A grammar sketch of North Tanna
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Abstract

This master’s thesis is a sketch grammar of the Austronesian North Tanna language of Vanuatu. The analysis is based on translations of a North Tanna and English version of the New Testament. This work is also an evaluation and experiment of using Bible translation as a primary source for investigating the grammatical features of a language. The result is an overview of the basic areas of the grammar of North Tanna, such as over all morphology with certain focus on verbal affixation, and some general observations on syntactical features such as valency, clause linking and subordination. There is no phonological analysis since the used data is in written form. The sketch is a base which can be used for further research to either study more of the grammar of North Tanna, or to do comparative work to other languages.
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<td>trial</td>
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1 Introduction

This chapter consists of basic information about the North Tanna language. 1.1 presents genetic, demographic and geographical information, and is followed by section 1.2, mentioning previous work on North Tanna and other Vanuatu languages. Section 1.3 introduces the sources used for this specific paper and how they were used. Finally, section 1.4 presents the theoretical approach to the grammar sketch, along with a discussion of the method of using only written sources and Bible translations as data.

1.1 About North Tanna

1.1.1 Affiliation and basics

North Tanna is an Austronesian language spoken in the northern parts of Tanna Island, Vanuatu. North Tanna belongs to the Tanna family of the South Vanuatu branch. The island of Tanna belongs to the Tafea province, along with Aneityum, Futuna, Erromango and Aniwa. North Tanna’s local name is ninaka, which translates to ‘say what’ (Nehrbass 2012, p. 3), but since most of the sources use ‘North Tanna’ I will refer to it as such as well for convenience. There are a total of 111 languages spoken in Vanuatu, while the official languages are Bislama, English and French (Ethnologue 2018). According to the 2009 National population and Housing Census, about 63% of Vanuatuans speak a ‘local language’ privately, that is to say, a language which is not any of the three above. According to Lynch et al. (2001, p. 6) North Tanna had around 5000 speakers in 2001, which at present seems to be the most recent number. Unfortunately, the 2009 census does not give any specific information on any of the ‘local languages’, and does not provide speaker numbers. The other Tanna languages are Whitesands, Lenakel, Kwamera and Southwest Tanna (Ethnologue 2018). Lynch et al. (2001, p. 5) write that the dialectal relations of Tanna languages are complicated and that it is difficult to draw concrete boundaries between the languages and dialects. Lindstrom writes that linguistic or geographical boundaries are not the most defining social divider on Tanna (Lindstrom 1983, p. 396), which might explain why the boundaries are hard to draw.

1.1.2 Typological profile

North Tanna is an agglutinative, nomino-accusative language where much of the grammatical information is marked on the verb. The verb takes affixation for subject, number, negation, direction, tense and aspect. The pronominal system shows distinctions between first person exclusive and inclusive, and between singular, dual, trial and plural. The word order is SVO, and there is no morphological marking of case, but there are some object pronouns, and three dative pronouns for singular number. There are a number of prepositions, four of which are discussed here, and an indefinite but no definite article for nouns. There are also some morphological features which are yet to be fully classified due to the scope of the work. For example there is the verbal prefix m-, possibly marking convers, and the verbal suffix -in which is connected to transitivity.
1.2 Previous Work

The North Tanna language is not completely undocumented, but the sources available are rather sparse, especially when it comes to grammar. Lynch (2001) describes the history and genealogical relations between the Southern Vanuatu languages. Lynch et al. (2001) is a collection and summary of descriptions of all Vanuatu languages, and also Tryon (1976) has an overview and comparison of the Vanuatu languages. He focuses mostly on phonology and lexicon, and his work includes a word list of some 300 words. Another lexical source is Nehrbass (2012), which discusses the lexicon of Tanna’s five largest languages and one of its dialects. There is a short but concise chapter on North Tanna grammar by Blaymires in *A grammar in Comparative Austronesian Dictionary: An Introduction to Austronesian Studies* (1995). Lastly, Lindstrom (1983) discusses the boundaries between all Tanna languages, focusing more on political and social topics rather than the structure of the languages of Tanna.

1.3 Sources for the present study

The main source for this grammar is the North Tanna New Testament, (NT) translated by Greg and Beth Ann Carlson. They have contributed by providing me with an unpublished ‘back-translation’ in English, which they have worked on along with several other people. This has been very helpful for many reasons, the main one being corresponding translations. The NT is itself based on several versions of the Bible, and by having only one which corresponds better to the North Tanna version, I have saved much time.
and effort. The back translation has also proved to be very useful in cases where grammatical information has been included. For example, North Tanna shows an inclusive/exclusive distinction in pronouns and verbs, whereas English does not. In some cases the back translation conveniently includes this information such as ‘we (incl.) went’, or similar constructions. Mostly there are no notes on grammar however. The English version is also at times very literal in its translation, and occasionally has some spelling errors. Understandably it has not been formatted or proof read for my convenience alone, but simply having this document has been of much importance, and I am grateful for being allowed to use it. To make the example sentences clearer, some glossed examples also include a new English translation, when the reader could benefit from it. The original back translation is also kept in the glossed examples, since it at many times can help support claims made about the grammar and/or lexicon.

Most of the examples in this thesis come from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles. One reason to this is that they are some of the longest books, but also when searching manually in a text document, they occur first in the text. Whenever possible, the examples are complete sentences, which Camp et al. (2018, pp. 289-290) believes is a good way to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

The chapter by Blaymires (1995), henceforth BL, is the source which provides the most grammatical information, and despite it being only a few pages long, it has been a very useful source for introducing the basics of North Tanna, and her sketch has functioned as a stepping stone to further figure out the grammatical functions. Some of Blaymires work agrees well with the findings presented here, while others do not. This paper will not engage in investigating much as to why that is, but one very plausible reason is that there are dialectal or other regional differences. As mentioned, Lynch et al. (2001, p. 5), writes that the relation between the languages is not entirely clear, and that classification is difficult. Some examples of where there might be dialectal differences can be found in the section on the verbal subject marker in 2.3.3.1.

Another very helpful source is Nehrbass’s work on the lexicon of Tanna languages, in *A Comprehensive Comparison of Lexemes in the Major Languages of Tanna, Vanuatu* (2012), henceforth referred to as NH. It consists of a wordlist with approximately 1700 words (which also includes some occasional grammatical information), along with some more in-depth comparative lexical studies. Using this has enabled this paper to focusing more on the grammar, and not discussing lexical meanings on top of the grammatical. Most, but not all, lexical glosses in the examples are also found in NH, sometimes with different spelling. At times it also proved useful to compare to the other languages which are included in the word list. Aside from North Tanna, the remaining examined five languages in NH are Lenakel, Kwamera, Whitesands, Southwest Tanna and one of its dialects, Vaha. Nonetheless the information should be approached with caution for a number of reasons.

The sketch is first and foremost a grammar based on Bible translations, and if a word in Nehbrass’s list does not to agree with the NT, the gloss will instead use whatever word is fitting based on the translation and other occurrences of the word in the rest of NT. Tryon (1976) also provides a word list for North Tanna in *The languages of The New Hebrides*, which has proven to be useful especially for North Tanna.
numerals. However it has been preferable to consult Nehrbass for lexicon when possible, since his word list is newer, longer and share more similar spelling to NT.

For times when neither BL or NH succeeded in giving insight, two grammars of the closest related languages, Whitesands and Lenakel have been used for clues. Nehrbass (2012, p. 16) says there is a 70% lexical similarity between N Tanna and Whitesands, and 71% with Lenakel. Of course, no claims here are based entirely on the grammar of another language, but consulting these grammars have lead to some important aspects. One example is the relation and similarities between the Whitesand postclitic =i and the North Tanna -in. More about this can be found in section 2.4.4. Finally, The North Tanna New Testament uses some Bislama loans for certain words. In these cases they have been cross checked with the *A New Bislama Dictionary* (Crowley 1995).

So, to say this grammar is completely Bible based would not be entirely correct. Without Nehrbass and Blaymires the results would have been very different, and I have also briefly been in contact with the translators of the New Testament, Greg and Beth Ann Carlson.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The main aim of this thesis is to offer a sketch grammar to people having an interest in the languages of Tanna and Vanuatu, and grammars in general. This is not a complete grammar but hopefully this sketch will help others to learn about North Tanna. The goal is also to contribute to the overall typological research that requires cross-examination of languages all over the world.

This grammar will use ‘basic linguistic theory’, as discussed and described by Robert Dixon’s work *Basic linguistic theory* (2010), for working with language descriptions. One prerequisite for basic linguistic theory is that it should be considered a natural science. This means that human languages is a whole complex system that requires “detailed observation and examination” (Dixon 2010, p. 1) in order to form theories and hypotheses about languages, and the relations between them. This, very broadly speaking, is the area of typology, i.e. the cross comparison of the languages of the world, in order to explain what defines languages and how they are related. Dixon writes that the descriptive work is a vital foundation for typological studies, and says that basic linguistic theory is to “apply same labels to similar phenomena in different languages” (Dixon 2010, p. 11).

The ideas of basic linguistic theory contrasts to areas of linguistics where only certain features are compared, without any regard to other features (Dixon 2010, p. 3). These ‘formal theories’ as he describes them, are more focused on specific areas, and more out of context. Dixon claims that instead of doing analysis on these isolated theories, one should instead acquire the whole concept, by aiming to capture a broad and much more general view of languages. The aim should then be to describe a language as thorough as possible, to enable further typological studies between languages. This in turn creates more understanding of the relationship between languages, and linguists can make suggestions to what separates them and what connects them. This is what I will hope to accomplish with this grammar, and why I have chosen to write a sketch grammar of a relatively undocumented language, which hopefully will be another
contribution to the never ending work of typology.

Another aim for this work is to try and evaluate the process of working with Bible translations as a primary source of language data. First it should be noted that it has been done before, although it is rather uncommon. One example is Dryer’s work with Kara-Lemakot (Dryer 2013), where he also used the New Testament as language data. The basics here is much the same as with Dryer, with the exception that this work consciously uses external data as well as the Bible translations, whereas Dryer deliberately decided not to. Dryer does not discuss his methods in detail, but this will be a bit more transparent in how well this method works for writing a grammar, and it will be discussed and evaluated further in chapter 3.

The work process has been a combination of translating sections of text and searching for specific features. Blaymires sketch (and occasionally NH) provides with information about grammar, which then is accounted for by examining example sentences in NT. The other procedure is the opposite, where text from NT is translated in order to account for every word and morpheme present. Very often one example sentence covering one aspect will lead to questions on another, and so on, which eventually leads to a somewhat basic understanding of the grammar. For more complex searches in the documents, I have used the ubuntu terminal using mostly the GNU grep command (Haertel 2018). This is helpful in many ways to for example search for possible verb forms, confirm if certain markers can be used for certain words and so on. However, most of the work in the thesis has been more manual. This means there are no statistically proven statements, but rather observations which have been attested by simply reading much of the source material. The NT is available online on the STEP Bible project website, (Burrell et al. 2018) which lets the user compare verses side by side with a large number of other Bible translations. Unfortunately this did not help much with the actual grammar since the back translation provided by the Carlsons is not a published Bible version, and is therefore not an option among the STEP Bible collections.

Dixon (2010, p. 2) writes that the optimal way to study a language ideally requires both very much time and actual interaction with speakers. Since this is a Master’s thesis, both of these come in short supply, which then makes for an excellent opportunity to evaluate working with written non-natural data only. This provides a challenge in a number of ways which is discussed in this section, along with some possible benefits as well.

One obvious problem to be expected is the “naturalness of spoken and spontaneous language”. Since the NT is a written translation, the language cannot be considered neither natural nor spontaneous, which Camp et al. (2018) means is highly preferred when it comes to source material. Dixon (2010, p. 2) also writes that when doing proper fieldwork, eliciting different types of speech is the optimal way to describe a language.

This leads to another issue, the lack of informants. Working with native speakers not only provides more spontaneous speech, but it also gives the important advantage of asking questions, and the opportunity to shape the discussion contents to one’s own preferences. A text consists of the given information and nothing else, which can be especially restricting when analyzing rare or complex features.

Written sources can also fail to provide phonological information, depending on the material used. If
the language under observation does have important tonal functions, that would be noticeable in the texts, but for languages where tone or intonation does not carry grammatical functions, it should not be expected to be marked in non-scientific writings such as the Bible. The only options then are to use the knowledge of the related languages and make estimated guesses, or to ignore the factor completely. For this reason phonology is kept to a minimum, and the section on phonology will be based on the information form BL, in order to give some context.

While the restrictions of written sources are many, there are some advantages to be found. Availability is one welcome factor of using written data instead of informants on site. The process is never dependent on other people in the same way as with field work, and the information is usually easy to access via the internet. Also economical issues are unlikely to stop the work process, along with for example political or natural factors. Another convenient advantage of using specifically Bible translations is accountability. Berez-Kroeker et al. (2018) discusses this in the article Reproducible research in linguistics: A position statement on data citation and attribution in our field. They argue for the importance of transparency of linguistic data, in order to attest for the reproducibility of the claims made. This becomes a question of context of the elicitation of the spoken data, which is not an issue here since the NT does not consist of elicitations of speech. Using the Bible means that all books, passages and verses are numbered, which makes for easy navigation and referencing. This applies both to readers wanting extra information, and for the author as well, when comparing the same text in different languages. This can then contribute to important contextual information. It should be noted however, that for this thesis there are large variations in whether the translations are similar to any official Bible translation, since the English back translation is based on the NT version, which itself is based on several versions.

