REAL:DL-go
lakha ↘.
 bush
 ‘Two of their children stayed, and two went to the bush.’
 [NVKS07.9: 53.356]

- (13.76) *Nida titi adr-ikh mama titi*
 mother 3PS:SG 3NSG-APPL father 3PS:SG

ari-kke-kh *ar-ver* *im-das* ↗,
 3REAL:DL-call-APPL 3REAL:DL-say 3IRR:SG-go.down
i-rosikh *mo* *im-das* ↘.
 3REAL:SG-not.want CONT 3IRR:SG-go.down

‘His mother and father called him to come down, but he didn't want to come down any longer.’ [NVKS31.39: 230.479]

(13.77) Denial–Correction

nemat i-ve *mo* *si* *nemat* ↗;
 snake 3REAL:SG-COP CONT NEG snake
i-ve *nimkhut* ↘
 3REAL:SG-COP man

‘The snake was no longer a snake; it was a man.’ [NVKS17.77]

The final example displaying the Reason-Result relation has falling intonation on the first clause; the second clause however, is marked by a greater fall in intonation, signalling that the two clauses are related, with the second an afterthought to the first.

(13.78) Reason–Result

Kar-rosikh *kabri-po-prok* *no-ssor-ian* *an*
 2REAL:DL-not.want 2IRR:DL-DUP-listen NPR-talk-NSF NMOD
na *ni-ver-ikh* *i-gam* ↘; *barnakh* *anjakh*,
 1SG 1REAL:SG-say-APPL PSNPR-2NSG now this

nida t-okh i-mas ↘ ↘

mother PSDT-2SG 3REAL:SG-dead

‘You didn’t want to listen to the message that I told you; so now your mother is dead.’ [NVKS20.59-60: 275.127-281.123]

13.6.2. Semantic relations signaled by level/falling intonation on the initial clause

(13.79) Concession–Contra-expectation

I-te nibbwas an nylvun

3REAL:SG- hit male.pig NMOD front.tooth

i-kkel→, *i-ul* *si*↘

3REAL:SG-curled 3REAL:SG-atone NEG

‘He killed a pig that had circular tusks, (but) he didn’t atone (for the sin).’ [NVKS12.29: 205.343]

Note: same intonation pattern is found with concession–contra-expectation pairs marked by *be* ‘but’

(13.80) Statement–Exemplification

I-vavkhas niterikh ang→, *i-lav nevlan*

3REAL:SG-dress.up child ANA 3REAL:SG-get charcoal

nakha↗ *i-vavkhal*↗, *i-tos niterikh titi*

tree 3REAL:SG-grate 3REAL:SG-paint child 3PS:SG

var ↘

unfortunate

‘He decorated the child, he got charcoal, and he ground it, and he marked his poor child.’ [NVKS12.34: 244.016]

(13.81) *Be ar-khan mang ni-kkan-ian titi er→:*

but 3REAL:DL-eat man:ANA NPR-eat-NSF 3PS:SG PL

ar-khan nauj ↗, ar-khan maniok. ↗

3REAL:DL-eat pawpaw 3REAL:DL-eat manioc

‘They ate all the man's food: they ate pawpaw, they ate manioc.’

[NVKS05.9-10: 51.119- 45.873]

(13.82) Simple Comparison

Nisib i-tokh si→; damiok i-tokh si→.

knife 3REAL:SG-exist NEG axe 3REAL:SG-exist NEG

‘There was no knife; there was no axe.’ [NVKS13.24]

13.7. Form and meaning

In Neverver, four types of clausal juncture have been identified. Adverbial subordination, subordinating tail-head linkage, syndetic coordination, and prosodic conjunction are all ways that clauses can be combined. These four structures are employed to express a range of inter-propositional semantic relations. The inter-propositional semantic relations identified in the corpus to date, along with the ways that they can be encoded, are summarised in Table 13.2. below.

	Adverbial Subordination	Subordinating Tail-head Linkage	Syndetic Coordination	Prosodic conjunction
Temporal sequence	✓	✓ Simple/ Augmented	✓ Conjunctive	✓
Temporal overlap	✓			
Event/State location	✓			
Reason-Result	✓			✓
Means-Purpose	✓			
Condition-consequence (Irrealis)	✓			
Condition-consequence (counter-fact)	✓			
Concession-contradiction			✓ Adversative	✓
Simple comparison				✓
Simple contrast				✓
Contrastive alternation			✓ Disjunctive	
Supplementary alternation			✓ Disjunctive	
Statement-exemplification				✓
Denial-correction				✓

Table 13.2. Summary of inter-propositional relations and clausal juncture

In contrast to clauses that are conjoined either by morpho-syntactic means, or by prosody, when a speaker reaches the end of a sequence of related ideas, falling terminal intonation is used. At the end of many recorded texts, particularly monologues, speakers make an overt statement of closure with strongly falling terminal intonation.

(13.83) *No-ssor-ian lele ang i-suvsvuv me tang* ↘ ↘

NPR-speak-NSF small ANA 3REAL:SG-be.finished just there

‘The short story is just finished there.’ [NVCT06.75: 380.355]

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Appendix I

Deacon's Nesan Data (1926-1927)

1. Orthographic notes

Deacon's (1926-1927) unpublished field notes contain a list of the orthographic conventions that he used to record language data while travelling around Malakula. The list is by no means comprehensive; however, it does allow the linguist to decode most lexical items.

Symbol	Deacon's descriptions of sound	Probable IPA value
G	ng as in 'song'	ŋ
C	g as in 'got'	g
¨	over letters after value as in German	front rounded vowels
Ř	guttural uvular 'r'	r (probably alveolar rather than uvular)
Ǧ	strong guttural 'gh'	ɣ
Ǧ	guttural 'ch' as in 'loch' or 'doch' (German)	x
Ḃ	a sound peculiar to Siniag and to a lesser extent Meaun. The lips are made to vibrate as the B is pronounced	β
Č	'ch' as in 'church'	tʃ
Ž	'j' as in 'jour' (French)	ʒ

A. Bernard Deacon's self-reported orthographic conventions (from Deacon (1926-27))

2. Deacon's Nesan Data

Deacon's Nesan data is reproduced from his handwritten field notes stored in the Haddon Papers at the Cambridge University Library. The modern Neverver data is extracted from the Neverver corpus. Phonemic representations of the modern Neverver data are presented, along with glosses where meanings differ.

Nesan (1926-1927)	Gloss	Neverver (2004-2008)
barmbar	‘sow’	/nibarbar/
ǰalǰal	‘block, obstruct’	/yalyal/ ‘closed (of doors)’
ǰan	‘eat’	/yan/
gar	‘cry out’	/ɲar/
ǰas	‘bite’	/yas/
gcinitʒ	‘nip’	
gcis	‘throttle’	/gis/ ‘squeeze’
gcugc	‘shrink (?)’	
ǰer	‘strong, hard’	/yer/
ǰit	‘see’	/yit/
ǰitil	‘perceive’	/yitl/
gonr	‘snore’	/ɲoD/ ‘snore’
got	‘blunt’	/ɲot/ ‘break’
ǰurǰor	‘scrape (yam)’	/yoryor ~ yuryur/ ‘scratch’
ǰurǰurus	‘cut up’	/tebirbir / ‘cut into pieces’
gus	‘breathe’	/ɲaβɲaβ/ ‘breathe’
havuǰ	‘plant’	/yaβuy/ ‘plant’
is	‘bad’	/is/
kke	‘call’	/kke/
livilipf	‘pour’	/l:iβiy/ ‘throw out (water)’
lmbas	‘deceive’	/lbas / ‘comfort’
malmal	‘weak, weary, tired’	/malmal/ ‘deeply (of sleep)’
mam	‘ripe’	/mam/
mas	‘die’	/mas/
matur	‘sleep’	/matur/
maur	‘live’	/maur/
mbel	‘chase, hunt’	/bel/
mber	‘long’	/ber ~ berber/
mbo	‘stink’	/bo/ ‘rotten’
mbulug	‘count’	/doɲon/ ‘count’
mbur	‘swollen’	/Bur/
mb̄us	‘don’	/rus/ ‘put on, wear’; /βus/ ‘carry (on head, shoulder)’
mbwillag	‘seek’	/l:ay/ ‘look for’
mcal	‘sharp’	/mgal/
menevmp	‘level, flat’	/maβ/
millipf	‘spill’	/milmiliβ/
min	‘drink’	/min/
misaǰ	‘sick’	/mɕʒay/ ‘have fever’
mlili	‘return’	/mlili/
mmap	‘heavy’	/m:aβ/
mtutaǰ	‘fear’	/l:is/ ‘be afraid’
muǰumbaǰump	‘soft’	/yobyob/ ‘soft’
n_ǰa	‘tree’	/naɲa/