With all these problems identified, we can expect some limitations to what can be determined in for specific thesis, with the method and other sources available. It mostly comes down to stating what grammatical functions exist, and how they can be used. For examples, areas such as phonology are not under much investigation. Also, it is much more difficult to find out if some features exist, and if they do, how common they are or how they appear. It is reasonable to assume that the data is large enough to tell us if something that it least very common does not exist. The NT consists of approximately 270 000 words in double columns in 400 pages, and covers both narration and dialogue. An informant can confirm or disprove claims, but here it is hard to decide if something does not exist. There are ways to account for or features, but considering the size and reasonable limitations, that will have to be left to the future. This will also be discussed further in chapter 3.
2 Sketch grammar of North Tanna

The sketch grammar is divided into four main parts: An introduction below in section 2.1, phonology in section 2.2 morphology in 2.3 and syntax in 2.4.

2.1 Introduction to the grammar

There are notable differences in spelling between the North Tanna New Testament and the other North Tanna sources. Since the examples come from the NT, that will be the spelling used in this grammar. The examples below illustrate how this has been an issue. For example, the second person plural pronoun. In Blaymires work this is *itam*əwat, but there are no occurrences of the this pronoun in the NT. However, it does not take long to find *itomat*, which according to the translation is the second person plural pronoun. If one form does not occur while another does, and it seems to fit with the meaning it has, they will be treated as the same. This is an example of an easily solved situation, but it is not always as clear. Working with the word list in Nehr bass (2012) also often results in different spellings. Two examples of this are shown in table 1, with the verbal adjective ‘be many’, and the verb ‘gather’. The letters *i*, *a* and sometimes *ə* especially do not always correspond. (see section (2.2) for phonological correspondences) As with *itomat*, when this happens, the spelling from Carlson’s translation is the one used, if there is enough in the translation to support that it is indeed the same word. From what this work has entailed, there is no obvious pattern to where these might differ but it will be left for now. Since this is a sketch over the grammar, I did not wish to get stuck in orthography or dialectal differences which I cannot investigate.

<table>
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<td>‘be many’</td>
<td>epət</td>
<td>epɔt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘gather’</td>
<td>uəfɨmɨn</td>
<td>cafimən</td>
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</table>

Table 1: Two examples of different spelling in NH and NT

The examples in the grammar are glossed using the Leipzig glossing Rules (Bickel et al. 2015). Some additional features and other abbreviations have also been added to the glossary. The glossed examples normally contain three or four lines. The first line is the text from the North Tanna New Testament, which has been segmented into morphemes. The second line contains the glossing of said text, and the third is the back translation by Carlson et al. (n.d.). Lastly, a fourth line might be included. Sometimes the text from the back translation is not completely grammatical (probably to capture the structure of the sentences), or it contains additional grammatical information. In those cases the translation is not always easy to read, and a revised version has been added. In some of those cases inspiration has been taken from phrases from either the English or American Standard Version of the Bible, both of which are also available at the STEP Bible website (Burrell et al. 2018). The back translations are also still included in the examples, since they at times provide with useful information and contributes to the strengthen any claim made on certain
features. (1) is an example of what a glossed example will look like in the grammar.

(1) *Josep ne Meri k- əm- ialəs * Jesu m- əhl- agim m- əhal- uwin əpəh ljip
Joseph and Mary 3PL- PST- carry.large.object Jesus CVB- TRI- run CVB- TRI- go DEM Egypt

‘Joseph and Mary took Jesus they-3 ran-away going to Egypt’ (Headline before Matt 2:13)

‘Joseph and Mary took Jesus and ran away to Egypt’

2.2 Phonology

This section is a very brief summary of the phonology, using Blaymire’s data. Since this thesis is text based, no phonological analysis has been made, and not much attention will be directed towards it.

BL shows a number of 16 consonants and 6 vowels, and they are presented below as they are in her sketch. *vl* and *vd* most likely stands for ‘voiceless’ and ‘voiced’ respectively, and it is not mentioned why that column does not have a label, or why the other rows are not specified for voicing. Since the different N Tanna sources do not agree on spelling, table 4 gives some examples of which letters are used respectively. There are most likely cases where letters do not correspond apart from the ones mentioned here, but nevertheless it can come in use. Especially the vowels have proven to show some irregularities between the sources. NH also uses a nasalized ˤ which is not found in NT or BL, and BL uses a labialized *mʷ* not used elsewhere.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labialised labial</th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td><em>pʷ</em></td>
<td><em>p</em></td>
<td><em>t</em></td>
<td><em>k</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td><em>vl</em></td>
<td><em>f</em></td>
<td><em>s</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>h</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>vd</em></td>
<td><em>β</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td><em>mʷ</em></td>
<td><em>m</em></td>
<td><em>n</em></td>
<td><em>ŋ</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laterals</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaps</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>r</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: North Tanna consonants, Blaymires (1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td><em>i</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>u</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td><em>e</em></td>
<td><em>ə</em></td>
<td><em>o</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>a</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: North Tanna vowels, Blaymires (1995)
Table 4: Phoneme correspondences between NT, NH and BL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>NH</th>
<th>BL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a, i, e</td>
<td>a, o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i, e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a, a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>y, i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ia</td>
<td>i, ia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i, i</td>
<td>i, o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>m&lt;sup&gt;W&lt;/sup&gt;, m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>p̃, p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Phoneme correspondences between NT, NH and BL

2.3 Morphology

This section describes the morphology of North Tanna. It discusses pronouns in 2.3.1, nouns in 2.3.2, verbs in 2.3.3 and adjectives and modifiers in 2.3.4.

2.3.1 Pronouns

2.3.1.1 Independent pronouns. North Tanna has independent personal pronouns which show an inclusive/exclusive distinction in first person, and number is specified for singular, dual, trial and plural. There is no marking of gender for any of the pronouns, and some pronouns also have an object form. There are also three possible dative pronouns for singular use, discussed in 2.3.1.2.

2.3.1.1.1 Subject pronouns. The independent pronouns for subjects are not always obligatory, as the subject is commonly indexed on the verb (see section 2.3.3 for verbal morphology). However, the subject pronouns are still quite common in North Tanna, and they are presented in table 5.

Table 5: North Tanna independent subject pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>DU</th>
<th>TRI</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.INCL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>kilau</td>
<td>kitəhal</td>
<td>kitat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.EXCL</td>
<td>io</td>
<td>itimlau</td>
<td>itiməhal</td>
<td>itimat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ik</td>
<td>itəlau, itəmlau</td>
<td>itəməhal</td>
<td>itəmat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>ilau</td>
<td>iləhal</td>
<td>ilat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: North Tanna independent subject pronouns

(2)  *T- əwir məmə itiməhal em- əhal- uwa ikin -u.*

3SG- be,good COMP 1TRI.EXCL 1.EXCL.PST- TRI- come place DEM

‘It is good that we three-excl came here.’ (Matt 17:4)
‘It is good that we came here’

2.3.1.1.2 Object pronouns. The subject and object forms are often the same, and the only distinctly different forms are for first person inclusive, and third person plural. There is also a form etəmat which might be a variation on the second person plural. The definition of object here needs further attention, and will here be referred to as the non-nominative participant. Some examples of the independent object pronouns can be found in (3) and (4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SG</th>
<th>DU</th>
<th>TRI</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.INCL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>itəmlau</td>
<td>itəməhal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.EXCL</td>
<td>io</td>
<td>itimlau</td>
<td>itiməhal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ik</td>
<td>etəlau, etəmlau</td>
<td>itəməhal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>ilau</td>
<td>iləhal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: North Tanna independent object pronouns

(3) in t- olkeike itat
3SG 3SG- love 1PL.INCL.OBJ
‘he loves us’ (Mark 9:40)

(4) Məto ilau k- əm- (ə)- iatun -ən nɨpəti nəghatən itəm t- əm- ən kəm ilau.
but 3DU 3PL- PST- NEG- know -NEG meaning speech REL 3SG- PST- say PREP 3DU
‘But they-2 did not understand the meaning of the talk which he said to them-2.’ (Luke 2:50)
‘But they did not understand the meaning of his speech.’

The third person plural independent object pronoun manifests in three forms, beginning either with i-, o- or e-. It is at present unclear if they are just different forms or if they should be considered different pronouns marking different types of participants, but here they will be treated as the same pronoun.

(5) Kan k- əm- ot- ən -iarpə nəhə -lat nələn rat min, kan in t- əm- əl baptais
and 3PL- PST- PL- say -DIR POSS -POSS.3PL actions bad PL and 3SG 3SG- PST- do baptize
elat e nəhau əh Jotan.
3PL.OBJ PREP water DEM Jordan
‘And they told out their bad ways, and he baptized them in that Jordan river.’ (Matt 3:6)

(6) Apəs ilat.
let.go 3PL
‘Leave them.’ (Matt 15:14)

(7) Ik o- n-ak- ipal wir olat.
2SG FUT- 2- NPST- protect be.good 3PL
‘You will look out good for them.’ (John 17:15)

(8) Os rəh -n kapə Jon Baptais e plet kit m- uwa ikin -u m- os -ipa kəm carry POSS -3SG head John Baptize PREP plate ART CVB- go place -DEM CVB- carry -DIR PREP io roiu.
1SG now

‘Bring the head1 of John the Baptist on a plate here and give it to me now.’ (Matt 14:8)

2.3.1.2 Dative pronouns. Blaymires does not mention any dative pronouns in her sketch, but Whitesands (Hammond 2014, p. 24) has three dative cases which take different personal suffixes, which Hammond classifies as “irregular pronouns”. These are identical to three words which seem to function as pronouns in the New Testament. Hammond does not mention dative markers which code other numbers than singular, and so far there are no instances found of plural dative markers in Carlson’s translation. In (Hammond 2014) these are segmented as a case marker followed by personal suffixes -n, -m and -k, but since the exact meaning is not clear here, they will in this work be analyzed simply as ‘dative pronouns’. They are excluded from table 6 since the usage of the object pronouns is not determined, while these dative pronouns are exclusively used for dative constructions, and might not be considered regular personal pronouns. There are also two ‘dative marker’ prepositions according to HN (discussed in 2.4.9.3) but they do not appear together with any of the singular dative pronouns. It seems as if there are several ways of expressing dative ness, and that the different functions cannot be combined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lak</td>
<td>lam</td>
<td>lan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(10) Kən Iesu t- əm- iet e nịtọn Kalili m- uwa e nọhau Jotan mọmọ Jon and Jesus 3SG- PST- go.out/exit PREP land Galilee CVB- come PREP water Jordan COMP John o- t- ol baptais lan.
FUT- 3SG- make baptize 3SG.DAT

‘And Jesus went out of Galilee and comes to the Jordan river in order for John to baptize him.’
(Matt 3:13)

(11) Kən k- əm- ot- aun -in rafin mopael min k- ot- uwa kiọlau lan.
and 3PL- PST- PL- summon -TM all soldier PL 3PL- PL- come gather.around 3SG.DAT

‘And they gathered all the soldiers around him.’ (Matt 27:27)

1 kapə, ‘head’, is preceded by a marker which indicates possession. It reminds of the possessive rọha-n, but is almost exclusively used with the (inalienable) word for head. The pattern repeats itself for other singular possessors, such as rọhk kapə and rọhm kapə. For non-singular possessors however, the rọha remains intact, with the corresponding suffix, as rehalat-kapə (POSS-3PL) or rehalaukapə (POSS-1.DU.INCL). I will treat it as a regular possessive marker.
(12) T- ətuatip əm məmə ik o- n-ək- ol baptais lak. ?Tahro n- at- uwa
3SG- straight only COMP 2SG FUT- 2- NPST- make baptize 1SG.DAT Q 2- CONT- come
məmə ek- ol baptais lam?
COMP 1SG.NPST- make baptize 2SG.DAT

‘It is only right that you will baptize me. How is it that you come in order that I will baptize you?’
(Matt 3:14)

‘It is only right that you will baptize me. How is it that your are coming to get baptized?’

2.3.2 Nouns
Nouns generally take little morphological marking. They are uninflected for case but specific nouns can be prefixed with n- to code plurality. However number is most commonly marked by the plural independent morpheme mɨn, and the less common dual mil. Singular number is unmarked, and there is no number marking for dual or trial for nouns. There are no concordial noun classes or gender, but Blaymires suggests two noun classes based on alienability. Dixon (2010, p. 156) gives two criteria for classification of noun classes or gender. The first is that there should be two or more clear groups of nouns, where the nouns usually do not belong in more than one group. The second criteria is that there needs to be some overt marking to indicate the noun class. The definition of concord is two words which are “marked for the same grammatical category”. Using this definition, we can see that although North Tanna nouns can occur in different possessive constructions depending on the type of noun, there is no marker or morphology dedicated for classification between them. They are two groups of nouns which share certain features, but no marking for a mutual grammatical category, which is why they will not be regarded as a noun class here. See section 2.3.2.4.2 for more information on alienability.

2.3.2.1 Number.

2.3.2.1.1 Plural. The most common plural marker for nouns is mɨn. It seems to be obligatory for plural nouns unless the noun already carries the n- marker, which is discussed below in this section, or for some inherently plural nouns such as natimnat, ‘things’. However, this is a special case where more work is needed to confidently prove the existence or nonexistence of a feature. There is one noun, natimnat which Nehrbass (2012, p. 220) translates to ‘things’, while the word for ‘thing’ is nat. Natimnat does not occur obligatory with mɨn, there are examples of both with and without. In contrast, there are no instances of *nat mɨn. Nothing found so far implies that there is a morphological system for this type of plural formation, and I have not encountered any other instance of this type. One possible thought is that the singular root is reduplicated with adding an -im- between, or either the initial or the final nat is the root, and the rest is one single marker. Since the singular noun root is still a part of the plural one, we should exclude suppletion, but we would need to see further if this is a unique case or not.