nağamal	‘house’	/naɣmal/
nağamb̄	‘fire’	/naɣaB/
nağambwir	‘dog’	/naɣabir/
nağansir	‘sugar cane’	/naɣaɖʒir/
nağonsun	‘nose’	/naɣaɖʒun/
nambuas	‘pig’	/niBwas/ ‘boar’
nambwer	‘mushroom’	/neber ~ nebeD/
nani	‘coconut’	/nani/
nasüs	‘breast’	/nasus/
naus	‘rain’	/naus/
navül	‘moon’	/naβul/
navuns	‘banana’	/naβuɖʒ/
ndag	‘extract’	/daŋlu/ ‘pull out’
ndas	‘descend’	/das/
ndölöm	‘swallow’	/dlom/
ndum	‘race’	/dum/ ‘run’
nelag	‘wind’	/nilaŋ ~ nelaŋ/
nelag	‘sky’	/nilaŋ ~ nelaŋ/
neman	‘bird’	/neman/
nemar	‘famine’	/nemar/ ‘hunger’
nembögön	‘mouth’	/nomŋon/
nembuagc	‘big taro’	/niBuaŋ/ ‘swamp taro’
nembwittan	‘earth’	/nibit:an/
nemeri	‘eel’	/nimer/
nemwat	‘snake’	/nemat/
nemwel	‘cycas’	/nimel/
nendam	‘yam’	/nidam/
nenrar	‘Erythrina’	/niDar/
nenre	‘blood’	/neDe/
nensans	‘croton?’	/neɖʒaɖʒ/ ‘k.o.plant’
nerigan	‘nest’	/nerŋen/
nero	‘leaf’	/noron/
netas	‘fish’	/netas/
neterih	‘child’	/niteriɣ/
netmas	‘ghost’	/netmas/
nevat	‘stone’	/neβat/
nevin nönnsö	‘star’	/niβin nimɖʒo/
nevwillag	‘fly’	/niβilaŋ ~ niβil:an/
nevwinmbwand	‘owl’	/netarban/
niliwun	‘tooth’	/nilβun/
nimbismboḵ	‘rat’	/nibisboɣ/
nimbolgon	‘bone’	/nibolgon/
nimbus nauwi	‘cane’	/nau/
nindilgan	‘ear’	/nidliŋan/
ninnun	‘spirit’	/nin:un/
nio	‘water’	/nio/

nisn	‘juice’	/niesn ~ nies'n/
nituḡans	‘mosquito’	/nituyɑḡ/
nitusu	‘sea’	/nitusu/
niviamp	‘reed’	/niβiaB/
nivüs	‘bow’	/niβis/
niyal	‘sun’	/nial/
noḡo	‘rope’	/noyo/
noḡon	‘face’	/noyon/
noḡut	‘louse’	/nayut/
nsavi	‘sneeze’	/ḡaβi/
nsemw	‘chew’	/ḡem/
nsin	‘put’	/ḡjik /‘put’, /ḡjiŋ/ ‘be there’
nugcovioin	‘egg’	/nigoβin/
numbu	‘bamboo’	/niβinBu/
nuwagca	‘canoe’	/nuwag/
panḡo	‘steal’	/panyo/
pwis	‘smart’	/p:is/
rar	‘be angry’	/rar/
rog	‘hear’	/rodroy, rot/
rogrog	‘want, desire’	/roŋ, roŋroŋ/
rongil	‘understand’	/roŋil/
rrap	‘laugh’	/r:aβ/
rvik	‘good’	/rβiy/
saḡ	‘climb’	/saḡ/ ‘ascend’, /sak:a/ ‘climb’
salgcar	‘be flash’	/salgar/ ‘be glad’
sap	‘dance’	/saβ/
sarmbur	‘tear’	/t:er/
sian	‘conceive’	/sian/ ‘be pregnant’
sisi	‘not want’	/rosiy/
smber	‘touch’	/sber/
sor	‘speak’	/ssor/
sup	‘cease’	/suβ/
sup	‘shave’	/suβ/
tag	‘cry’	/taŋ/ ‘grieve’
tap	‘don bracelet’	/taβ/ ‘put on (of jewellery)’
te	‘strike’	/te/
te	‘cut’	/te/
temburvur	‘kill’	/te Burβur/
tgis	‘bewail’	/tŋis/ ‘weep in sorrow’
tigas	‘profane’	/tŋas/ ‘sacred, taboo (associated with women)’
titn	‘cook’	/tn/ (TRANS); /titn/ (INTRANS)
toḡ	‘stop’	/toy/ ‘exist, be at’
tölas	‘undo, unfasten’	/tlas/ ‘separate out (of vines); untangle’
tugtukh	‘flower’	/tuytuy/ ‘flower (of breadfruit)’
tukḡ	‘hit’	/duk/ ‘bang into’
tur	‘stand’	/tur/

tütñ	‘hot’	/tutñ/
vağvağ	‘short’	/βaɣβaɣ, mut/
vavu	‘walk about’	/βaβu/
vyuğ	‘unfold’	/βuy/ ‘unwrap (laplap leaves)’
worwor	‘sit down’	/βorβor/
yal	‘fly’	/yal/

Appendix II

Results of the UNESCO Language Vitality Assessment of the Neverver Speech Community

Factor 1. Intergenerational language transmission

Limap Village	5-. Stable yet threatened	Lingarakh Village	4. Unsafe
Neverver is spoken in most contexts by all generations with unbroken intergenerational transmission. A small number of children in Limap are dominant in another language.		Most, but not all children in Lingarakh speak Neverver as their first language, but this may be restricted to specific social domains. In some families, another local language or Bislama has become the dominant home language and Neverver is only used for communication outside the home with other Neverver speakers.	

Factor 2. Absolute number of speakers (January 2005)

Limap Village	Lingarakh Village	TFC Plantation Settlement (coastward of Limap village)	Losarsar Settlement (coastward of Lingarakh village)
158	342	23	23

Factor 3. Proportion of speakers within the total population

Limap Village	4. Unsafe	Lingarakh Village	3. Definitely endangered
Nearly all speak the language.		A majority speak the language; in a number of families with small children, the children are growing up with another language as the dominant home language.	

Factor 3.1. Percentage of households with differing dominant languages

	Limap	Lingarakh
Percentage of households where Neverver is the dominant language of children	88%	75%
Percentage of households where Bislama is the dominant language of children	12%	17%
Percentage of households where another local language is the dominant language of children	0%	8%

Factor 3.2. Languages reported to be spoken by the Neverver speech community

	Limap Village	Lingarakh Village
Actively used indigenous languages	Neverver	Neverver Avava Neve'ei
Reported known indigenous languages	Avava Neve'ei Uripiv (Northeast Malakula) Paamese Vivti A Pentecostal language	Uripiv (Northeast Malakula) Paamese Asoruan (Maskelynes) Tape (Marakus, Tautu) Nitita (Viar)
Additional (non-indigenous) languages	Bislama	Bislama English

Factor 4. Shifts in domains of language use

Limap Village	4. Multilingual parity	Lingarakh Village	3. Dwindling domains
	Bislama is the primary language in the official domains of government and public offices and in the church. A diglossic society has developed with Neverver associated with informal and home contexts, and Bislama associated with most official domains.		Neverver is used in home domains and for many functions, but Bislama is beginning to penetrate home domains. Language shift appears to be underway.

Factor 5. Response to New Domains and Media

Neverver speech community

1. Minimal ~ 2. Coping

Neverver is used in some new domains although its role is limited in these domains.

Factor 6. Materials for Language Education and Literacy

Pre-Documentation Project (2004)

1. Minimal

A practical orthography is known to one or two community members.

Post-Documentation Project (2008→)

2. Limited

Written materials exist but they may be useful only for some members of the community; for others, they may have a symbolic (i.e. religious) significance; literacy education in the language is not part of the school curriculum, but is beginning to be introduced at the pre-school level.

Factor 7. Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Politics, including Official Status and Use

Neverver Speech Community

4. Differentiated support

Non-dominant languages are protected primarily as the language of the private domain. The use of the non-dominant language is prestigious.

Factor 8. Community members' attitudes towards their own language

Limap Village

3.

Lingarakh Village

2.

Many members support language maintenance; many others are indifferent or may even support language shift.

2. Some members support language maintenance; some are indifferent or may even support language shift.

Factor 9. Type and Quality of Documentation

Pre-Documentation Project (2004)

1. Inadequate

Initially, there was a word list containing around 180 items published in Tryon (1976) under the name 'Lingarak'; an earlier wordlist was found among A. Bernard Deacon's (1926-1927) fieldnotes. Grammatical sketches, audio and video recordings and texts did not exist. A handwritten set of translated hymns, and two typed versions of this were held by one community member in Lingarakh village.

Post-Documentation Project (2008→)

3.5 Fair ~ Good

There is now a detailed grammatical description and a draft dictionary containing some 3,250 items is under development. There is also a corpus containing over one hundred audio recordings, most of which have been at least fully annotated. Also in the corpus is a series of over seventy elicitation sets containing grammatical and lexical data. The set of hymns translated into Neverver has been digitised, standardised and distributed among community members, as have literacy materials including an alphabet booklet, primers, a number booklet and a story collection. Some video material has been collected, although not from the field site. There is a large collection of digital images.

Appendix III

The Neverver Documentation Corpus

1. The Contemporary Tale Collection [NVCT]

This collection contains recently created stories, along with interpretations of religious material, western fairy tales, and local traditional tales. The speakers contributing to this collection are aged between 19 and 45 years.

Toolbox Record/ WAV file	Track Name	Speakers
NVCT01	The Crab and the Rat	Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCT02	The Christmas story	Lina Peniyas
NVCT03	Yesu and Nikotomas	Philimon Mark
NVCT04	Good Samaritan	Philimon Mark
NVCT05	The Rich Man 1	Limei Simo
NVCT06	Jack and the beanstalk	Miriam Simo
NVCT07	Noah	Philimon Mark
NVCT08	Neglecting the Church	Peniyas Bong
NVCT09	Joseph	Philimon Mark
NVCT10	Luke 15:11	Philimon Mark
NVCT	The Lost Son	Philimon Mark
NVCT	The Widow	Peniyas Bong

2. The Conversation Collection [NVCV]

This collection contains extracts of conversational material recorded in a range of more and less organised settings. Speakers range in age from 19 to 60 years old and are predominantly female, although NVCV03, NVCV07, and NVCV10 also include a male participant.

Toolbox Record/ WAV file	Track Name	Speakers
NVCV01	The fight at Tavalı Aut	Emlina and Limei Simo, Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCV02	No more crabbing	Helen-Rose Peniyas & Emlina Simo
NVCV03	Nida Neri's missing pig	Peniyas Bong, Helen-Rose and Lina Peniyas
NVCV04	The huskless corn	Emlina and Limei Simo, Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCV05	One night at Joseph Bak's house	Emlina and Limei Simo, Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCV06	Miriam's coconut	Emlina, Limei and Miriam Simo, Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCV07	The small cow	Lena, Nancy, Lina, Evlina and Jon-si
NVCV08	Collecting prawns	Group of women
NVCV09	Making Nakhadrong Mats	Emlina and Limei Simo, Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVCV10	Wedding plans	Emlina Simo, Peniyas Bong, Lina Peniyas...

3. The Daily Life Collection [NVDL]

This collection contains descriptions of life as Neverver speakers experience it today. Descriptions of common processes, and instructional texts combine with personal accounts of recent events are included. Speakers range from around 18 years old to 75 years old and include both male and female speakers.

Toolbox Record/ WAV file	Track Name	Speakers
NVDL01	Hariken	Douglas Vatdal
NVDL02	Kopra	Rali Bong
NVDL03	Courtship 1	Roslin Turia
NVDL04	Courtship 2	Roslin Turia
NVDL05	Courtship 3	Roslin Turia
NVDL06	Building local houses	Kalvau Appi
NVDL07	Gardening	Yunisa
NVDL08	More on gardening	Douglas Vatdal
NVDL09	Raising children	Tabeta
NVDL10	Nimerbbun laplap	Lerakhbel
NVDL11	Nolong nivinbbu	Lerakhbel

NVDL12	Nidam soxsox and Nolong mavus	Lerakhbel
NVDL13	Making mats	Anjong (text file only)
NVDL14	Cyclone Bola	Naling Sapla
NVDL15	Food after a cyclone	Naling Sapla
NVDL16	Kava production	Jean-Pierre Peniyas, John-Jilik (text file only)
NVDL17	Mat-making	Lerakhsil Moti (text file only)
NVDL18	Making gardens	Naling Sapla (text file only)
NVDL19	More on making gardens	Peniyas Bong
NVDL	Futbol	Peter Vatdal
NVDL	Futbol 2	Peter Vatdal
NVDL	Welcome speech	Jacob Naus

4. The Custom Interview Collection [NVKI]

The custom interview collection contains descriptions of traditional practices and beliefs of the Neverver speakers. Some texts are monologues, with a single speaker responding to a request for information on a particular topic; others are interviews, with a younger community member asking questions of an older community member. Many topics covered in this collection were prompted by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre's fieldworker topics for men, provided by the then director, Ralph Reganvanu. With the exception of Philimon Mark, who is in his 40s, the primary speakers are all over 65 years old. A number of these texts had not been fully digitised at the time of writing.

Toolbox Record/ WAV file	Track Name	Speakers
NVKI01	Water	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKI02	Circumcision	James Bangsukh
NVKI03	Initiation rights	James Bangsukh
NVKI04	Trade & exchange 1	James Bangsukh (with Emma Vatdal)
NVKI05	Trade & exchange 2	James Bangsukh (with Emma Vatdal)
NVKI06	Marriage traditions	James Bangsukh (with Nellie Vatdal)
NVKI07	Arrival of Christianity	Philimon Mark

NVKI08	Pig's tusks	Moti
NVKI09	Marriage traditions	Moti
NVKI10	A fight	Moti
NVKI11	Death ceremonies	Moti
NVKI12	A woman who refused to marry	Moti
NVKI13	Lakhahor	Moti
NVKI14	Months of the year	Moti
NVKI15	Traditional dancing rhythms	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKI16	Painted pigs	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKI17	Siblings	Moti
NVKI18	The ship in Crab Bay	Moti
NVKI19	The ship in Crab Bay	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKI20	Trade & exchange	Lerakhsil Moti (with Nellie Vatdal)
NVKI21	Marriage	Lerakhsil Moti (with Nellie Vatdal)
NVKI22	Trade & exchange 3	James Bangsukh(with Emma Vatdal)
NVKI23	Trade & exchange 4	
NVKI24	Trade & exchange 5	
NVKI25	Trade & exchange 6	
NVKI26	Trade & exchange 7	
NVKI27	Trade & exchange 8	
NVKI28	Death ceremony 1	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKI29	Death ceremony 2	
NVKI30	Gardening traditions	Naling Sapla (text file only)
NVKI	Yam Beliefs 1	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Yam Beliefs 2	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Trees	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Crimes 1	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Crimes 2	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Land dispute	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Incest	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Chiefly duties	Jacob Naus
NVKI	Traditions of childbirth	Lerakhsil Moti

5. The Traditional Story Collection [NVKS]

The traditional story collection contains tales of the ni-Vanuatu people, particularly those of Malakula island. The story of Lemanvukh, recorded in three different versions, is an account of the emergence of the traditional cultural organisation of the Neverver speech community, and the closely related peoples

of north-central Malakula. Other stories recount historical events that have become legends in the re-telling. These stories are all described as *Nimitl* ‘traditional story’.

Toolbox Record/ WAV file	Track Name	Speakers
NVKS01	Finding coconut and thatch	Jacob Naus
NVKS02	Lavni	James Bangsukh
NVKS03	Breaking the rules	Tabeta
NVKS04	How the rat got its tail	Douglas Vatdal
NVKS05	How the fruit bat got its wings	Douglas Vatdal
NVKS06	The pig’s child	Jacob Naus
NVKS07	Finding fire	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS08	The pig’s child	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS09	The Netrar custom	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS10	Lemanvukh	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS11	Lemanvukh	James Bangsukh
NVKS12	Outsmarting the snake	James Bangsukh
NVKS13	The Famine	James Bangsukh
NVKS14	The Flood	James Bangsukh
NVKS15	The sun and the moon	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS16	Lemanvukh	Kalvau Appi
NVKS17	The story of Lavias	Lerakhsil Moti
NVKS18	The winged women	Emlina Simo
NVKS19	The snake eggs	Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVKS20	The octopus	Helen-Rose Peniyas
NVKS21	The foolish man and the tree	Naling Sapla
NVKS22	The foolish man and the Niberiyev fruit	Naling Sapla
NVKS23	The hen and the scrub fowl	Naling Sapla
NVKS24	The bad mother	Lina Peniyas; song sung by Emlina Simo
NVKS25	‘Varmut’	Lina Peniyas
NVKS26	The forbidden fruit	Simo Saikon
NVKS27	The boy and the breadfruit	Alan of Vili
NVKS	The foolish man	Jean-Pierre Peniyas
NVKS	The stone	Lina Peniyas

6. The Elicitation Collection [NVE]

This collection contains thirty-four files of elicited material produced by language consultants on the 2005 field trip. Some of these derive from Bouquiaux and Thomas's (1992) questionnaires on the verb phrase and the noun phrase. Others are arranged by structural and functional themes suggested by Catriona Hyslop's (2001) grammar of Lolovoli, Talmy Givón's (2001a) syntax volume, and the unfolding Neverver corpus.

7. The Lexical Collection [NVLX]

This collection contains thirty-three files of lexical material produced by language consultants while checking the Neverver word list on the 2005 field trip. Definitions and example sentences for many verbs are recorded in this file, along with reduplicated and suffixed forms were checked.

8. The Question Collection [NVKW]

This small collection contains twelve files of material produced by language consultants during the 2008 summer workshop. There is a particular focus on negative evidence in this collection and it contains constructions produced while checking draft chapters of the Neverver grammatical description.