The plural marker occurs at the end of the noun phrase, as seen in (13) and (14).
(13) Kən Setan t- əm- agim m- apos lesu, kən nagelo min k- əm- ot- uwa m- ot- and Satan 3SG- PST- flee CVB- let.go Jesus and angel PL 3PL- PST- CONT- go CVB- PL- asitu lan. help 3SG.DAT

‘And Satan left Jesus, and angels came and helped him.’ (Matt 4:11)

(14) Rəha -m nolən rat min em- os -iəkis rəkis. POSS -POSS.2SG actions bad PL 1SG.PST carry -finish finish

‘Your sins I have already taken them out.’ (Matt 9:2)

‘I have already taken away your sins.’

In addition to the independent morpheme, there is also a plural prefix n- for a smaller group of nouns. Nehrbass (2012, p. 165) explains it as a “pluralizer for some nouns”. In NT it seems to mostly be used for animate and possibly also only human nouns. It can be used both with or without a following independent plural or dual marker. Here we can again bring up the discussion of possible noun classes, as discussed in the introductory part of this section. This feature indicates different treatment of nouns based on a neighbouring word, and comes slightly closer than the alienable/inalienable possession difference. However, more work should be done on what types of nouns take the plural marker and how it can be used in combination with the plural min and dual mil.


‘You two come follow me and become my two people, and I will make you become people of pulling people to become my disciples.’ (Matt 4:19)

Possessive constructions are also marked for plurality. For example, in (16) the plural marker appears once after the possessive morpheme roha, and once after kau (Bislama loan for ‘cow’). The plural marker should also not be confused with the homonymous adverb, glossed as ‘too, again’, in (Nehrbass 2012, p. 28), shown in (17) and (18). In the translation it often translates to ‘also’.

(16) Rəha -tat pipi Jekop u aupən, in t- əm- os -ipa wel u kəm POSS -POSS.1.INCL ancestor Jacob DEM beforehand 3SG 3SG- PST- carry -DIR well DEM PREP itat, kən in t- əm- at- øtu nəhau ikən nim -in, ilat n(e)- nəti 1.INCL.OBJ and 3SG 3SG- PST- CONT- scoop/place.on.s.th water place drink -TM 3PL PL- child
-n min, ne rəha -n min kau min.
-3SG PL and POSS -POSS.3SG PL cow PL

‘Our ancestor (lit. grandfather) Jacob from before, he gave this well to us, and he filled-into-something water here for drinking, along with his children, and his cows.’ (John 4:12)

‘Our ancestor Jacob gave this well to us, and he filled it with water for his children and his cows to drink.’

(17) Kən iesu t- əm- uwin e pot, kən rəha -n min netəmim k- ot- uwin and Jesus 3SG- PST- go.away PREP boat and POSS -POSS.3SG PL people 3PL- PL- go.away
ilat min.
3PL too

‘And Jesus went in the boat, and his people are going together with him.’ (Matt 8:23)

(18) Kən suah u itam t- at- it patan əh, in min t- at- ol təfagə. and man DEM REL 3SG- CONT- lead woman DEM 3SG also 3SG- CONT- make behavior

‘And this person which marries/leads that woman, he also sins.’ (Matt 5:32)

2.3.2.1.2 Dual. There is also a dual marker mil mentioned in Nehrbass (2012, p. 87), which in North Tanna functions much the same as the plural marker. In (19) it occurs not only with the noun, but also when the NP has the numeral kəiu, ‘two’. It is so far unclear how obligatory this marker is. The examples below show instances where nouns take either the dual marker or the numeral. Nehrbass also mentions a free standing trial marker əhal (Nehrbass 2012, p. 228) but it is not found in NT.

(19) E nian əm əh inəh, suah mil kəiu rəha iesu k- əm- u- aliwək m- at-
PREP day only DEM still people DU two POSS Jesus 3PL- PST- DU- walk CVB- CONT-
ian latuwənu kit, nərgɨn u Emeas.
be.daylight village ART name DEM Emeas

‘In just that same day, two people of Jesus walked and went to a village, it is called Emeas.’ (Luke 24:13)

(20) Nian netəmim ten min rəha iesu k- əm- ot- əto nəghatən əh, kən neməha t- əm-
when people ten PL POSS Jesus 3SG- PST- PL- hear talk DEM and anger 3SG- PST-
ol pik ilat o suah mil ilau pia -n.
make much 3PL PREP man dual 3PL.DU brother -POSS.3SG

‘When the other ten people of Jesus heard that talk, then they were very angry at those two brothers.’ (Matt 20:24)

(21) Suah kit, nəti -n isəman kəiuf.
person ART child -POSS.3SG male two
2.3.2.2 Indefinite article kit. Nouns can be marked as indefinite by the article kit. It follows the head noun in the NP, as in (22), and does not seem to mark the whole noun phrase. The article is not obligatory, as shown in (23) where the word for cow does not have the article. There is no article for definite nouns.

(22) Kən in o- t- ilxs nəti -n kit iərmən, kən o- n- āk- aun and 3SG FUT- 3SG- carry.large.object child -POS 3SG ART man and FUT- 2- NPST summon -in nargin məmə lesu məto -inu in o- t- osmegəh rəha -n min netəmim e -TM name COMP Jesus but -here 3SG FUT- 3SG- save POSS -POS 3SG PL person PREP nolən t(o)- rat min rəha -lat.

actions 3SG- be.bad PL POSS -POS 3SG PL

‘And she will bear a male child, and you will call his name Jesus because he will save his people from their bad ways (one of the idioms for ‘sin’).’ (Matt 1:21)

(23) Nian n-ak- ot- asig kau m- ot- uwa məmə o- t- ol wək m- ewig -ewig when 2- NPST- PL- lead.by.rope cow CVB- PL- come COMP FUT- 3SG- do work CVB- tread -tread e wit, s- ot- əlis -on nøhli -n pas ton nimismisi wit neen.

PREP wheat NEG- PL- fasten -NEG lip -POS 3SG let ton crumbs wheat some

‘When you (PL) pull a cow and it comes in order for it to work and to tread wheat, do not bind his mouth that it allows he will eat some small wheat.’ (1Cor 9:9)

Kit could carry other meanings as well. In (24) it also follows a verb (‘eat’) instead of a noun, but this has not been the focus of this thesis.

(24) Nian kau kit t- at- ol wək kit rəha -m, kən okəmə t- olkeike məmə o- when cow ART 3SG- CONT- do work ART POSS -POS 3SG and if 3SG- want COMP FUT- t- un kit, s- ahtosig -in -ən.

3SG- eat ? NEG- block -TM -NEG

‘When a cow on a rope does work for you then if he wants to eat don’t block him.’ (1Cor 5:18)

2.3.2.3 Demonstratives. The demonstratives in North Tanna follow the noun and show four distance distinctions. Blaymires (1995, p. 839) mentions four ‘deictics’, each distinguishing a different type of distance. Table (7) shows the revised set based on the NT. BL calls this group deictics but they will here be referred to as demonstratives. Demonstratives are according to Dixon’s definition deictic referents which are not speaker or addressee (Dixon 2010, p. 224). As the examples (25) to (26) show, that is how they can be used in North Tanna. The glosses describing distance relations used by Blaymires in table 7 do not always agree with the translations in the NT, and it has not been possible to investigate the actual translations due to the size of this work. For this reason the glosses will simply be DEM, and future investigations
will have to determine the differences more precisely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BL Eng. gloss</th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>near speaker</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near person spoken to</td>
<td>un</td>
<td>un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>away from both</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indicated/pointed to</td>
<td>apwah</td>
<td>apah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Demonstratives in North Tanna

(25) *Suah ah t- at- əghat məmə o- t- ol məmə in Uhgın.*
man DEM 3SG- CONT- speak COMP FUT- 3SG- make COMP 3SG God

‘That man says that he is like God.’ (Matt 9:3)

(26) *Kən n- etəm min u itəm k- oat- egəs -in, kən o- k- ot- ehm.*
and PL- human PL DEM rel 3PL- PL- search -TM and FUT- 3PL- PL- see

‘And those people who are looking, they will see.’ (Matt 7:8)

(27) *Pətan əh in Rejel, in t- ət- asək o rəha -n nisualkələh.*
woman DEM 3SG Rachel 3SG- CONT- cry PREP POSS -POSS3SG children

‘That woman is Rachel, she is crying for her children.’ (Matt 2:18)

(28) *Em- ot- ehm rəha -n məhau t- əm- ər əpəh par, kən ek- oat-*
1.EXCLPST- PL- see POSS -3SG star 3SG- PST- climb/increase DEM inland and 1.EXCL- PL-
uwa məmə ek- ot- ox əpən nisialən kəm in.
come COMP 1.EXCL- PL- carry -DIR respect PREP 3SG

‘We saw his star rise in the east, and we are coming that we will give honor to him.’ (Matt 2:2)

‘We saw his star rise in the east and we are coming to honor him.’

Some demonstratives can also occur attached to other words. *Un,* ‘near person spoken to’ is in example (29) following the noun *ikina,* ‘place’. It is also not clearly expressing that something is near the addressee, and might therefore have other functions. Example (30) shows *u,* ‘near speaker’, preceding what NH refers to as an adverb, *roiyu* (*roiu* in NT) ‘today, now’. This means that the demonstratives can appear either free or bound. What can be mentioned is that demonstratives most commonly do occur independently. When they are bound they attach to what seems to be a small set of words which includes at least nouns and adverbs.

(29) *ərmərə, itimat ek- ot- əruru ukin -un n- ak- at- uwin ikin.*
Lord 1PL.EXCL 1PL.EXCL.NPST- PL- not.know place -DEM 2- NPST- CONT- go.away place

16
‘Lord, we do not know this place where you are going.’ (John 14:5)

(30) Nian u- roiu in Sapat, kon nolən u n-ək- oat- ol t- at- ətgəhl Lou. time DEM- now 3SG sabbath and actions DEM 2- NPST- PL- make 3SG- CONT- break law

‘This is the Sabbath day, and this way your are doing breaks the Law.’ (Luke 6:2)

2.3.2.4 Possession.

2.3.2.4.1 Possessive suffixes. There are possessive suffixes which are attached to the possessor noun or the possessive free standing marker rəha. The difference between those is discussed in section (2.3.2.4.2). Some of the suffix forms show certain variations, especially the first person exclusive and the second person suffixes. For example, the suffix tətmat is used only once for second person plural and could therefore simply be considered a spelling mistake. It is at least uncommon enough for it not to be considered a regular possessive suffix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessor</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. incl.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-lau</td>
<td>-təhal</td>
<td>-tat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. excl.</td>
<td>-k</td>
<td>-təmlau, -təmlau</td>
<td>-təməhal</td>
<td>-təmat, -təimat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-təmlau, -təlau</td>
<td>-təməhal, -təməhal</td>
<td>-təmat, -təimat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-lau</td>
<td>-lal, -lat, -ilat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: North Tanna possessive suffixes

(31) Rəha -k etəmim, rəha -k t- ikə e nətələgən POSS- POSS.1SG.EXCL person POS- POSS.1SG.EXCL 3SG- be.gone/nonexistent PREP thoughts u rəha -təmlau o noorən rəha -təmlau natımnət. DEM POSS- POSS.2DU PREP dividing POSS- POSS.2DU thoughts

‘My friend, I have none of this thought of you2 (i.e. this is none of my business) for dividing your2 things.’ (Luke 12:14)

‘My friends2, it is none of my business to judge you.’

2.3.2.4.2 Possessive rəha. Possessive constructions also frequently use the possessive word rəha. The possessive suffixes discussed in 2.3.2.4.1 are often attached to the possessive marker, but it can also appear on its own. It can also occur both before or after NP. Nehrass (2012, p. 44) explains it as a benefactive marker, which does not agree with its usage in the New Testament. It might express benefactiveness as well, but it is primarily used in possessive constructions. Rəha takes possessive suffixes like

---

[2]It is possible that the correct translation should be ‘friends’, if we look at the rest of the translation where the possessive marker later uses the dual form. However this suggests that etəmim should be followed by a dual marker mil. This means that etəmim can be plural, or that there is a number marker missing.
some nouns do, but it should not be considered as belonging to the class of nouns. It is not treated as a noun syntactically, but can take the plural marker min as mentioned above in (16).

There is a difference in possession between alienable and inalienable possession, where the inalienable according to Blaymires is restricted to body parts and some kinship terms (Blaymires 1995, p. 839). She writes that inalienable nouns are expressed by a possessive suffix to attached to the noun, or by preceding a proper name. The NT translation does not quite follow the same rules, as sometimes these type of words can occur with rəha anyway. For example *mamak ‘my mother’, is not used anywhere in NT, but rəhak mama ‘my mother’ does, as in example (33). That consists of the possessive marker with a 1SG possessive suffix attached, followed by the word for ‘mother’. One reason this could be, is just because mama is a loan and might be treated differently (The word ita is never used in the text). However, when looking at the same example, the word kaka ‘sibling, cross-gender sibling, cousin’, which does not seem to be a loan, is treated the same. The word for brother does occur inalienably, and is in the texts never used with the inflected form of rəha, such as for example, *rəhak piə.

Example (35) also shows some disagreement to Blaymires discussion. The possessor is a proper name but still appears with the rəha. Inalienable nouns can also be indicated by uninflected proper names, which here could extend to kinship as in example (35).

Based on these findings, a suggestion could be that inalienable nouns can be possessed both by a possessive suffix, and by using the uninflected form of the possessive marker, or appear juxtaposed without any other grammatical marking.