9. Miscellaneous

Images from the field site and song files, along with new audio and video material collected during the 2008 collaborative workshop, have not yet been incorporated into the Neverver Documentation Corpus.

Appendix IV

Sample Texts

1. *Nidam Sokhsokh* ‘Baked Yams’ [NVDL12]

Text one comes from the Daily Life collection [NVDL]. Lerakhbel (approximately 55 years old), daughter of Lerakhsil Moti, of Limap Village, tells the author how to make a baked yam dish known as *bunia* in Bislama. The text was recorded on 21 October, 2004, and is one of several short texts describing cooking processes.

There are just four units in the text that end with falling pitch (signalled by ↘); elsewhere, clausal boundaries are marked with rising pitch (↗) and a lengthy pause (;). The text begins in irrealis mood which is characteristic of such instructional texts, as well as imperative constructions. At line (1.5), however, it changes into realis mood. Realis mood is characteristic of descriptions of habitual processes. The switch may have been triggered by the description of fire-making, as instructions were given on fire-making in the immediately preceding text.

- (1.1) *Barnakh* *mil* *nim-sisir* *mil* *i-tmakhan*
now again 1IRR:SG- discuss again 3REAL:SG- how
ar-ve *nidam-sokhsokh*
IMPS:REAL- make baked.yam
‘Now, again, I’ll discuss again how they make the baked yam dish ↘.’
[15.668]

- (1.2) *Nidam-sokhsokh, kubi-kkin* *nidam,*
 baked.yam 2IRR:SG- peel.with.knife yam
kubi-kkin *nidaro, kubi-kkin*
 2IRR:SG- peel.with.knife taro 2IRR:SG- peel.with.knife
nakhbo
 k.o.yam?
 ‘About the baked yam dish, peel yams, peel taro, peel Nakhbo
 yams(?) ↗;’ [21.034]

- (1.3) *Kum-te* *m-khiskhis* *edr*
 2IRR:SG- cut STATIVE-shatter PL
 ‘Cut them into pieces ↗;’ [32.862]

- (1.4) *Kum-tuv* *nakhabb*
 2IRR:SG- light fire
 ‘Light the cooking fire ↗;’ [36.057]

- (1.5) *Ale, baga nakhabb ang ba ib-is,*
 then then fire ANA when 3IRR:SG- bad
ku-yel¹ *nevat*
 2REAL:SG- pick.up stone
 ‘Then, after that, the fire, when it has burned down, you pick up the
 stones ↗;’ [40.755]

¹ The verb *yel* ‘pick up’ is also used to mean ‘scoop out’ when talking about the action of removing seeds (i.e. from a cacao seed). There is a perceived similarity between removing seeds from fruit, and removing stones from a fire pit.

(1.6) *Ku-yel* *nevat* *i-suvsvuv,*
 2REAL:SG- pick.up stone 3REAL:SG- be.finished
kum-jurjur
 2IRR:SG- spread.out
 ‘Finish picking up the stones and spread the remaining stones flat ↗;’
 [49.465]

(1.7) *Ku-jurjur* *lu* *ku-ttarik*
 2REAL:SG- spread.out PERF 2REAL:SG- lay.flat.leaves
nulkha *lon* *nevat*
 laplap.leaf LOC stone
 ‘Having spread (the stones) flat, you put the laplap leaves on the
 stones ↗;’ [54.33]

(1.8) *Ku-rrik* *nidam sokhsokh* *i-vu*
 2REAL:SG- throw baked.yam 3REAL:SG- go
 ‘You throw on the pieces of root crop ↘.’ [61.031]

(1.9) *Ale* *ku-rrik* *nemjal* *aran*
 then 2REAL:SG- throw meat LOC.on
 ‘Then you throw meat on top ↗;’ [65.061]

(1.10) *Ale* *ku-yas*
 then 2REAL:SG- cover.with.stones
 ‘Then you cover it with stones ↘.’ [70.493]

(1.11) *Ku-yas* *lu* *ku-skhav,*
 2REAL:SG- cover.with.stones PERF 2REAL:SG- cover
 ‘Having covered it with stones, you cover it with leaves ↗;’ [72.568]

(1.12) *Ku-tvin-ikh* *nibittan,*
 2REAL:SG- bury -VI soil
 ‘You bury it with soil ↗;’ [78.835]

(1.13) *I-suv*
 3REAL:SG- finish
 ‘It is finished ↘.’ [81.916]

2. *Nossorian an Krismas* ‘The Christmas Story’ [NVCT02]

Text two is a story from the Contemporary Tales collection [NVCT], which was created and told by Lina Peniyas (approximately 40 years old) of Limap village. Lina, mother of six, made up the story to teach children that no matter what they look like, their parents will love them anyway. Text two was recorded on the 30 October, 2005, when Lina performed the story at my request after dinner, to a small group of family and friends.

(2.1) *Na* *nikhijan* *na* *Lina*
 1SG name 1SG Lina
 ‘My name is Lina.’ [0.000]

(2.2) *Ni-rong-rong nim-sisir stori lele i-skham.*
 1REAL:SG- DUP- want 1IRR:SG- discuss story small 3REAL:SG- one
 ‘I want to tell a short story.’ [4.229]

(2.3) *Stori ang i-gang.*
 story ANA 3REAL:SG- like.so
 ‘The story goes like so.’ [10.131]

(2.4) *Nida i-skham adr-ikh mama i-skham*
 mother 3REAL:SG- one 3NSG -VI father 3REAL:SG- one
ar-lukh.
 3REAL:DL- live
 ‘There lived a mother and a father.’ [12.191]

(2.5) *Ar-lukh ga ale ari-tbbukh niterikh*
 3REAL:DL- live and then 3REAL:DL- have child
lele i-skham i-vuvam.
 small 3REAL:SG- one 3REAL:SG- first
 ‘They lived and then, they had a small child first.’ [15.427]

(2.6) *Niterikh adr ari-tbbukh duvakh ang nimukhman.*
 child 3NSG 3REAL:DL- have first ANA male
 ‘The child, they had a boy first.’ [19.570]

(2.7) *At-matmat-ikh* *ga-ga-ga-ga-gaga* *niterikh*
 3REAL:PL- take.care -VI DUP- DUP- DUP-DUP- on.and.on child
ang *i-lablab* *tokhtokh.*
 ANA 3REAL:SG- big huge
 ‘They looked after the child until he was fully grown.’

(2.8) *I-lukh* *blev* *adr.*
 3REAL:SG- live with 3NSG
 ‘He lived with them.’ [27.744]

(2.9) *Ale,* *ar-lukh* *ga-ga-gaga* *mil*
 then 3REAL:DL- live DUP- DUP- on.and.on again
ari-tbbukh *mil* *niterikh* *ang* *i-skham.*
 3REAL:DL- have again child ANA 3REAL:SG- one
 ‘Then they lived on and on until again they had another child.’ [30.242]

(2.10) *Niterikh* *ang* *ba* *nida* *titi* *i-vu*
 child ANA when mother 3PS 3REAL:SG- go
i-lem, *i-lem* *mil* *nimukhman.*
 3REAL:SG- give.birth 3REAL:SG- give.birth again male
 ‘The child, when its mother went and gave birth, she gave birth again
 to a boy.’ [34.870]

(2.11) *Ale baga niterikh ang igen ei*
 then then child ANA 3REAL:SG- like 3SG
i-rvikh bbutkha si.
 3REAL:SG- good too.much NEG
 ‘That child was, like, he was not good at all.’ [40.818]

(2.12) *Ei nidruman ati-rvikh mokh at-ve*
 3SG body 3REAL:PL- good all 3REAL:PL- COP
nimkhut be nokhon lele titi ang mej
 man but face small 3PS ANA IMM
i-gen i-rvikh-da si.
 3REAL:SG- like 3REAL:SG- good -PART NEG
 ‘His body parts were all good, they were human but his small face,
 like, it wasn't very good.’ [47.036]

(2.13) *Nokhon i-kokngo me i-vukhle.*
 face 3REAL:SG- appear just 3REAL:SG- different
 ‘His face appeared different.’ [53.426]

(2.14) *Ale baga i-maur ar-matmat-ikh,*
 then then 3REAL:SG- live 3REAL:DL- take.care -VI
ar-khita niterikh ar-matmat-ikh ga-ga-gaga,
 3REAL:DL- like child 3REAL:DL- take.care -VI DUP-DUP- on.and.on
 ‘Then, he lived and they cared for him, they liked the child and they
 cared for him on and on.’ [57.362]