(32)  
\[\text{ita} \quad -k\]  
mother -poss.1SG

‘my mother’ (Blaymires 1995)

(33)  
\[\text{ilat} \quad u \quad \text{pia} \quad -k \quad \text{min}, \ne \quad \text{rəha} \quad -k \quad \text{kaka} \quad \text{min}, \ne \quad \text{rəha} \quad -k \quad \text{mama}.\]  
3pl dem brother -poss.1sg pl and poss -poss.1sg sibling pl and poss -1sg mother

‘these are my brothers, and my sisters, and my mother.’ (Mark 3:35)

(34)  
\[T- \quad (ə)s- \quad \text{ahmen} \quad -ən \quad \text{məmə} \quad o- \quad \text{n}- \quad \text{ak}- \quad \text{it} \quad \text{pətan} \quad \text{rəha} \quad \text{pia} \quad -m.\]  
3sg neg way -neg comp fut- 2- cont- lead wife poss brother -poss.2sg

‘It is not right that you marry the wife of your brother.’ (Mark 6:17-19)

(35)  
\[\text{Epraham in} \quad \text{tata} \quad \text{rəha} \quad \text{Aisak}\]  
Abraham 3sg father poss isaac

‘Abraham was the father of Isaac’ (Mark 1:3)

(36)  
\[\text{pətan} \quad \text{rat} \quad \text{kit} \quad t- \quad \text{əm}- \quad \text{au} \quad \text{neltki} \quad \text{lesu} \quad e \quad \text{senta}\]  
woman bad art 3sg- pst- clean foot Jesus prep perfume

‘A bad woman bathed the feet of Jesus with scent’ (Headline before Luk 7:36)
Verbs

Verbs in North Tanna carry most of the marking in the clause. Prefixes, suffixes and circumfixes are found for various grammatical categories, and Blaymires writes that the verb phrase is the most complex one in the language. She provides affixes for subject, number, tense, aspect, negation and direction. From looking at a number of examples, there are some affixes that do not directly agree with Blaymires. This can be due to several reasons. It can be variations of the already mentioned affixes, dialectal differences, marking which is not discussed in Blaymires, or different spelling.

Blaymires (1995, p. 840) describes the typical positions for affixes, shown in example (37). She also mentions that different dialects can show different variants, but does not go into more detail on which differences there are. In NT the order of suffixes is similar to BL but some differences can be found.

The verb takes indexing for subject and not for object. Subject person (and for some affixes this is a portmanteau for subject + number, see table 9) is usually the first prefix in the verb complex, unless there is the future tense/imperative marker o- as seen in example (39). In some cases negative prefix s- can also be initial, and verbs expressing imperative can appear completely unmarked. Those three are the only exceptions where the subject is not initially marked. The second prefix is usually tense, followed by subject number (unless it is singular, which is zero marked). If the verb is negated, the first part of the negative circumfix usually comes before the number marker, but after the tense marker. Direction is always the first suffix, followed by the final part of the negative circumfix. (38) is a suggestion on how the verbal affixation works in North Tanna, and (39) shows an example of all but the aspect marker used with one verb. The “Tense/aspect” slot is combined since there are cases of portmanteaus like the PRS/CONT at or at, and that the order of tense and aspect sometimes is not strict. Sorting this out is somewhat problematic since not all markers are obligatory. More work is needed on what all the affixes are marking, in order to determine which types occur where in the verb complex. Lastly, there is a convverb marker which is used for non-finite verbs and occurs initially, with certain affixes removed. It is discussed further in 2.3.3.8.

(37) Subject - Tense/aspect - Negation - Number - Verb root - Direction - Negation

(38) (Converb marker) - Future - Subject person/number - Tense/Aspect - Negation - Subject number - Verb root - Direction - Negation

(39) O-n-ak- (ə)s- ot- on -iarəp -ən nat un kəm suah kit.
FUT- 2- NPS- NEG- PL- say -DIR -NEG thing DEM PREP man ART
‘(Impv) You will not tell out this to a person.’ (Mark 5:43)

(40) Nian Jesu t- in- at aliwək m- at- uvən
when Jesus 3SG PRF- CONT- walk CVB- CONT- go.away
‘When Jesus started to go’ (Mark 10:17)
Blaymires (1995, p. 840) writes that the only obligatory elements of the verb are subject, number and root. This is true to some extent, with the exception that the subject person marker can appear without a number prefix, shown in (41). Since the singular has no overt marking, verbs expressing singular subjects can appear with only one prefix.

(41)  Kən k- ialəs suakəku un m- ian əpəh Jerusalem məmə o- k-
and 3PL- carry.large.object child DEM CVB- walk.around DEM Jerusalem COMP FUT- 3PL-
oias -ipən kom ibrəmərə.
receive -DIR PREP Lord

‘And they take this child and go to Jerusalem to give him to the Lord.’ (Luk 2:22)

2.3.3.1 Subject person indexing. Subject person is nearly always marked on the verb, as well as being the first prefix of the verb complex, with the most common exception being the future/imperative o- mentioned in sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.3.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.EXCL</td>
<td>i-</td>
<td>e-, i-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.INCL</td>
<td>k-</td>
<td>k-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>n-</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>a-</td>
<td>t-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>k-</td>
<td>k-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: North Tanna subject prefixes

(42) Ilat k- ot- olkeike məmə o- k- ot- əghat kom ik.
3PL 3PL- PL- want COMP FUT- 3PL- PL- speak PREP 2SG

‘They want to speak with you.’ (Matt 12:47)

First person exclusive is said to be coded by i- (Blaymires 1995, p. 841) which is present in North Tanna, but e- is more common. The exception to this might phonological. The i- is used when the following suffix begins with a or o, which happen to be the only suffixes beginning with a vowel. Conversely, e- is only used where the following suffix begins with a consonant. This is illustrated in examples below in (43) and (44).

(43) Etəm -iasol, i- at- əplan məmə ik ien kit ərha Uhgin.
man -big 1SG- CONT- see COMP 2SG prophet ART POSS God

‘Sir, I see that you are prophet of God. (John 4:19)
‘I saw the Lord!’ (John 20:18)

Another difference in Blaymires’ sketch is that third person singular is said to be expressed by ə-, but in NT it is always marked by t-. Despite Blaymires’ claim, here I will refer t- as the most likely suffix for third person singular. It is over all rather unusual for verbs to begin with ə-, unless it is the initial part of the root, for example in cases where the verb is uninflected to express imperative. (See 2.3.3.6.1). Whitesands also has the t- prefix for 3SG, which does not necessarily prove anything about North Tanna, but since they share many features it at least makes the claim more believable. As with the first person exclusive, this could also concern differences between dialects.

The plural k- is used for both dual, trial and plural subject.

‘And some people carried a person to him.’ (Matt 9:2)

‘And they saw the body of Jesus become different.’ (Mark 9:2)

2.3.3.2 Subject number indexing. Subject number is normally required for a verb to be complete. There are prefixes for dual, trial and plural, and zero marking for singular. Number can be marked twice on the verb, since these can be used with the prefixes expressing both subject and number, such as the 3PL prefix k-.

One example of this can be found in (49).
Table 10: North Tanna number markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>ò-</td>
<td>ò-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>u-, ia-</td>
<td>u-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRI</td>
<td>hal-</td>
<td>ðhal-, ðhl-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>ot-</td>
<td>ot-, oat-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Singular number has zero marking, and the dual marker is \( u- \). Blaymires also presents another dual marker \( ia- \), which is not found in the NT.

(48) \( M\partial o in t- óm- ð ðghat nulan k\òm l\èsu. \)
but 3SG 3SG- PST- SG- talk like PREP Jesus

‘But he talked that way about Jesus.’ (Heb 1:5)

(49) \( Nîan k- óm- u- al\i\wək m\òsin m- ian e suatîp, k\òn ðmûn nagelo t- óm- \)
when 3PL- PST- DU- walk piece.of CVB- walk.around PREP road and then angel 3SG- PST-

\( i\k ð \min. \)
be.gone too

‘When they two walked a bit going in the street, then the angel was no longer.’ (Acts 12:10)

The trial marker \( \text{hal-} \) (Blaymires 1995) should here be \( ð\text{hal}- \), which is how it normally manifests. (50) and (51) shows the same verb for ‘walking’ inflected differently. (50) could be a misspelling, but it is used a bit too frequently for it to be a complete coincidence. It could also be a style choice, or simply changes between forms since the back translation has been a several year project. The two forms will be regarded as carrying the same meaning here.

(50) \( K\òn k- óm- ð\text{hal}-\i\wək ðm e ñ\ar\p t\òn un m- ñt\òrat\ùs m- ð\text{hal}-i\et \)
and 3PL- PST- TRI- walk DEM PREP ground DEM CVB- do.until.certain.time CVB- TRI- exit

\( -\ar\p ð e t\òn \text{Pafos}. \)
-arrive PREP town Paphos

‘Then just those three walked through that land until they arrived at the town of Paphos.’ (Acts 13:6)

(51) \( K\òn k- óm- ðh\al-\i\wək m- ðh\al- u\win -\p\òn M\is\i\a i\kin \)
and 3PL- PST- TRI- walk CVB- TRI- go.away -DIR Misia place

‘Then they three walked an went through Misia place’ (Acts 16:8)

‘They walked to Misia’
The plural is marked by *ot- or oat-*. While the first is more common, the second is not extremely rare. There does not appear to be an obvious difference between them, since both can be used with the same word in a very similar context, in the same affix position. The *oat-* could also be a portmanteau of both plural and the continuous/present marker. It is likely to at least mark plurality, since it is used in verbs with the 3pl *k-* but never with the 3sg *t-*.

(52) *Kən k- əm- oat- atəlig-in wir k- atoarus t- əm namnun.*

and 3PL- PST- PL- listen -TM good 3PL- do.until.certain.time 3SG- say completion

‘And they were listening well until he says the end.’ (Acts 22:22)

(53) *Kən netəm min un k- əm- ot- atəlig-in Jesu k- əm- ot- agien pik o raha and people PL DEM 3PL- PST- PL- listen -TM Jesus 3PL- PST- PL- be.happy much PREP POSS-n nəghatən POSS.3SG speech*

‘And the people listening to Jesus were very glad about his talk.’ (Mark 12:37)

‘And the people who listened to Jesus were glad to hear his speech’

2.3.3.3 TAM overview. North Tanna has tense, aspect and possibly mood markers which attach to the verb. The table below presents these prefixes mentioned in BL, with a revised set of glosses as found in the NT. BL does not mentioned mood in her sketch, but the *o-* has proven to possibly carry an imperative function in N Tanna. Sections 2.3.3.4, 2.3.3.5 and 2.3.3.6 will each discuss these prefixes in turn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BL gloss</th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>new gloss</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRS, CONT</td>
<td>at-, ət-</td>
<td>PRS, CONT</td>
<td>at-, ət-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>ak-, o-</td>
<td>NPST</td>
<td>ək-, ak-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>am-</td>
<td>PST</td>
<td>əm-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRF</td>
<td>ən-</td>
<td>PRF</td>
<td>ən-, in-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQ</td>
<td>apan-</td>
<td>SEQ</td>
<td>apan-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Contrary to fact conditional”</td>
<td>ap-</td>
<td>CF</td>
<td>əp-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>FUT/IMP</td>
<td>ə-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Tense and aspect markers in North Tanna

2.3.3.4 Tense.

2.3.3.4.1 Present/Continuous. The present tense marker *at-/ət-*, is also used for continuous aspect according to BL. In the NT it might be used for both, but also for for progressive aspect. However there
are indications which suggests it should be treated as an aspect marker only. It differs from the other tense affixes in that it cannot be used with the m- discussed in 2.3.3.1. This is discussed further in 2.3.3.5.1, but it will henceforth be glossed as continuous.

(54) Məto Nimə əh Rəha Uhgɨn itəm Iesu t- at- əghat -in, in nipt -(i)n.

but house DEM POSS God REL Jesus 3SG- CONT- talk -TM 3SG body -POSS.3SG

‘But this House of God which Jesus was talking about, it is his body.’ (John 2:21)

(55) Iesu əpəh, etəm Nasaret, t- ət- aliwək e suatɨp.

Jesus DEM man Nazareth 3SG- CONT- walk PREP road

‘Jesus is there, the man of Nasaret, he walks on the road.’ (Luke 18:37)

2.3.3.4.2 Past. The past tense is expressed by əm-. When the subject is first person exclusive, the tense marker and the subject marker fuse into a portmanteau as shown in example (57).

(56) Kən Pailat t- əm- ətapəh ron məmə, “?Ik kig rəha n- etəm Isrel?”

and Pilate 3SG- PST- ask PREP COMP 2SG king POSS PL- human Israel

‘And Pilate asked him “Are you the King of the Jews?”’ (Mark 15:2)

(57) Em- ot- ehm rəha -n məhau t- əm- ər əpəh par, kən

1.EXCL.PST- PL- see POSS -POSS.3SG star 3SG- PST- climb/increase DEM inland and

ekt- oat- uwa məmə ek- ot- os -ɨpən nisaiiən kəm in.

1.EXCL.NPST PL- come COMP 1.EXCL.NPST- PL- carry -DIR respect PREP 3SG

‘We saw his star rise in the east, and we are coming that we will give honor to him.’ (Matt 2:2)

2.3.3.4.3 Non-past. Blaymires presents two future prefixes, ak- and o-, and does not mention any difference between them. From what can be found in the material, the markers are not interchangeable and appear in different slots in the verb complex. The suffix ak- or ak- are found in NT expressing the most common future tense, but also present tense. Examples (58) and (59) also show that the two forms can be used with the same verb. Hammond (2014, p. 35) writes that Whitesands has two tense markers, dividing between past and non-past. I believe this is the case for North Tanna as well, since the ak- can also be used where sentences do not express future tense, as in (60) and possibly in (58) too.