- (2.15) *niterikh ang i-lablab tokhtokh.*
 child ANA 3REAL:SG- big huge
 ‘The child grew up.’ [63.197]
- (2.16) *Ale, ba dran i-skham, at-lukh*
 then when TMPPN 3REAL:SG- one 3REAL:PL- live
i-gen lile im-bbu sur krismas mej ing.
 3REAL:SG- like near 3IRR:SG- go near Christmas IMM EXCL
 ‘Then when one time, they were there and like, it was nearly Christmas
 now.’ [65.744]
- (2.17) *Ale, nida adr-ikh mama ar-ver ‘nimt-uv*
 then mother 3NSG -VI father 3REAL:DL- say 1IN:IRR:PL- go
lon stoa, nimt-uv nibit-vul-vul’.
 LOC store 1IN:IRR:PL- go 1IN:IRR:PL- DUP- buy
 ‘The mother and father said ‘We’ll go to the store, we’ll go shopping’.’
 [72.145]
- (2.18) *Ale at-uv at-vavu lon niar*
 so 3REAL:PL- go 3REAL:PL- walk LOC garden
titi khabat,
 3PS:SG European
 ‘So they went and walked to the store.’ [79.372]

- (2.19) *at-vavu lon niar titi khabat ang,*
 3REAL:PL- walk LOC garden 3PS European ANA
at-vavu at-khit-khit netan an
 3REAL:PL- walk 3REAL:PL- DUP-look thing: DEF NMOD
adr abit-vuledr.
 3NSG 3IRR:PL- buy PL

‘They walked to the store, they walked and looked at the things that they could buy.’ [84.041]

- (2.20) *Ale, at-vul-vul ga-ga-ga-ga-ga-ga-gaga*
 then 3REAL:PL- DUP- buy DUP- DUP-DUP- DUP- DUP- DUP- on.and.on
at-vul-vul ati-vlem aiem
 3REAL:PL- DUP -buy 3REAL:PL- come home
 ‘They shopped on and on, they shopped and then they came home.’
 [88.941]

- (2.21) *be ba adr at-uv at-vul-vul*
 but when 3NSG 3REAL:PL- go 3REAL:PL- DUP- buy
ang, mama titi-dr i-vul niten, glas
 ANA father 3ps.pl 3REAL:SG- buy thing:DEF glass
i-skham, nitan i-gen abit-khit
 3REAL:SG- one thing:DEF 3REAL:SG- like 3IRR:PL- see
nimkhut nokhon lon.
 man face Loc

‘When they went shopping, their father bought this thing, a glass, the thing like, they can see a person's face in it.’ [93.609]

(2.22) *Ar-khit-khit nimkhut nimillun lon.*
 IMPS:REAL- DUP- see man reflection Loc
 ‘They can see the reflection of a person in it.’ [103.481]

(2.24) *Ale, baga mitabbukh mej ing lile im-bbu mej*
 then then morning IMM EXCL near 3IRR:SG- go IMM
lon krismas twenti-faev mitabbukh, nida i-tur
 Loc Christmas 25 morning mother 3REAL:SG- get.up
i-ver-ikh kek tokhtokh i-skham.
 3REAL:SG- work -VI cake huge 3REAL:SG- one
 ‘After that, in the morning of the 25th, the mother got up and made a
 big/special cake.’ [107.378]

(2.24) *Ale, i-bbulbul niterikh lele ang ar*
 then 3REAL:SG- shake.awake child small ANA PL
i-ver ‘ale kabit-tur kamt-uv
 3REAL:SG- say well 2IRR:PL- get.up 2IRR:PL- go
kabit-lumlum’.
 2IRR:PL- wash.hands.and.face
 ‘She shook the small children away and said ‘Well, get up and go and
 wash your hands and face’.’ [115.845]

(2.25) *Ale, niterikh lele ang adr ari-blev*
 then child small ANA PL 3REAL:DL- be.with

mama titi-dr at-uv at-lumlum,
 father 3PS.PL 3REAL:PL- go 3REAL:PL- wash.hands.and.face
 ‘The small children and their father went and washed their face and
 hands.’ [121.077]

(2.26) *ati-vlem i-ve at-rus adr.*
 3REAL:PL- come 3REAL:SG- make 3REAL:PL- wear PL
 ‘They came and he made them dress themselves.’ [124.648]

(2.27) *Ale nida i-vus kek ang i-vu*
 then mother 3REAL:SG- carry cake ANA 3REAL:SG- go
i-jik lon tabel an adr abit-vor
 3REAL:SG- put LOC table NMOD 3NSG 3IRR:PL- sit
lon amti-kkan.
 LOC 3IRR:PL- eat
 ‘Mother carried the cake and went and put it on the table where they
 were going to sit and eat.’ [126.661]

(2.28) *Ale ba- ver at-vor at-uv mej*
 then when- say 3REAL:PL- sit 3REAL:PL- go IMM
at-vor ga mama titi-r mej ing
 3REAL:PL- sit and father 3PS.PL IMM EXCL
ibi-ssor, i-ver
 3IRR:SG- speak 3REAL:SG- say
 ‘Then, when they sat, they went and sat, then their father was about to
 speak and he said,’ [131.806]

- (2.29) *'Barnakh krismas mej ing nibit-gel*
 now Christmas IMM EXCL 1IN:IRR:PL- slice
kek t-git, varikh nibit-khan git
 cake PSDT- 1IN:NSG TEMPPOX 1IN:IRR:PL- eat 1IN:NSG
ngatian nimti-vlem nibit-khit-khit nokhon
 many 1IN:IRR:PL- come 1IN:IRR:PL -DUP- see face
git lon an na mira ni-vul tjakh."
 1IN:NSG LOC NMOD 1SG mirror 1REAL:SG- buy here
 ‘‘Now it is Christmas and we'll cut our cake; just before we eat, all of
 us will come and look at our faces in the mirror that I bought here.’’
 [137.404]

- (2.30) *Ale mama titi-dr i-staetem duvakh i-vu*
 then father 3PS-PL 3REAL:SG- start first 3REAL:SG- go
i-khit-khit nokhon.
 3REAL:SG- DUP- see face
 ‘Then their father started first and went and looked at (his) face.’
 [147.810]

- (2.31) *I-vu i-khit-khit nokhon*
 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- DUP - see face
i-suv-suv i-vlem i-vor-vor,
 3REAL:SG- DUP- be.finished 3REAL:SG- come 3REAL:SG- DUP- sit

ale nida titi-dr i-vu.

then mother 3PS-PL 3REAL:SG- go

‘He finished going to look at (his) face and came and sat down and their mother went.’ [152.404]

(2.32) *Nida titi-dr i-vu i-khit-khit*

mother 3PS.PL 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- DUP-see

nokhon, ale i-vlem i-vor-vor.

face then 3REAL:SG- come 3REAL:SG- DUP- sit

‘Their mother went and looked at (her) face and then she came and sat down.’ [157.493]

(2.33) *Ale niterikh an adr at-lem duvakh*

then child NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL- give.birth first

ang i-vu, i-vu i-khit-khit nokhon

ANA 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- look face

lu i-suv-suv ale i-vlem

PERF 3REAL:SG- DUP- be.finished then 3REAL:SG- come

ivorvor.

3REAL:SG- dup- sit

‘Then the child that they gave birth to first went, and having finished looking at his face, he came and sat down.’ [161.509]

(2.34) *An an i-vtakh ang mej i-vu.*

DEMSPN NMOD 3REAL:SG- last ANA IMM 3REAL:SG- go

‘The one who was last went then.’ [167.899]

- (2.35) *Ba i-vu i-tokh i-khit-khit*
 when 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- PROG 3REAL:SG- look
nokhon lon klas ang, ga i-khit nokhon
 face LOC glass ANA and 3REAL:SG- see face
i-is we i-is, nokhon igen
 3REAL:SG- bad AUGCO 3REAL:SG- bad face 3REAL:SG- like
si var nimkhut.
 NEG unfortunate man

‘When he went and was looking at his face in the mirror, then he saw the face was really bad, the face unfortunately wasn't like a man.’
 [170.122]

- (2.36) *Ga i-ver-kh mama titi, i-ver O*
 and 3REAL:SG- say-VI father 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG- say Oh
mama! I-tmakhan okh ku-sisir si
 father 3REAL:SG- how 2SG 2REAL:SG- discuss NEG
na tuan na tue ij
 1SG LOCPSN 1SG long ago ANT

‘Then he said to his father, ‘Oh Dad! How could you not discuss this with me long ago?’’ [177.232]

- (2.37) *kum-bbuer-ikh na kum-bbuer na nokhon na*
 2IRR:SG- say -VI 1SG 2IRR:SG- say 1SG face 1SG
i-rvikh si.
 3REAL:SG- good NEG

‘‘You (should have told) me my face isn't good.’’ [184.205]

(2.38) *Il na ni-lukh i-gang, na*
 CAUSE 1SG 1REAL:SG- live 3REAL:SG- like.so 1SG
ni-rongil si se na nokhon na
 1REAL:SG- know NEG COMP 1SG face 1SG
i-gang.
 3REAL:SG- like.so

‘‘Because I lived like that (but) I didn't know that my face was like so.’’ [187.084]

(2.39) *Nollon var i-is we i-is*
 heart unfortunate 3REAL:SG- bad AUGCO 3REAL:SG- bad
ga i-dri ei, idas vere.
 and 3REAL:SG- turn 3SG 3REAL:SG- go.down outside
 ‘His poor heart was very bad and he turned around and went outside.’
 [191.059]

(2.40) *Ga mama titi i-ver ‘Kum-bbulem*
 and father 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG- say 2IRR:SG- come
nakh; na ni-khita i-okh okh varikh
 here 1SG 1REAL:SG- like PSNPR- 2SG 2SG TEMPprox
na ni-rongrok we ni-rongrok okh’
 1SG 1REAL:SG- want AUGCO 1REAL:SG- want 2SG
 ‘And his father said ‘Come here; I like you absolutely, I really love you.’’ [196.029]

(2.41) *Be niterikh ang i-setta si nitan*
 but child ANA 3REAL:SG- remember NEG thing:DEF
mama titi i-ver i-vu.
 father 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG- say 3REAL:SG- go
 ‘But the child didn't remember what his father said; he went.’ [201.849]

(2.42) *I-vu-vu-vu mej il im-loj*
 3REAL:SG- DUP- DUP- go IMM PURPOSE 3IRR:SG- bend
lon nimdali, im-das vere.
 LOC door 3IRR:SG- go.down outside
 ‘He went slowly then to bend in the door and go outside.’ [205.452]

(2.43) *Mama titi mil i-kke tuan.*
 father 3PS:SG again 3REAL:SG- call LOCPSN
 ‘His father again called out to him.’ [209.396]

(2.44) *I-ver ‘nimkhut t-na var, kum-bbulem;*
 3REAL:SG- say man PSDT- 1SG unfortunate 2IRR:SG- come
na ni-khita bburvur okh, na ni-rongrok
 1SG 1REAL:SG- like completely 2SG 1SG 1REAL:SG- want
okh we ni-rongrok okh.’
 2SG AUGCO 1REAL:SG- want 2SG
 ‘He said ‘My poor son, come; I like you very much; I really love you.’
 [211.431]

(2.45) *Ale niterikh lele ang i-dri mil*
 then child small ANA 3REAL:SG- turn again
ei varikh i-vlem.
 3SG TEMPPOX 3REAL:SG- come
 ‘Then the small child turned around again and he came right away.’
 [216.857]

(2.46) *I-vlem ale at-uv at-vor-vor*
 3-REAL:SG- come then 3REAL:PL- go 3REAL:PL- sit
ale nida titi-dr i-gel kek ang
 then mother 3PS:PL 3REAL:SG- slice cake ANA
at-letu lu ale ati-kkan.
 3REAL:PL- pray PERF then 3REAL:PL- eat
 ‘He came and they went and sat and their mother cut the cake; after
 they prayed, they ate.’ [220.157]

(2.47) *Ati-kkan lu i-suv-suv ale*
 3REAL:PL- eat PERF 3REAL:SG- DUP- be.finished then
at-uv mej il abit-sukul ing.
 3REAL:PL- go IMM PURPOSE 3IRR:PL- go.to.church EXCL
 ‘Having finished eating, they went right away to go to church.’
 [227.237]

(2.48) *Stori ang i-suv-suv mej tang.*
 story ANA 3REAL:SG- DUP-be.finished IMM there
 ‘The story is finished there.’ [232.815]

3. *Nibongva* ‘The Circumcision Ceremony’[NVKI02]

Text three is an extract from the Custom Interview collection [NVKI]. In this extract, Chief James Bangsukh (approximately 60 years old) of Limap village talks about traditional circumcision practices of the Neverver speakers. The text was recorded on 20 October, 2004, and Chief James was speaking to a small group of men from Limap village, as I recorded his comments. The topic was self-selected and highlights the important role that the maternal uncle plays in the life of his nephews.

(3.4) *I-na mil tjakh i-na James Bangsukh.*
 PSNPR- 1SG again here PSNPR- 1SG James Bangsukh
 ‘I, here again, I’m James Bangsukh.’ [41.445]

(3.5) *Ni-tbbukh no-ssor-ian i-skham il*
 1REAL:SG- have NPR- speak -NSF 3REAL:SG- one CAUSE
ni-ver nim-sisir kumam kumam
 1REAL:SG- want 1IRR:SG- discuss 1EX:NSG 1EX:NSG
no-ssor-ian an Neverver
 NPR- speak -NSF NMOD Neverver
kumam nemakh Midu
 1EX:NSG denizen Mindu
 ‘I have a story because I want to talk about, I want to talk about us, us,
 in the language of Neverver, us, the Mindu people.’ [46.668]

(3.6) *nitan ni-ver nim-sisir ang*
 thing:DEF 1REAL:SG- want 1IRR:SG- discuss ANA
at-ver te nibongva
 3REAL:PL- say COMP circumcision
 ‘The thing I want to talk about, they called the Nibongva (circumcision)
 ceremony.’ [64.916]

(3.7) *nibongva, niterikh- mukhman i-yaljokh*
 circumcision child- male 3REAL:SG- run.away
nida titi i-vu i-bakhbakh
 mother 3PS:SG 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:SG- hide
im-bbulev me nimukhman adr lume
 3IRR:SG- with just male PL only
 ‘About the Nibongva ceremony, a boy left his mother and went and just
 hid with the men only.’ [73.148]

(3.8) *nimokhmokh i-vev si, i-khitrokh si*
 female 3REAL:SG- go to NEG 3REAL:SG- see NEG
 ‘A woman couldn't go, she couldn't see (the child).’ [82.735]

(3.9) *niterikh at-ve nibongva*
 child 3REAL:PL- did circumcision
 ‘The children do the Nibongva ceremony.’ [85.435]

(3.10) *nibongva, lon mam no-ssor-ian t-mam*
 circumcision LOC 1EX:NSG NPR- speak -NSF PSDT- 1EX:NSG
nat-ver nibongva be no-ssor-ian an
 1EX:REAL:PL- say circumcision but NPR- speak -NSF NMOD
nimkhut balian at-rongil, ar-ver 'sekomsaes'
 man all 3REAL:PL- know IMPS:REAL- say circumcision
 'Nibongva in our language, we say 'Nibongva' but in the language that
 everyone knows (i.e. Bislama), they say 'sekomsaes'. [87.309]

(3.11) *il niskhan ar-ver nibongva?*
 CAUSE what IMPS:REAL- say circumcision
 'Why do they say Nibongva?' [97.173]

(3.12) *ar-ver nibongva il ar-ver*
 IMPS:REAL- say circumcision CAUSE IMPS:REAL- say
te ar-ve- bkhas niterikh- mukhman
 COMP IMPS:REAL- make- clean child- male
 'They say Nibongva because they say they make the boys clean.'
 [102.066]

(3.13) *niterikh- mukhman ib-lukh ga-ga-gaga*
 child male 3IRR:SG- live DUP- DUP- on.and.on
im-bbue nimkhut
 3IRR:SG- COP man
 'A boy will stay until he is a man.' [115.087]

- (3.14) *barnakh ar-sus si niterikh mokhmokh be*
 now IMPS:REAL- ask NEG child female but
tue, khavut- tro at-matmat-ikh me
 long.ago husband- old 3REAL:PL- take.care -VI just
niterikh- mukhman titi-dr ba i-ve
 child- male 3PS-PL when 3REAL:SG- COP
nimkhut, at-uv at-khit bibi,
 man 3REAL:PL- go 3REAL:PL- see maternal.uncle
bibi titi im-bbu niterikh ang,
 maternal.uncle 3PS:SG 3IRR:SG- go child ANA
il bibi im-sus niterikh- vidro
 CAUSE maternal.uncle 3IRR:SG- ask pre-adolescent.girl
ibi-skham tuan khavut- tro ibi-skham il
 3IRR:SG- one LOCPSN husband- old 3IRR:SG- one PURPOSE
im-bbul il niterikh- mukhman titi.
 3IRR:SG- buy BENE. child- male 3PS:SG

‘Now they don’t ask for a woman but before, the old men just looked after their boys (and) when he was a man, they went and saw the maternal uncle, the maternal uncle of the child because the maternal uncle was going to go and ask for a girl from a man to buy (her) for his boy.’ [120.477]

- (3.15) *Oke, ba i-gang, im-bbul lu*
 okay when 3REAL:SG- like.so 3IRR:SG- buy COMPL

niterikh- mokhmokh am-lik niterikh- mukhman
 child female IMPS:IRR- pass child male
titi, ar-tokh
 3PS:SG 3REAL:DL- exist

‘When it was so, he was going to pay off the girl, and they would give (her) to the boy, they lived together.’ [147.918]

- (3.16) *be im-kharikh ei im-bbue nitan*
 but 3IRR:SG- TEMPprox 3SG 3IRR:SG- do thing:DEF
i-jing, niterikh ba i-ve
 3REAL:SG- be.there child when 3REAL:SG- do
nibongva, netan mama adr-ikh nida
 circumcision thing:DEF father 3NSG -VI mother
ar-ve i-vuvam abir-ver te ang
 3REAL:DL- do 3REAL:SG- first 3IRR:DL- say COMP ANA
wallas im-bbu tuan niterikh bibi
 thank-you 3IRR:SG- go LOCPSN child maternal.uncle
titi-dr, bbubbu titi-dr.
 3PS.PL grandfather 3PS.PL

‘But before he was going to do that thing, the child, when he did the Nibongva, the thing (his) father and mother did first, they would say thank-you to the child’s maternal uncles and grandfathers.’ [159.568]

- (3.17) *Wallas an i-jing adr at-ve*
 thank-you NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.there 3NSG 3REAL:PL- do

il nisin man?