(58) Ita, t- owir əm, pas -tu k- ian n- ak- əplan -tu.

okay 3SG be-good DEM let -please 1.INCL- walk.around 2- NPST- see -please

‘Alright, good enough, let’s we-2 go you can see.’ (John 1:46)

‘Alright, that is good enough, let us go and you will see.’
'And you also will see that I do not do that which you want.' (2Cor 12:20)

'All of you are bad.' (Luke 13:27)

The person prefixes are normally obligatory and occur initially, with at least one exception. It is quite common for verbs to have an o- preceding the subject person marker when expressing imperative future or suggestions to the speaker. In some cases, the verb is coding future, but sometimes it does not. In the back translation notes on this can be found, as in example (61). Here the o- precedes the person marker and expresses both future and a command/wish from the speaker/narrator. Neither Blaymires or Nehrbass discuss any modal categories, but it is possible this suffix is carrying an irrealis function. Whitesands (Hammond 2014, p. 37) shares a very similar feature, and Hammond suggests that it might be a modal category, expressing a possible future. For now I will continue to gloss the prefix as FUT, since it very often includes a future meaning. Also because Carlson et al. (n.d.) includes a note in the translation after Acts 4:18 writing “sometimes just saying things in the future tense is used as command form”. This is also not only for negation, as we can see in (62). An interesting question regarding this is why some verbs require the future o- and some occur unmarked.

'(impv) You will go to the priest in order that he will see your body’ (Luke 17:14)

You will go to the priest so that he will see your body.'
2.3.3.5.1 Continuous. The prefix \textit{at-} or \textit{ət-} can express continuous aspect or present tense, according to Blaymires (1995). She gives two forms which are used “depending on the initial vowel of the verb root”, but does not specify the root. Its position as the second suffix in the verb complex suggests that it is a tense aspect, but if we include the analysis from section 2.3.3.1, it is also the only tense affix which can be used with the \textit{m-} marker. This speaks against it being classified as an only tense marker, and will here be referred to as an aspect marker. In the NT it is used for present tense or a continuous/progressive aspect, and the two variants are likely caused by phonological conditions of the verb root. Hammond (2014) shows a similar form for a marker in Whitesands which he glosses as “progressive”. The translation often uses the progressive ‘-ing’-form in English.

(63)  
\begin{CodeBlock}
Kən in t- ahl -ipən min kit min, kən ilat k- əm- oat- oh k- at- oh k- os
and 3SG 3SG- send -DIR PL ART DIR and 3PL 3PL- PST- PL- hit 3PL- CONT- hit 3PL- carry
-ipən nıməəm kam in, kən m- ot- ahl -iarəp.
-DIR wound PREP 3SG and CVB- PL- send -DIR
\end{CodeBlock}

‘And he sends another one, and they hit him hitting him gave him wounds, and they cast him out.’  
(Luk 20:12)

‘And he sends another one, they wounded him and cast him out.’

(64)  
\begin{CodeBlock}
In t- əm- isi -pən isəu m- aliwək m- at- uwa e taon.
3SG 3SG- PST- come from DIR far CVB- walk CVB- CONT- go PREP town
\end{CodeBlock}

‘He came from far away and walked coming into town.’ (Luke 23:26)

2.3.3.5.2 Perfect. The perfect marker according to Blaymires is \textit{ən-}. There is an identical suffix found in the New Testament, but it is not clear if it marks perfect aspect. In (74), \textit{ən-} and \textit{in-} are possibly coding the same feature. The translation shows similar constructions for each verb, with some exceptions. When searching for how these prefixes can be used, it turns out that \textit{in} never occurs with \textit{m-}, which could point to another phonological dependency. However there are plenty of instances where instead \textit{t-} occurs next to \textit{ən}. They also both have the present tense suffix attached, in the same slot closest to the verb root. The verbs roots share initial and final vowel, which means the vowels should not be controlling a phonological condition. What remains is then, a) the consonants controls the sound or b) the first verb takes an object or c) there is nothing found here which proves any environmental rules, including the possibility that there are arbitrary rules which are based on some type of verbal groupings. There is not a large pool of verbs where the first consonant is \textit{g} or \textit{p}, so it is difficult to make any claims about that part of the verb. Both forms are present where the final consonant is \textit{n}, but when it is \textit{t}, \textit{in-} is almost exclusively used.

Occasionally, NT provides with some notes on the grammar or other language specific features. Some of these include what can be seen in the examples below, that is an explanation to something which is a ”completed action”. Some of the sentences which have this note uses \textit{ən-} (65) or \textit{in-} (66), while some have
no aspectual marking. Example (67) is one of these cases, but it is possible that the verbal adjective *rəkis* which NH glosses as ‘be finished’, is the reason behind it.

(65) *Itəmat n- an- am- ot- os rəkis rəha -k nəgħatən ron*

2PL 2- PRF- PST- PL- carry completely POSS -POSS.1SG speech for.him

‘You(pl) took (completed action) my talk about him.’ (Col 4:10)

(66) *?Tahro itəmat n- in- oat- iləs -ipən Lou kəm ilat məmə in nat t- Q 2PL 2- PRF- PL- carry.large.object DIR law PREP 3PL COMP 3SG thing 3SG- apigəm kit itəm ilat k- ot- alis? be.heavy ART REL 3PL 3PL- PL- carry.on.shoulders

‘How is it that you all have started giving (completed action) the Lou to them that it is a heavy thing that they carry on their shoulders?’ (Acts 15:10)

(67) *Timoti, ik o- n- ak- əkəike m- at- ehm wir natimmat min itəm Uḥgin t- əm-Timothy 2SG FUT- 2- CONT- must CVB- CONT- look good things PL REL God 3SG- PST- alahəu -pən rəkis e nelm- (ə)m put.down -DIR be.finished PREP hand -POSS.2SG

‘Timothy, you must look out good for everything that God put (completed action) in your hand.’ (1Ti6:20)

2.3.3.5.3 Sequential. The sequential prefix *əpan-* marks that an event is happening after another.

(68) *Nikuti nat itəm n-əm- afə, o- t- əkəike m- imis pitən, uarisisg u t- əpan- seed something REL 2- PST- plant IMP- 3SG- must CVB- die first after DEM 3SG- SEQ- əmegəh.

live

‘The seed of something which you planted, it must die first, after that it will live.’ (1Cor 15:36)

2.3.3.5.4 Counterfactual. The prefix *əp-* is used for what Blaymires refers to as “Contrary to fact conditional”. It is used for what can be described as a conditional expression, but is not obligatory for all conditional clauses. It is not very frequent in NT, so its function is not entirely covered here. Dixon (2010, pp. 86-87,136) means that conditional marking is not a type of mood, but a clause linker. In North Tanna, the prefix does not actually act as linker between two clauses, in a syntactical way. So far there is no obvious difference between conditional clauses with or without the *əp-* , but this marker is at least somehow connected to conditionality since it often (but not obligatory) occurs in conditional sentences. At the time being it will referred to as a counterfactual marker, often expressing possible or hypothetical scenarios in relation to an adjoining clause. There is also a counterfactual conjunction mentioned in NH,
shown in (71) which also requires further attention in the future. It is not clear if the emphasis mentioned in the translation is part of the conjunction or marked elsewhere in the example.

(69)  Okəmə İərəmərə Əsanən Pik  Agin in t- (ə)t- egəhanin -ən  itat məwə rəha
       if  ruler  strong  much more 3SG 3SG-  NEG-  permit  -NEG 3PL  COMP  POSS
       tat  nita  masin  o-  k-  ot-  amegə,  o-  k-  ol
       -POSS.3PL.EXCL  blood  piece.of.something  FUT-  1PL.INCL-  PL-  live  FUT-  1PL.EXCL-  make
       kitat  k-  ap-  ot-  uwa  m-  ot-  ahmen  e  netəmim  rəha  Sotom  ne
       1PL.EXCL  1PL.EXCL-  CF-  PL-  come  CVB-  PL-  resemble  PREP  people  POSS  Sodom  and
       Komora  itəm  in  t-  əm-  ərəshin  agin  ilat.
       Gomorrah  REL  3SG  3SG-  PST-  ruin  more  3PL

‘If the Lord Most High did not permit that some of our family line {lit: blood} would live, we would become like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah which he totally spoiled/ruined them.’ (Rom 9:29)

‘If the Lord did not allow some of our family to live, we would have become like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.’

(70) ‘Okəmə suah  kit  t-  at-  os  noanawil  o  oltə,  in  nat  ərnəpərin  əm
       if  person  ART  3SG-  CONT  carry  oath  PREP  altar  3SG  thing  insignificant  DEM

‘If a person takes an oath on the altar, it is just nothing’ (Matt 23:18)

(71)  io  əm  un  okol  ek- (ə)s-  agim  -ərin -ən  ik
      I  only  this  if.contrafactual  1.EXCL-  NEG-  abandon  -NEG  2SG

‘I will not (emph) run away from you’ (Mark 14:29)

2.3.3.5.5  in-.  The in- prefix is not mentioned in Blaymires sketch, and might cover the same features as the ən-prefix. It might also mark a type of inchoactive or imperative, since they always occur with verbs expressing beginnings or starts.

(72)  Kən  etəm  t-  əm-  imis  t-  in-  amegə  m-  in-  atul,  kən  m-  ətuənən  m-
       and  human  3SG-  PST-  be.dead  3SG-  PRF-  live  CVB-  PRF-  stand.up  and  CVB-  begin  CVB-
       at-  əghat.
       CONT-  speak

‘And the dead man lived and stood, and began speaking.’ (Luke 7:15)

(73)  məto  bot  t-  in-  uwin  rəkis  ilugi  -n  e  lek,  kən  t-  in-  at-
       but  boat  3SG  PRF-  go.away  completely  among  -3SG  PREP  lake  and  3SG-  PRF-  CONT-
       ilas  əs-  -pikən  nimətag,  kən  peau  -peau  min  k-  in-  oat-  oh  bot.
       carry.large.object  go.into  wind  and  wave  -wave  3PL-  PRF-  PL-  hit  boat

28
‘but the boat had already gone out in the middle of the lake, and and was going into the wind and the waves beat the boat.’ (Matt 14:24)

‘but the boat had already gone out to the middle of the lake, and was going into the wind, waves beating the boat.’

(74) Kən Iesu t- øm- ol -wir min, kən suah øh t- øn- at- aplan nat kən m- and Jesus 3SG- PST- make -good again and man DEM 3SG- PRF- CONT- see thing and CVB-
in- at- øghat.
PRF- CONT- talk

‘And Jesus made him well again, and that person began seeing things and began talking.’ (Matt 12:22)

2.3.3.6 Mood. There is not much grammatical marking dedicated to mood, from what can be found in the NT, with possibly imperative being the only feature found so far.

2.3.3.6.1 Imperative. As mentioned in 2.3.3.4.3, verbs can take a future prefix to sometimes express imperative. It is not clear what dictates if the ø- marks future or imperative, or if it can even be considered a mood marker. For most cases, imperative is expressed with an unmarked verb, as in (76). Sometimes the verb can also use what looks like a polite suffix -tu, translated to ‘please; tryingly’ in NH (Nehrbass 2012, p. 167), shown in (77).

(75) !Pətan økəku, i- at- øn -ipınə kom ik məmø ø- n- ak- øtul! girl little 1.EXCL- CONT- say -DIR PREP 2SG COMP FUT- 2- NPST- stand

‘Little girl, I say to you that you will get up (impv)!’ (Mark 5:41)

(76) Agim.
\text{flee/run.away}

‘Move. (Lit. Run away.)’ (Luke 14:9)

(77) lrəmərə, aplan -tu.
Lord see -please

‘Lord, look.’ (Luk 22:38)

2.3.3.7 Directionals. Verbs commonly take directional suffixes, which are listed in BL. Blaymire’s table suggest they are all attached to the verb since they are presented with hyphens, but in NT they can sometimes occur independently. When they are suffixed to a verb in NT, there is usually already hyphen separating the verb from the directional, as in shown in (78). There are also other words which might be directionals, such as iarəp, usually translated to ‘out’ or similar. Nehrbass also mentions ləhau ‘below’, as a directional. It does not share the same characteristics as the other directionals, by only occurring independently and
never attached to a verb. Blaymires (1995) mentions a locative \textit{l-} or \textit{i-}, which could here be attached to the \textit{əhəu}. However the locative is according to BL only used for nouns, which means it is not certain that it is the same marker.

The forms mentioned could be variants of the ones below, or carrying other meanings. I will refer to them as directionals regardless, since the exact usage is yet to be determined. It is also entirely possible that BL and NH do not share the same definition for directionals.