BENE. thing:INDEF EMPH

‘Those thanks, did they do them for something?’ [182.013]

(3.18) *at-ve il, mama adr-ikh nida ar-ve*

3REAL:PL- do CAUSE father 3NSG -VI mother 3REAL:DL- do

nitan i-jing il niterikh mukhman

thing:DEF 3REAL:SG- be.there CAUSE child male

titi-dr i-dran, nidruman i-dran.

3PS.PL 3REAL:SG- bleed body 3REAL:SG- bleed

‘They did it because, the father and mother did that thing because their son bled, (his) body bled.’ [187.545]

(3.19) *ar-tek nisib, nidruman niterikh titi-dr i-dran.*

IMPS:REAL- strike knife body child 3PS.PL 3REAL:SG- bleed

‘They cut him with a knife, the body of their child bled.’ [199.426]

(3.20) *Ale, nida adr-ikh mama barnakh an-jing*

so mother 3NSG -VI father now that

ni-sisien-ian i-skham i-tokh lon adr

NPR- decide -NSF 3REAL:SG- one 3REAL:SG- exist LOC 3NSG

il adr mas abri-rkhas il

PURPOSE 3NSG must 3IRR:DL- make.compensation CAUSE

niterikh ang i-dran, *niterikh ang i-dran*
 child ANA 3REAL:SG- bleed child ANA 3REAL:SG- bleed

‘So, the mother and father, at that time, a decision was in them, for they had to make compensation because their child bled, their child bled.’ [205.941]

(3.21) *nedre an i-jing* *adr abir-vul*
 blood NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.there 3NSG 3IRR:DL- buy
im-bev *aran nimkhudan niterikh ang adr*
 3IRR:SG- go to LOC family child ANA PL
be nokho nimdan, nimkhut an adr
 but vine eye man NMOD 3NSG
abir-ve *ngosgon niterikh ang adr*
 3IRR:DL- make present child ANA 3NSG
im-bbuev aran, mej bibi. *ngosgon niterikh*
 3IRR:SG- go to LOC IMM maternal.uncle present child
ang adr im-bbuev aran, mej bibi.
 ANA 3NSG 3IRR:SG- go to LOC IMM maternal.uncle

‘That blood, they were going to pay to all the family of the child, but the centre of the vine, the man who they would make the child's gifts go to, was the maternal uncle.’ [218.223]

(3.22) *bibi* *an i-m-yang* *blev mej*
 maternal.uncle NMOD 3REAL:SG- STATIVE- be.born with IMM

nida an i-lem niterikh ang

mother NMOD 3REAL:SG- give.birth child ANA

‘The uncle who was born with the mother who gave birth to the child.’

[236.900]

(3.23) *kut an i-jing, ar-ve*

LOCPN NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.there 3REAL:DL- do

i-gang il bibi ib-rongil

3REAL:SG- like.so PURPOSE maternal.uncle 3IRR:SG- know

netan im-bbue aran khalan nabbung

thing:DEF 3IRR:SG- make LOC nephew day

an im-bbulem deb

NMOD 3IRR:SG- come CONT

‘That place, they did like that, so that the maternal uncle would know

the thing to do for his nephew in the days still to come.’ [241.479]

(3.24) *i-ve i-gang nida adr-ikh*

3REAL:SG- COP 3REAL:SG- like.so mother 3NSG -VI

mama ar-ve ngosgon niterikh i-vev

father 3REAL:DL- make present child 3REAL:SG- go to

kut an i-jing il ang

LOCPN NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.there PURPOSE ANA

‘It was like so, the mother and father made the child's present go to that

place for that purpose.’ [256.436]

Text Four: [NVKS07] *Nakhabb* ‘Fire’

Text four is a Neverver legend from the Traditional Story (*Kastom Stori*) collection. Told by Lerakhsil Moti (approximately 75 years) of Sarmette, this legend describes how two young girls were instructed on the use of fire to cook breadfruit by a man they met in the bush. The text was recorded in Lingarakh Village on 25 September 2005.

(4.1) *Na nikhijan na Lerakhsil Moti.*

1SG name 1SG Lerakhsil Moti

‘My name is Lerakhsil Moti.’ [0.0]

(4.2) *No-ssor-ian an nim-bbuer ang tue*

NPR- speak -NSF NMOD 1IRR:SG- say ANA long ago

an an man an at-tokh tue

DEMSPN NMOD man NMOD 3REAL:PL- exist long ago

nakhabb i-vangvang si.

fire 3REAL:SG- be.alight NEG

‘The story that I’ll tell, long ago, in the time of the men who lived, long ago, fire didn’t burn.’ [6.94]

(4.3) *Nakhabb vangvang i-tokh si.*

fire be.alight 3REAL:SG- exist NEG

‘There was no fire.’ [19.822]

(4.4) *Ale, nat-khan me ni-kkan-ian*
 so 1EX:REAL:PL- eat just NPR- eat -NSF
an i-mrekh
 NMOD 3REAL:SG- raw

‘So, we just ate food that was raw.’ [22.154]

(4.5) *Nat-khan nibet.*
 1EX:REAL:PL- eat breadfruit

‘We ate breadfruit.’ [28.383]

(4.6) *Nat-tav nibet, nat-khan.*
 1EX:REAL:PL- spear breadfruit 1EX:REAL:PL- eat

‘We speared breadfruit and ate it.’ [30.386]

(4.7) *Ale, las i-skham, lokhavre an*
 then occasion:INDEF 3REAL:SG- one village NMOD
nat-somda nakhabb t-nam, lokhavre
 1EX:REAL:PL- discover fire PSDT- 1EX:NSG village
an nikhijan Bongrari.
 NMOD name Bongrari

‘Then one time, the village where we found our fire, that village was called Bongrari.’ [32.593]

(4.8) *Mokhmokh i-skham blev khavut titi*
 female 3REAL:SG- one with husband 3PS:SG

ari-tbbukh niterikh ang ivas.
 3REAL:DL- have child ANA 3REAL:SG- four

‘A women, with her husband, they had four children.’ [42.21]

(4.9) *Niterikh titi-r ar-tokh-tokh, adr*
 child 3PS-PL 3REAL:DL- DUP- exist 3NSG
ar-uv lakha.
 3REAL:DL- go bush

‘(Two of) their children stayed and two went to the bush.’ [53.356]

(4.10) *Ar-das ari-vlem, ari-vlem*
 3REAL:DL- go.down 3REAL:DL- come 3REAL:DL- come
lakha titi-dr Niobittan.
 bush 3PS.PL Niobittan

‘They came down, they came to their bush atNiobittan.’ [56.044]

(4.11) *Ale, ba ver-t i-gang,*
 then when say - COMP 3REAL: SG- like.so
niterikh- mokhmokh at-tokh-tokh, at-lukh-lukh
 child female 3REAL:PL- DUP- exist 3REAL:PL- DUP- live
gaga, ale, niterikh- mokhmokh ang adr
 on.and.on then child - female ANA PL
ar-uv ar-vavu lakha.
 3REAL:DL- go 3REAL:DL- walk bush

‘Then, when it was so, the girls stayed there, they stayed for a while,
 and then (two of) the girls went walking to the bush.’ [63.284]

(4.12) *Ba ar-vavu lakha titi-dr, ar-leb*
 when 3REAL:DL- walk bush 3PS-PL 3REAL:DL- carry
nakhabb, ar-rot nisin i-skham
 fire 3REAL:DL- hear thing:INDEF 3REAL:SG- one
i-ngar.

3REAL:SG- cry

‘They walked to their bush, they carried firewood, and they heard something cry.’ [77.476]

(4.13) *Ba i-ngar i-gang nilang ang*
 when 3REAL:SG- cry 3REAL:SG- like.so wind ANA
i-vu-vuv nakha ang i-vadradr
 3REAL:SG- DUP- blow tree ANA 3REAL:SG- rub.noisily
ale nakhabb ang i-da-das.

then fire ANA 3REAL:SG- DUP- go.down

‘When it cried like that, the wind blew, the wood rubbed and then the fire went down.’ [85.029]

(4.14) *Ba i-da-das i-gang, niterikh-*
 when 3REAL:SG- DUP- go.down 3REAL:SG- like.so child
mokhmokh lele ar-tur ari-tvis
 female small 3REAL:DL- stand 3REAL:DL- look.dir
ar-khit nakhabb ang i-da-das.

3REAL:DL- see fire ANG 3REAL:SG- DUP- go.down

‘When it went down like that, the small girls stood and looked around and saw the fire go down.’ [90.441]

(4.15) *Ba ar-uv ari-sber nakhabb ang,*
 when 3REAL:DL- go 3REAL:DL- touch fire ANA
nakhabb ang i-khan i-ttes adr.
 fire ANA 3REAL:SG- eat 3REAL:SG- emphatic 3NSG
 ‘When they went and touched the fire, the fire burned them painfully.’
 [96.241]

(4.16) *Ba ver-t i-gang ale, ar-lav,*
 when say - COMP 3REAL:SG- like.so then 3REAL:DL- get
ar-tur tuan, ale, nimkhut i-skham
 3REAL:DL- stand LOCPSN then man 3REAL:SG- one
i-vlem i-ver-ikh adr i-ver
 3REAL:SG- come 3REAL:SG- say -VI 3NSG 3REAL:SG- say
te ‘kabr-lav nakhabb an i-jakh,
 COMP 2IRR:DL- get fire NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.here
netan- jakh, kabr-uv kabir-vu-vuv aiem.’
 thing:DEF be.here 2IRR:DL- go 2IRR:DL- DUP- blow home
 ‘When it was so, they got it and stood there and then a man came and
 said to them, a man came and said to them ‘Get this fire, this thing, and
 go and blow on it at home.’ [100.201]

(4.17) *Ale, kabri-tn nibet t-gam lon.*
 then 2IRR:DL- roast breadfruit PSDT- 2NSG LOC
 ‘‘Then, roast your breadfruit on it.’ [114.002]

(4.18) *Kabri-tn nibet ang i-mmas,*
 2IRR:DL- roast breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG- be.dry
kabir-khan, kabit-khan."
 2IRR:DL- eat 2IRR:PL- eat
 "Roast the breadfruit until it is cooked, then eat it, you all eat it."
 [117.446]

(4.19) *Ale, nitlele ang ar-dev nakhabb*
 then small.child ANA 3REAL:DL- carry.fire fire
ang i-vu, ar-vu-vuv, ari-tn
 ANA 3REAL:SG- go 3REAL:DL- DUP- blow 3REAL:DL- roast
nibet titi-dr.
 breadfruit 3PS-PL
 'Then, the small children carried the fire away and blew on it and
 roasted their breadfruit.' [121.334]

(4.20) *Nibet an ari-tn ang, iskham*
 breadfruit NMOD 3REAL:DL- roast ANA INDEF.PN
nibet ang nikhijan nibet-tuag,
 breadfruit ANA name k.o.breadfruit
iskham nikhijan nijavi
 INDEF.PN name k.o.breadfruit
 'The breadfruit that they cooked, one breadfruit was called Nibet tuag,
 and one was called Nijavi. [127.623]

(4.21) *Ale, ari-tn nibet ang.*

so 3REAL:DL- roast breadfruit ANA

‘So, they roasted the breadfruit.’ [137.926]

(4.22) *Ari-tn nibet ang, mama titi-dr adr-ikh*

3REAL:DL- roast breadfruit ANA father 3PS-PL 3NSG -VI

nida titi-dr ar-ver lakha ga-ga-gaga

mother 3PS.PL 3REAL:DL- work bush DUP- DUP- on.and.on

ba ver-t ari-vlem aiem, livrav.

when say - COMP 3REAL:DL- come home afternoon

‘They roasted the breadfruit, and their father and mother worked in the bush on and on and when they came home, it was afternoon.’ [139.533]

(4.23) *Ba ari-vlem, ar-rot nabbun nisin*

when 3REAL:DL- come 3REAL:DL- feel smell thing:INDEF

i-skham i-tokh, ar-ver ‘niskhan

3REAL:SG- one 3REAL:SG- exist 3REAL:DL- say what

nabbun itokh ang?’

smell 3REAL:SG- exist ANA

‘When they came, they sensed the smell of a thing there and they said,

‘What smell is there?’’ [146.861]

(4.24) *‘Nabbun nitan-jakh nit-rongil vasi.’*

smell thing:DEF - be.here 1IN:REAL:PL- know not.yet

‘‘The smell of this thing, we don’t know it yet.’’ [152.616]

(4.25) *Ari-vlem aiem, ar-khit nakhabb ang*
 3REAL:DL- come home 3REAL:DL- see fire ANA
i-vangvang man.
 3REAL:SG- be.alight EMPH
 ‘They came home and saw the fire burning.’ [155.55]

(4.26) *Ba nakhabb ang i-vangvang ga*
 when fire ANA 3REAL:SG- be.alight then
ar-ver ‘Niskhan ing?’
 3REAL:DL- say what EXCL
 ‘When the fire burned, then they said, ‘What’s this?’’ [160.893]

(4.27) *Baga niterikh lele ang at-ver te,*
 then child small ANA 3REAL:PL- say COMP
niterikh- mokhmokh ar-ver ‘nakhabb anjakh
 child- female 3REAL:DL- say fire this
nar-somda me akhsung Bongrari.’
 1EX:REAL:DL- discover just inland Bongrari
 ‘The small children said, the girls said ‘This fire, we just found it up at
 Bongrari.’’ [164.073]

(4.28) *‘Nimkhut i-skham i-vlem i-ver-ikh*
 man 3REAL:SG- one 3REAL:SG- come 3REAL:SG- say-VI
nam i-ver nabir-lav nakhabb
 1EX:NSG 3REAL:SG- say 1EX:IRR:DL- get fire

ang im-bbulem nabir-vu-vuv, nabritn
 ANA 3IRR:SG- come 1EX:IRR:DL- DUP- blow 1EX:IRR:DL- roast
nibet nakh nabir-khan, nabit-khan.'
 breadfruit here 1EX:IRR:DL- eat 1EX:IRR:PL- eat
 ‘‘A man came and told us to bring the fire and blow on it and roast
 breadfruit here and eat it, and all eat it.’’ [171.308]

(4.29) *Ba nat-ve i-gang, ale*
 when 1EX:REAL:PL- do 3REAL:SG- like.so then
nat-khan nat-rot i-rvikh,
 1EX:REAL:PL- eat 1EX:REAL:PL- feel 3REAL:SG- good
ale, at-t-gam nibet ang i-tokh
 and PSPN- PSDT- 2NSG breadfruit ANA 3REAL:SG- exist
man tjakh kabir-khan
 EMPH here 2IRR:DL- eat
 ‘‘When we did that, we ate it and we felt good; your breadfruit is here
 to eat.’’ [180.325]

(4.30) *(Ba ar-khan nibet ang,) mang*
 when 3REAL:DL- eat breadfruit ANA man:ANA
adr at-lav mama titi-r, nida titi-r
 PL 3REAL:PL- get father 3PS-PL mother 3PS-PL
ar-khan nibet ar-rot i-rvikh
 3REAL:DL- eat breadfruit 3REAL:DL- feel 3REAL:SG- good

we i-rvikh.

AUGCo 3REAL:SG- good

‘(When they ate the breadfruit,) they got their mother and their father,
and they ate the breadfruit and felt really good.’ [186.106]

- (4.31) *I-gen ni-vuvam-ian an, adr at-khan*
3REAL:SG- like NPR- first -NSF NMOD 3NSG 3REAL:PL- eat
i-mrekh me ni-kkan-an, at-khan si
3REAL:SG- raw just NPR- eat -NSF 3REAL:PL- eat NEG
ni-kkan-ian an i-mmas lon nakhabb.
NPR- eat -NSF NMOD 3REAL:SG- be.dry LOC fire

‘It was like, at first, they just ate raw food, they didn't eat food that was
cooked on the fire.’ [192.801]

- (4.32) *Be mang me i-lav nakhabb ang*
but man:ANA just 3REAL:SG- get fire ANA
i-lik adr, ari-tn nibet ang
3REAL:SG- pass 3NSG 3REAL:DL- roast breadfruit ANA
lon i-mmas, ale, ar-vu-vuv
LOC 3REAL:SG- be.dry then 3REAL:DL- DUP- blow
at-ve-bbur nibet ang at-khan
3REAL:PL- make - swell breadfruit ANA 3REAL:PL- eat

Appendix V

Semantic Relations

The following Semantic Relations are employed to describe participants in situations (events, actions and states). The list is an expansion of Van Valin's (2001:31) Thematic Relations.

Semantic Relations	Semantic Macroroles
Agent	Prototypical Actor
Experiencer (cognizer, perceiver, emoter)	
Beneficiary	
Recipient (given to, sent to...)	
Comitative (volitional)	
Associative (non-volitional)	
Instrument	
Stimulus (seen, heard...)	
Theme (located, moved, given...)	
Patient (broken, destroyed, killed...)	Prototypical Undergoer