(78) “Nian Iesu tameiuaiu-pa e nitot, netəmim tepat kətomətəu-pən.”
   “When Jesus came down from the mountain, many people followed him.” (Matt 8:1)

(79) \textit{O- t- øəike m- uwin m- iuw -pər}:
   FUT- 3SG- must CVB- go.away CVB- pull -DIR
   ‘No, he must go pull him up.’ (Matt 12:11)

(80) \textit{?Kən pah t- øm- os -ipinə nepətən un?}
   and who 3SG- PST- carry -DIR greatness DEM
   ‘And who gave you this authority?’ (Matt 21:23)

(81) \textit{Kən pris asol min k- øm- ot- øn - iarəp nolan t- epət lan.}
   and priest big PL 3PL- PST- PL- say -DIR actions 3SG- be.many 3SG.DAT
   ‘And the chief priests told out many ways about him.’ (Mark 15:3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towards speaker</td>
<td>-pa</td>
<td>-pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards person spoken to</td>
<td>-pəna</td>
<td>-pinə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Away from both</td>
<td>-pən</td>
<td>-pən</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up</td>
<td>-pər</td>
<td>-pər</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>-aḥau</td>
<td>-əhau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>-par</td>
<td>-par</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards coast</td>
<td>-pah</td>
<td>-pah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>-pahap</td>
<td>-pahap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>-pis</td>
<td>-pis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Directional suffixes in North Tanna

These directionals frequently show two variants, one which (more or less) follows the list in BL, and one which is preceded by an \textit{i-}. Some examples are \textit{pən/-ipən}, \textit{-ap/-ipa} and \textit{-əhau/-iəhau}. This could be due to a number of factors, and below is a discussion on some which might control the markers. First, no verb occurs with both forms, and all directionals are able to use the additional \textit{i-} or not. For this reason, it is reasonable to analyze them as two variants on one form, rather than different markers.
(82) $K\, \text{os-} \, \text{ip-} \, \text{nəsənanən} \, \text{kəm-} \, \text{ilat-} \, \text{nərəkinən} \, \text{nəptən-} \, \text{ne-} \, \text{nɨtəhəi.}$
3PL PST carry DIR power PREP 3PL PREP destruction ground and ocean

‘Power was given to them to destroy the ground and the ocean.’ (Rev 7:2)

(83) $Kən \, k\, \text{ət-} \, \text{-pən-} \, \text{nətə-} \, \text{iləhəl-} \, \text{kəsil-} \, \text{e-} \, \text{nıkəli-} \, \text{n-} \, \text{pah}$
and 3PL PST write DIR name three PREP side.of POSS.3SG oceanwards/towards.coast

ikin, kəsila min e nıkəli n pəhəp ikin, kəsil e nıkəli n pis ikin,
place three PL PREP side.of POSS.3SG north place three PREP side.of POSS.3SG south place

kən kəsil e nıkəli n par ikin.
and three PREP side.of POSS.3SG inland place

‘And three of the names were written on the east side, three more on the north side, three on the south side, and three on the west side.’ (Rev 21:13)

As seen below, verbal transitivity is not a deciding factor. In examples (84) to (86) we see three verbs, each one belonging to one of the verbal groups in Nehrbass (see section 2.4.4), all which can take the same directional suffix form.

(84) $Pəs \, iləu \, kəəm \, əm \, k\, \text{ət-} \, \text{owər m-} \, \text{ər-} \, \text{oərəs-} \, \text{pən-} \, \text{wət-} \, \text{inimətə.}$
let 3PL both DEM 3PL rise CVB CONT do.until.certain.time(V) DIR wheat 3SG be.green

‘Let them both grow until the wheat is ripened.’ (Matt 13:30)

(85) $Kən \, nətəm \, rəhə \, -lat \, \text{nautə-} \, \text{t-} \, \text{epət-} \, \text{k-} \, \text{ot-} \, \text{rakin-} \, \text{pən-} \, \text{nəni} \, \text{asol \, \text{mın-}}$.
and people POSS POSS.3PL property 3SG be many 3PL PL throw(TR) DIR money be.big PL

‘And the rich people are throwing in much money.’ (Mark 12:41)

(86) $Pəs \, ek- \, \text{itələg-} \, \text{pən-} \, \text{e-} \, \text{rəha-} \, \text{k-} \, \text{nima \, \text{itəm-} \, \text{em-} \, \text{isi}}$
let 1SG.NPST return(INTR) DIR PREP POSS POSS.1SG house REL 1SG.PST come.from(INTR)

-pan ik'in auxon.
-DIR place beforehand

‘Let me return to my house which I came from before.’ (Luke 11:24)

What is likely the deciding factor is the final vowel of the verb root. Table 13 shows the number of instances of i- or ø-. For simplicity, only the directionals beginning with p are used, meaning əhau is excluded form this particular analysis. There are roughly 2300 instances when verb complex use a suffix beginning with -$p^*$ 3 The number of unique combinations are approximately 2100. The number for verbs followed by -$ip^*$ is around 2600, with some 2300 unique combinations.

3The search found all instances of a hyphen followed by either p or ip followed by any letter combination. This should not mean any significant interference for two reasons. First, the use of hyphens to indicate attachment in the NT is apart from directionals restricted to demonstratives, repetition and the transitive marker -in, and at least none the grammatical markers begin with either p or ip. Second, if for example a repeated word beginning with any of these, they are likely not disturbing the results since repeated words are in limited numbers, while directionals are very frequent in NT.
The differences between the forms do not depend on whether the last phoneme is a vowel or not, but rather which vowel is used. The i-form is clearly more used when the final vowel is e or o, while the unmarked is more common for a, i, i, u and w. For a the result is quite similar for both sides, and it is not enough to make any claims on. We should note however, that even though one final vowel often tends to use one form, there are instances which contradict the proposed phonological condition. For the time being, final vowel is the most reasonable deciding factor for the two forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final vowel</th>
<th>No. of -p*</th>
<th>No. of -ip*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>142 (122)</td>
<td>351 (275)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>279 (122)</td>
<td>22 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td>117 (95)</td>
<td>1459 (1128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>275 (251)</td>
<td>8 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɨ</td>
<td>535 (465)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>35 (30)</td>
<td>825 (721)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>809 (719)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>104 (93)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Occurrences of directionals using -i or not, unique instances in parenthesis

2.3.3.8 Converb marker. Examples (87) and (88) show the usage of the m- suffix, which Blaymires calls “same subject as previous verb”. In NT this marker is used on verbs replacing a number of verbal affixes, and it is true that the verb carrying the marker mostly shares the subject of of a previous verb. However there are some properties of the marker which disagrees with how a same subject marker would normally function. Most importantly, there are cases where the m- does not correspond to the same subject. It is also unclear whether these verbs also can take tense marking. No verbs beginning with m- take the past tense marker əm-, or the future ak- or ək-. They can however take the at/ət- prefix, which might be a portmanteau marking present tense and continuous aspect.

(87) T- əm- aliwọk m- uwa, iωhkr əm t- aprəkis -in ilat.
    3SG- PST- walk CVB- go nearby only 3SG- more.than -TM 3PL
    ‘He walked and came, and he nearly passed them.’ (Mark 6:48)

(88) Kən əmun e nian əh lapin, Josep t- əm- ətul m- ilas suakoku
and then PREP when DEM night Joseph 3SG- PST- stand.up CVB- carry.large.object child
    ilau rọha -n mama m- əhl- agim m- ət- əhal- uwin əph əjip.
    3DU POSS -POSS.3SG mother CVB- TRI- flee CVB- CONT- TRI- go.away PREP Egypt
    ‘Then that very night, Joseph stood/got up and carried the child together with his mother and the three fled and went to Egypt.’ (Matt 2:14)
It is possible that the \textit{m}- is the same, or is very similar to, a \textit{m}- marker in Hammond (2014, p. 61). He refers to it as an “Echo Referent” marker which marks co-referentiality to a previous subject. The \textit{m}- replaces the subject and tense marking on the verb. This is similar to the North Tanna example (87), but that is not always the case. Example (88) shows the verbs \textit{agim} meaning ‘run away, flee’ and \textit{uwim}, ‘go away’, with the \textit{m}- followed by a trial marker. This means that the subject no longer is the same as it was first in the clause. Hammond (2014, pp. 78-79) explicitly writes that a verb with the \textit{m}- must share the same number marking as the main verb, which suggests that these prefixes are not the same after all. Dixon’s definition of a same subject marker is that it is one of two possible switch reference marker, which he explains as “indicating whether a certain clause has the same or different subject (A or S) as the following one” (Dixon 2012, p. 204).

By this definition, and by comparing to Hammond’s discussion, the \textit{m}- in North Tanna is likely something else than a same subject marker. The \textit{m}-verbs cannot take (at least only) tense, are non-finite, and the marker is not always coding same subject. A possibility is that \textit{m}- is the marker of a convorb. Haspelmath et al. (1995, p. 3) define converbs as a non-finite verb form whose function is to mark adverbial subordination. According to their definition, the verb of the convorb is supposed to be inherently subordinate. This fits with NT, since \textit{m}-verbs never occur independently, and can be interpreted as carrying an adverbial meaning. This means the verbs still is connected to the other verb in some way by (most commonly) sharing the same subject.

2.3.3.9 Negation. Blaymires presents the circumfix \textit{s-} + \textit{-ən} for verbs. It is possible it is \textit{əs} + \textit{ən} in NT, or that there are phonological conditions which demand an additional \textit{ə} between two consonants. The second form occurs more often, as in (89) but there are also instances where the negation is the initial part of the verb, and begins with an \textit{s-}, as in (90). As mentioned in section 2.3.3.6.1, verbs can drop their subject markers for coding a sort of imperative, and it would appear that this is possible for negated verbs as well. This should indicate that the affix’s regular form is \textit{s-} + \textit{-ən}. However, example (91) contradicts this by having an imperative negation beginning with \textit{əs-} instead.

\begin{quote}
(89) \textit{O-} n-\textit{ək-} (ə)s- ot- os- \textit{-ən} nat kit e \textit{rəha} -təmat naliwəkən, məto o- n-
FUT- 2- NPST- NEG- PL- carry -NEG thing art PREP POSS -POSS.2PL walk but FUT- 2-
\textit{ək-} ot- os \textit{əm} kasıkin \textit{rəha} -təmat
NPST- PL- carry only walking.stick POSS -POSS.2PL
\end{quote}

‘(impv) You will not take a thing on your walk/travel, but you will take only your walking stick.’
(Mark 6:8)

‘You shall not bring anything on your travels, but your walking stick.’

\begin{quote}
(90) \textit{S-} \textit{əkləh -ən}
NEG- steal -NEG
\end{quote}

‘Do not steal’ (Rom 13:9)
As (89) also shows, the negative imperative is marked by using the future o-. This is the same as with declarative verbs, and as with the other verbal markers, it is the initial prefix of the verb.

There are some exceptions to this. Here in (91) the negative imperative verb begins with a ə- instead. Although it is not certain if the ə here corresponds to the imperative, if it is part of the negative circumfix or if it is a so far unclassified marker. Examples (91) and (92) show two inflections of the same verb. The one difference here is that (91) does not explicitly code a future event, if we look at the English translation. This requires more attention and investigation, but the negative circumfix will be interpreted as s- + -ən for the time being.

Negation can also mark a verb + adverb as in (93) where the adverb min (‘again, too’) takes the final marker of the negation

There is a negative copula for equational negation. The work of Nehrbass (2012, p. 132) includes sənən ma, ‘it is not’. This is possibly the same construction in North Tanna, but Nehrbass does not discuss any properties other than that it is a verb. However, in NT, it almost never takes any verbal marking, apart from three single instances where it is preceded by kə-. One possible explanation is that the prefix is the third person plural. Copulas for non-negative is expressed by either juxtaposing the subject and the predicate or using demonstratives, see section 2.4.2.3.
(94) Suah əh sanəmə in i- ol təfagə rat
man DEM not 3SG NOM- do behaviour bad

‘This man is not a sinner {lit: a person doing bad things}.’ (John 9:16)

(95) N- ak- at- os natimnat itom k(ə)- sanəmə rəha -m, kən m- at- əulək
2- NPST- CONT- carry things REL 3PL- not POSS-POSS.2SG and CVB- CONT- gather?

e nasumən min itom ik n- əm- (ə)s- əfe -ən ilat.
PREP garden PL REL 2SG 2- PST- NEG- plant -NEG 3PL

‘You take things which are not yours, and you gather in gardens which are not yours.’ (Luke 19:21)

Locative and existential negation are marked by using the verb ikə which is translated as ‘be non-existent, be gone’ according to Nehr bass (2012, p. 154). Examples (96) and (97) show that it codes both location and existence, and example (98) also shows that the copula itself can take the verbal negative circumfix s- + -ən.

(96) Kən t- ol nəhan, nian ilat k- əm- ot- əplan məmə Iesu t- inikə u ikin -u,
and 3SG- do like.that when 3PL 3PL- PST- PL- see COMP Jesus 3SG- be. gone DEM place -DEM
kən rəha- n min netəmim k- ot- ıka
and POSS -POSS.3SG PL people 3PL- PL- be nonexistent

‘So being like that, when they saw that Jesus was not there in that place, and his disciples were not there (John 6:24)

(97) Rəha -lat nolkeikeən kəm netəmim o- t- ıkə, kən o- k- (ə)s- ot-
POSS.3PL love PREP people FUT- 3SG- be. non-existent and FUT- 3PL- NEG- PL-
ələn -on nəratən itom suah kit o- t- ol kəm ilat.
forget -NEG evil REL man ART FUT- 3SG- do PREP 3PL

‘Their love for people will not exist, and they will not forget a wrong which a person will do to them.’ (Mark 4:39)

(98) Nat kit t- (ə)s- ıkə -ən ron itom kitat netəmim k- ot- itun
thing ART 3SG- NEG- be. non-existent -NEG about.him REL 1SG.PL.INCL person 3PL- PL- know
nolən k- os -ipən kəm in.
actions 3PL- carry DIR PREP 3SG

‘There is not one missing thing about him that we (incl) person can make and give to him.’ (Acts 17:25)

2.3.3.10 Verbal derivational morphology. The derivative circumfix n- -ən can turn verbs and adjectives into nouns. Blaymires refers this to ‘noun formatives’. Examples (99) and (100) shows the verb ərəmərə
('rule') derived with the circumfix to mean ‘kingdom’. This process appear to be fairly productive, where many nouns seem to be derived from a verb.

(99) \textit{Məto pas kitat k- ot- rərəmərə e rəha -tat nolən min, məto -inu}

but let 1PL.INCL 1.INCL- PL- rule PREP POSS -POSS.1PL.INCL action PL but -here

\textit{kitat netəm rəha nianən.}

1PL.INCL humans POSS daytime

‘But let us (incl) rule our(incl) ways, because we are the people of the daytime.’ (1Thess 5:8)

(100) \textit{N- ak- əkəike m- ol nəhlən məto -inu n- rərəmərə -ən rəha Uḥgin in t-}

2- NPST be.obliged CVB- make like.that but -here NMLZ- rule -NMLZ POSS God 3SG 3SG

\textit{ol nulan.}

-make like.this

‘You must do like that because the rule/kingdom of God is like this.’ (Matt 18:23)

‘You must do it because that is the way of the kingdom of God.’

A second derivational function is the prefix \textit{i-}. Verbs which take this nominalizer become agentive nouns. Neither Nehr bass or Blaymires discusses this, but Nehr bass’s list includes some nouns which begin with y, and it appears most of them consist of a verb root and a prefix. In North Tanna this is the same process but with an \textit{i-} instead. For example, the verb rərəmərə (‘rule’) can again be derived, but this time to an agent noun ’ruler’. This also is the word for ‘Lord’, as in God.

(101) \textit{I- rərəmərə, I- rərəmərə!}

NMLZ- rule NMLZ- rule

‘Lord, Lord!’ (Matt 7:22)

(102) \textit{nima rəha i- akləh min}

house POSS NMLZ- steal PL

‘a house of thieves.’ (Matt 21:13)

2.3.4 Adjectives and modifiers

Nehr bass lists words which can be divided into “true” adjectives and verbal adjectives. The way they differ is not quite clear when comparing them with the NT and some might belong to both groups. There are some characteristics which are prominent however, which will be discussed below.

2.3.4.1 Adjectives. The word list in Nehr bass (2012) shows that there are quite a few words that are adjectives as a separate class. In North Tanna they do not seem to take any marking, and the NT also agrees with Blaymires (1995) who claims that adjectives follow the nouns they modify. Some examples of this is seen in (103) with \textit{keike}, ‘beloved, important’, and in (104), with \textit{rat}, ‘bad’.
(103) *Inu nəti -k keike itəm i- ak- olkeike pik, kən niki -k t- agien*  
this child -POSS.1SG beloved REL 1SG- NPST love much and soul -POSS.1SG 3SG- be.happy *pik ron.*  
much because.of/for  
‘This is my beloved son whom I love very much, and my heart is very happy because of him.’  
(Matt 3:17)

(104) *Iesu t- əm- əhg - iarəp narmi - n rat min e suah kit*  
Jesus 3SG- PST- ignite -DIR spirit -POSS.3SG bad PL PREP person ART  
‘Jesus cast out bad spirits from a person’ (Headline before Luke 8:26)

2.3.4.2 Verbal adjectives. While the “true” adjectives (henceforth referred to as lexical adjectives) function as nominal modifiers, the verbal adjectives are often used predicatively. They are a much larger group than the adjectives and are often treated similarly to verbs in that they can share a lot of verbal morphology. However the verbal adjectives are also capable of occurring unmarked. Nehrbass (2012, p. 212) mentions *alməl*, ‘be stupid, ignorant’, as a verbal adjective. In example (105), *alməl* can take markers for number as well as the negative circumflex, but in (106) the same word can be used with no marking. The difference is that now it is used as a noun attribute, and as mentioned in 2.3.3.6.1, verbs can only be unmarked when expressing imperative. Since the unmarked verbal adjectives do not show any imperative indications, this means there are differences in how verbs and verbal adjectives are used. Another possibility is that *alməl* is not used as a verbal adjective in example (106), and that the difference between verbal adjectives and lexical adjectives is that the first takes verbal morphology and is used predicatively, while the other does not take any morphology and is used attributively. One thing that might speak against this is that *alməl* is not listed as a lexical adjective i NH, but that does not exclude it from being one. Verbal adjectives are also treated differently in that they occur only taking a 3SG prefix even if the subject is plural.

(105) *Kən t- ol min- nəhlan, s- ot- alməl -ən -ta, məto o- t- əkəike m- and 3SG- make too- like.that NEG- PL be.ignorant -NEG -please but FUT- 3SG- must CVB- ot- alkut məmə o- n- ək- ot- itun nat naka itəm lərəmərə t- olkeike.*  
and 3SG- make too- like.that NEG- PL be.ignorant -NEG -please but FUT- 3SG- must CVB- ot- alkut məmə o- n- ək- ot- itun nat naka itəm lərəmərə t- olkeike.*  
PL- try.hard COMP FUT- 2- NPST- PL- know thing what REL lord 3SG- want  
‘And that being so, do not be crazy now, but you-PL-must try to understand that which the Lord wants.’ (Eph 5:17)

(106) *Məto apəs nəghatən alməl min itəm netəmim k- oat- ən t- ol min-nulan:*  
but let.go talk be.ignorant PL REL people 3PL- PL- say 3SG- do too -like.this  
‘But leave crazy talks that people say like this:’ (Tit 3:9)

Another example is the the word *rat*, ‘bad, be bad’, which can according to Nehrbass be both an
adjective or a verbal adjective. In (104), it is used as an attribute and takes no marking for plural, and in (107) it is used predicatively and agrees with the subject as a verb would normally do.

(107)  Itəmat rafin netəm n- ak- ot- (ə)rat agin.
     3PL all people 2- CONT- PL- be.bad more

     ‘All of you are bad.’ (Luke 13:27)

To summarize, there are two distinct groups of words which cover adjectival meanings. One group is used predicatively and takes regular verb marking, and one is used attributively and takes no marking. Some words like rat, ‘bad, be bad’ can belong to both groups.

2.3.4.3 Quantifiers. North Tanna use quantifiers for modifying nouns. rafin ‘all’, and neen ‘some’, are found in NH. They follow the nouns but as example (109) shows that quantifiers can also be treated as nouns by occurring in the nominal position and take number markers.

(108)  Netəmim rafin o- k- ot- ətəhau itəmat o nərg -(ə)k
        people all FUT- 3PL- PL- hate 2PL PREP name -POSS.1SG

     ‘All people will hate you for my name.’ (Matt 10:22)

(109)  Netəmim neen k- ot- əmə ik Jon Baptais. Neen min k- ot- əmə ik Elaija.

     ‘Some people say you are Jon Baptaes. Some others say you are Elijah.’ (Mark 8:28)

2.4 Syntax

2.4.1 Basic word order

The normal word order for independent clauses is SVO, which Blaymires (1995) also claims. Modifiers follow the nouns they modify, and there are prepositions and not postpositions for marking nouns.

(110)  Kən Jesu t- əm- uəfimin rəha -n n- etəm tuelef k- ot- uwa kitiəh
        and Jesus 3SG- PST- gather POSS -POSS.3SG PL- human twelve 3PL- PL- come one

     ‘And Jesus gathered his twelve people to come together {lit: to come one}’ (Luke 9:1)
     ‘And Jesus gathered twelve of his people together’

2.4.1.1 Pro-drop. Independent pronouns are not obligatory for a clause to be complete and there are plenty of instances where it can be excluded. This subject indexing is however almost always obligatory on the verb, the only exception being when verbs stems appear unmarked for imperative mood.

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2.4.2 Subordination

As with basic word order, subordinate clauses tend to also have SVO order, but is possible other variations are present. The verbs in the subordinate clauses can take the same set of verbal marking as the verb in the main clause, but it is also common for the subordinate clause to carry the converb marker m-. Subordination in North Tanna requires some further attention, but four types of subordination will be presented below in 2.4.2.1 to 2.4.2.4.

‘They were very wise for telling the meaning of stars.’ (Matt 2:1)

And they took out riches from their baskets which were expensive, and gave them to him.’ (Matt 2:11)

‘Now, I am baptizing you in water because, you turned your thinking from your bad ways.’ (Matt 3:11)

‘All these things, I will give them to you if you will bow your knee and worship me.’ (Matt 4:9)
Okəmə t- at- atəlig -in ik, rəha -m nəghatən o- t- ol in t- at-
if 3SG- CONT- listen -TM 2SG POSS -POSS.2SG talk FUT- 3SG- do 3SG 3SG- CONT-
itəlɨg -pa min n- ak- u -əwir o- ətəlɨg listen -in tm, 2sg rəha poss -m -poss 2sg
nəghatən talk o- fut - t- 3sg -ol do in 3sg t-
ətəlɨg return -pa -dir mɨn too n- 2 -ak-
cont -u- du -əwɨr be.good o- fut -təlau together mɨn. too

‘If he listens to you, your talk will make him return and you two will be good together.’ (Matt 18:15)

2.4.2.2 Complement clauses. Something which which appears frequently in NT is the complementizer məmə. It has two different functions: It can either function as a complementizer or what Nehrbass calls a “quote marker” (Nehrbass 2012). The back translation usually translates it to sentences such as ‘in order that’, ‘so that’ and other similar variations. məmə always remains uninflected.

In Nehrbass’s word list it occurs as ̃mə, but according to Hammond (2014, p. 101), Whitesands uses both ̃mə and məmə as a complementizer. Nehrbass does not mention this variant, but the definition fits with the NT, and it is very likely that məmə corresponds to Nehrbass’s ̃mə.

Example (116) shows how məmə is used for introducing speech or quotations.

(116) kən etəm -iasol rəha nımə o- t- ən kom ik məmə, ‘Agim. Pas suah u - in t-
and man -big POSS house FUT- 3SG- say PREP 2SG COMP flee let person DEM 3SG 3SG-
apələh u ıkın -un.’ sit DEM place -DEM

‘and the big-man of the house will say to you, ’Move. (Lit. Run away.) Let this person sit here.”
(Luke 14:9)

‘and the leader of the house will tell you, ‘Move and let this person sit here”.

It can also be used as a complementizer, preceding a complement clause.

(117) Herot Antipas t- olkeike məmə in o- t- ohamnu Jon, mato t- əm- (ə)s- ol -ən
Herod Antipas 3SG- want COMP 3SG FUT- 3SG- kill John but 3SG- PST- NEG- do -NEG
mato -inu t- at- əgin netəmim.
but -here 3SG- CONT- fear people

‘Herod Antipas wants that he will kill John, but he did not do it because he was afraid of the people.’ (Matt 14:5)

‘Herod Antipas wants him to kill John, but he did not do it because he was afraid of the people.’

(118) Ilat k- oat- isiai -in Jon m- oat- ən məmə in ien ət.
3PL 3PL- PL- respect -TM John CVB- PL- say COMP 3SG prophet ART

‘They respect John and say that he is a prophet.’ (Matt 14:5)
2.4.2.3 Equational clauses. Equational clauses can either be formed by juxtaposing the noun and the verb, or by connecting them with a demonstrative.

(119) *In kig rəha Isrel.*

3SG king POSS Israel

‘He is the king of Israel.’ (Matt 27:42)

(120) *ilat u pia -k min, ne rəha -k kaka min, ne rəha -k mama.*

3PL DEM brother -POSS.1SG PL and POSS -POSS.1SG sibling PL and POSS -POSS.1SG mother

‘these are my brothers, and my sisters, and my mother.’ (Mark 3:35)

2.4.2.4 Relative clauses. There is a relative pronoun *itəm*, which Nehrbass translates as ‘that; which; whom; who’ (Nehrbass 2012, p. 218). It is very frequent in the NT, and it precedes the relative clause and can take marking for plural as seen in (124). It should be considered a relative pronoun since in (124) it can function as a NP in the relative clause.

(121) *Kən inu nərgɨ pipi min itəm t- əm- ətuoun e nian noanol min rəha Isrel k- and here name grandparent PL REL 3PL- PST- begin PREP day bloodline PL POSS Israel 3PL-əm- ot- uwin Papilon. PST- PL- go.away Babylon*

‘And these are the names of the ancestors which begin at the time the bloodline of Israel went to Babylon.’ (Matt 1:12)

‘And these are the names of the ancestors of the bloodline of Israel after they went to Babylon.

(122) *Taon itəm k- əm- ol əpəh ilis e nɨtot, okol tə- s- əhluaig -ən. town which 3PL- PST- do there above on mountain counterfactual 3SG- NEG- hide -NEG*

‘The town which is made up high on the hill, it cannot be hidden.’ (Matt 5:14)

‘The town on the hill cannot be hidden.’

(123) *Etəmim mil itəm k- əm- u- ətul -əpəh o Jesu person DU REL 3PL- PST- DU- stand -DIR PREP Jesus*

‘The two who stood-out for Jesus’ (John 19:31)

‘The two who stood up for Jesus’

(124) *kon ilat k- əm- oat-oor kəm itəm min u rəha -lat nat kit t- ıkə. and 3PL 3PL- PST- PST- share PREP REL PL DEM POSS -POSS.3PL thing ART 3SG- be.gone*

‘And they were dividing it to those who did not have any.’ (Acts 4:35)

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*The verb ‘ol’ here carries a third person plural marker, which I have not found an answer as to why. It could be a special construction of some kind which will not be discussed here.
2.4.3 Dummy verb

Whitesands (Hammond 2014, pp. 58,71) has a dummy verb for loans, and this is the case for North Tanna as well. Common Bislama loans in NT are ‘baptais’ and ‘wak’, which are both always preceded by the verb *ol*, glossed as ’do, make’ in Nehrbass (2012, p. 84). This verb can also be used with words which are not loans, and it is also especially common with verbal adjectives, as in example (127).

(125) *Nətɨ -k, uwim m- ol wək u- roiu əpəh e nasumən.*

child -POSS.1SG go.away CVB- do work DEM- now there PREP garden

‘My child, go and do work today there in the garden.’ (Matt 21:28)

‘My child, go and work in the garden today.’

(126) *T- stuatip əm məmə ik o- n-ək- ol baptais lak*

3SG- be.straight DEM COMP 2SG FUT- 2- NPST- do baptize 1SG.DAT

‘It is only right that you will baptize me.’ (Matt 3:4)

(127) *Əwəh, n- am- ol t(o)- wir*

yes 2- PST- do 3SG- be.good

‘Yes, you did well’ (2Tim 2:15)

2.4.4 Transitivity

Many verbs take the marker *-in* as the final suffix. At first glance it seems to have the characteristics of a transitive affix, but a sizable portion of the instances are clauses which do not take an overt object. Blaymires does not mention anything related to valency in her sketch, but the wordlist in Nehrbass (2012) gives some information on verbal transitivity in North Tanna. In his work, verbs are categorized as either transitive (TR) intransitive (INTR), unspecified for transitivity (V). There is so far no overt marking found which separates any of these verb categories. However, Nehrbass (2012, p. 227) lists a ‘transitive marker’ *in*. He does not seem to classify it as an affix, but possibly as a free standing marker, since he does not include a hyphen with the gloss. It should also be noted that the *-in* in NT is connected to the verb with a hyphen. This also happens with directionals and repetition, but not with negation or derivation. I have chosen to interpret this as suffixation, since both negation and derivation are circumfixes and are therefore not hyphenated possibly for simplification. Another possible hypothesis is that it is a free standing marker but when translating to North Tanna, Carlson et. al. wanted to separate the 3SG pronoun from the *-in* marker, both which happen to share the same form. They should also not be considered the same feature, since no other pronouns can be suffixed to a verb.

The usage of the marker is not entirely obvious, but it is possible to make some general statements. First, the verbs which use the suffix are often, but not always, categorized as TR or V in NH. Some examples of these can be found in (128) and (129).
(128)  *O- t- ətəlɨg -in -tu io.*  
FUT- 3SG- listen -TM -please 1SG  
‘Try to listen to me.’ (Luke 23:29)

(129)  *Iesu t- əm- əghat -in Jon Baptais*  
Jesus 3SG- PST- talk -TM John Baptize  
‘Jesus talks about John the Baptist’ (Headline before Matt 11:7)

(130) to (132) are examples of many instances where verbs can also take objects without the *-in*.

(130)  *Iesu t- əm- əghat ilat pia -n min*  
Jesus 3SG- PST- talk 3PL brother POSS.3SG PL  
‘Jesus talked with his brothers’ (Headline before John 7:1)

(131)  *Herod Antipas t- əm- əghat nəhlan moto -inu in t- əm- ohamnu rəkis Jon Baptais*  
Herod Antipas 3SG- PST- talk like that but -here 3SG 3SG- PST- kill completely John Baptize  
‘Herod Antipas talked like that because he had killed John the Baptist.’ (Matt 14:9)

(132)  *netəm niganəmt- ilat toppis k- in- oat-əplan nat.*  
people eyes -POSS.3PL dim 3PL- PRF- PL- see thing  
‘the people whose eyes are blind have started seeing things.’ (Matt 11:5)

There are also many verbs which can occur both with and without the *-in*. Examples (133) and (134) show the same verb forms from above but with a covert object, mentioned earlier. Whitesands does not have morphological marking for transitivity, but employs a clitic =*i* that functions as a resumptive marker (Hammond 2014, pp. 46-47). Only for clauses such as below, where there is no overt object, the *-in* shares the characteristics of a resumptive marker. It is also possible that the *-in* is a clitic, but it will be treated as a suffix here since the full meaning of it has not been discovered.

(133)  *Nian t- epət t- əto əghatən rəha Jon, kən t- in- əruru əfəməh, mətə t- time 3SG- be.many 3SG- hear talk POSS John and 3SG- PRF- not.know be.long but 3SG- olkeike mopə o- t- at- ətəlɨg -in.*  
like COMP FUT- 3SG- CONT- listen -TM  
‘Many times he heard the talk of John, and he was confused, but he liked to listen to him.’ (Mark 6:20)
This discrepancy between objects leads to the conclusion that the -in is neither a transitive, intransitive or a resumptive marker. There is also nothing regarding the objects themselves which could dictate what or when the -in is used or not. Lenakel has a transitive postclitic =in used for for all verbs which are not inherently transitive or intransitive. Lynch explains this marker as (Lynch 1978, pp. 30-31). This is somewhat similar to North Tanna, but Lynch does not mention anything related to covert objects.

Below are three tables presenting data for eighteen verbs. There are six each for transitive, intransitive and unspecified verbs. These words were chosen since they cover the categories mentioned, and are all frequently used in NT. The results below should not be interpreted as statistical evidence regarding transitivity, but instead as a way to show the variation of the usage of the -in. The tables do not show obligatoriness. For some verbs the -in seems obligatory when taking an object, but for some it is not. For example, the verb aun, ‘summon’, is barely used without the suffix, and when it is, it does not take objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N Tanna</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>use -in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agim</td>
<td>run away, flee</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smegah</td>
<td>be alive</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atig</td>
<td>dwell</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iet</td>
<td>exit, escape</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>italig</td>
<td>return</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uwa</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Some intransitive North Tanna words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N Tanna</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>use -in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aklish</td>
<td>steal</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aun</td>
<td>summon</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atalig</td>
<td>listen, think</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oe</td>
<td>bear fruit</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ohamnu</td>
<td>murder, kill</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oh</td>
<td>hit, beat</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Some transitive North Tanna words

In conclusion, what we do know is that some verbs can take or exclude the -in marker, and that it might cause a difference in which objects can be used or excluded. We also know that sometimes the same verb
Table 16: Some unspecified North Tanna words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N Tanna</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>use -in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>asitu</td>
<td>help</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stapah</td>
<td>ask</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stuoun</td>
<td>begin</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aghat</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>say, tell</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olkeike</td>
<td>want, love, need</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

can take the -in marker, and can choose to take an overt object or not. Transitivity classification is not relevant regarding which verb can use the marker. Until this has been further investigated, this marker will be referred to as a Transitivity Marker (TM), and its function can be said to mark transitive events which sometimes can exclude the object.

2.4.5 Serialization

Verbs in North Tanna can occur juxtaposed after each other, but it is unclear if this should be considered serial verb constructions. Aikhenvald et al. (2005, p. 1) explain the requirements for these constructions as several verbs acting as one predicate, with no overt marking, describing one single event. The verbs share tense and aspect, and the individual constituents should be able to occur independently.

Some requirements for serial verb constructions are fulfilled in North Tanna. Example (135) shows the verb for ‘go’ followed by the verb for ‘say’, which is translated to ‘coming and saying’. (We should exclude the verbal adjective ‘be many’ from the analysis since it is not a proper verb, and takes restricted marking). The second verb differs from the first only by carrying the m- marker, coding the verb as a non-finite subordinate verb which shares subject with the first one. Another example is (136). Here there are the verbs which are expressing one event, where the two final verbs are juxtaposed and both marked with the m-.

These constructions can express simultaneous actions and there is no connective marker between them. They often share the same grammatical categories, but as in (136) the subject is changed between the finite and the non-finite forms. Until more work is done, I propose that this is not serial verb constructions, based on the fact that there are non-finite forms which can carry other markers which the finite form does not, which also cannot be used independently. It is likely juxtaposing of converbs and/or finite verbs to express the simultaneous events of the main verb.

(135) *Mto nian rafin netamim t- epət k- oat- uwa m- oat- e n sipahri en e Jesu,*

but day all people 3SG- be.many 3PL- PL- go CVB- PL- say truth PREP Jesus

*noman ne nipitan, kən ilat t- at- epət.*

men and women and 3PL 3SG- CONT- be.many
‘But every day many people are coming and saying truth about Jesus, men and women, and they are getting many.’ (Acts 5:14)

Joseph and Mary took Jesus and ran away to Egypt’ (Headline before Matt 2:13)

2.4.6 Repetition

Verbs can be repeated or possibly reduplicated in certain contexts. Example (137) shows *ohalkin*⁵, possibly ‘break’, and (138) *aliwək*, ’walk’. Verbs which are repeated are more often dynamic.

(137) *lərəmərə, k- am- ot- ohamnu rəha -m ien m- ot- ohalkin -ohalkin rəha*

lord 3PL- PST- PL- murder POSS -POSS.2SG prophet PL CVB PL- break -break POSS

‘Lord, they killed your prophets and they broke up your altars.’ (Rom 11:3)

‘Lord, they killed your prophets and broke your altars.’

(138) *k- oat- iuw rəkis netəmim itəm rəha -lat nətəlɨgən t- at- aliwək -aliwək, 3PL- PL- pull completely people REL POSS -POSS.3PL thoughts 3SG- CONT- walk -walk*

‘They are pulling away the people who their thinking goes walking (unstable thinking) and they are going to their bad way.’ (2pet 2:14)

‘They are enticing people who do not think straight and they will sin’

It is possible that this is simply repetition, meaning it carries no grammatical information. Some dynamic verbs in Nehrbass are repeated as a part of the whole word, which makes it look like it is indeed lexical and not grammatical. For example there is *kəlkin-kəlkin* ‘break into little pieces’, or *elkin-elkin*, ‘spread out s.th’ or ‘make s.th. level’. Since Nehrbass’s list is primarily lexical and grammatical information is sparse, it is not apparent from his work which verbs can be repeated and what exact function the repetition has. By looking through examples in the New testament, most cases of this repetition seem to have more iconical meaning. *Ohalkin* never appears non-repeated, but *aliwək* ‘walk’, can be repeated or

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⁵The verb *ohalkin* could here treated as compound, which is discussed in section 2.4.8. However since the rules of compounds are not clear, I have decided to translate the word as it is in the back translation, i.e. ‘break’, since that is the element which is repeated.
occur with only one stem. The words which can be used both ways are of course more interesting here, because the repetition could (but might not be) be an inflection of the verb stem.

Hammond does not mention any reduplication or repetition in Whitesands, but it does occur in Lenakel (Lynch 1978, p. 32). He writes that reduplication of verbs express meanings such as diminutiveness, intensiveness and repetitive actions, but that it is not a productive function.

In example (139), the translation is very literal, writing 'break break', which differs from (137). This makes an interpretation more difficult, but it could also point to the fact that there is no grammatical information coded by repeating a verb.

(139)  Nɨpahrienən i- at- ən kəm itəmat məmə nɨmə min nəh n- etəmim o- k- ot-
truth 1.EXCL- CONT- say PREP 2PL COMP house PL DEM PL- people FUT- 3PL- PL-
əhap -əhap kəpiel min elat.
tear.open -tear.open stone PL 3PL.OBJ

‘Truly I am telling you that those houses people will break break stones of them.’ (Matt 24:2)

‘I am telling you that people will break those houses and no stone will be left.’

More work is needed to obtain a complete picture of how the repeating of verbs functions, but based on the data here it should not be regarded as as grammatical reduplication.

2.4.7 Conjunctions

North Tanna has at least two conjunctions, one nominal and one clausal. Their use is rather straightforward and not much attention will be directed towards them. Kən is used to connect clauses, but can also be used initially for a single sentence. The nominal conjunction ne is used to link nouns in the same clause.

(140)  Inu nɔrɡi tipi jesu Kristo rat min, kit in ɨ Kig Tefɨt, kən kit min
here name grandparent Jesus Christ great-grandparent PL one? 3SG King David and one also
in ɬpraham.
3SG Abraham

‘These are the ancestors of Jesus Christ, one is King David, and another is Abraham.’ (Matt 1:1)

(141)  jesu ne Jon Baptais
Jesus and John Baptize

‘Jesus and John the Baptist’ (Headline before Luke 7:18)

2.4.8 Compounding

There are some instances of compounding in the North Tanna New Testament, and the use of hyphens between two words in TN often seem to indicate this function.
2.4.8.1 Verb compounding. There is at least one possible example of verbal compounding. Nehrbass lists the words 'oh', ‘hit’, and 'alkin', ‘stir’, which used together in NT is used as ‘break’, as in (142). It should be noted that the only instances of this word are repeated.

(142)  Ḫōmat n-ak- oat- ehm natimmat min əh, məto nian o- t- at- uwa etəm netəmim
2PL 2- NPST- PL- see thing PL DEM but when FUT- 3SG- CONT- come REL people
o- k- ot- oh- alkin -oh- alkin kəpiel min rəha nいま min əh, inəh kəpiel kit o- t-
FUT- 3PL- PL- hit- stir hit- stir stone PL POSS house PL DEM still stone ART FUT- 3SG-
(ə)s- ətul -ən əh- ikin t- at- ətul ikin roiu.
NEG- stand.up -NEG DEM- place 3SG- CONT- stand.up place now

‘You are looking at those things, but a day is coming which people will knock down the stones of these houses, and not one stone will stand in the place it is standing now.’ (Mark 13:2)

2.4.8.2 Noun-adjective compounding. The noun etəm, ‘human, person’ is combined with the word derived form of the verbal adjective asol, meaning ‘be great, be big, be much (Nehrbass 2012, p. 114). The result is translated to ‘master, leader’, and it can also be found in Nehrbass, but instead as ‘etəmyasol’, since Nehrbass uses y- instead of i- to derive verbs or verbal adjectives to agent nouns. However, ‘iasol’ cannot be found, which makes the situation a bit more complicated since we do not know if it can occur on its own.

(143)  Io, io etəm- i- asol rəha nいま.
1SG 1SG person NMLZ- big POSS house

‘I, I am the master of the house.’ (Matt 10:25)

2.4.9 Prepositions

There is no morphological case marking in North Tanna, but prepositions are used to mark nouns. There are likely more than the ones discussed here. (Nehrbass 2012, p. 78) mentions two ‘dative markers’, kəm and o which are very frequent in the NT texts.

2.4.9.1 e. The preposition e is used for meanings such as ‘at, in, on’.

(144)  Kən e Listra, suah kit əh -ikin.
and PREP Lystra man ART that -place

‘And at Lystra, a man at that place.’

‘There was a man at Lystra.’ (Acts 14:8)

(145)  Kən m- ən -ipən kəm netəmim məmə o- k- ot- ṣəpələh ləhau e manuwihl.
and CVB- say -DIR PREP people COMP FUT- 3PL- PL- sit DIR PREP grass

‘And he said to the people that they will sit down on the grass.’ (Matt 14:19)
2.4.9.2 ΄α-pagination. Epah in Nehrbass it is explained as ‘emphatic ‘there’”, and is said to function both as a preposition and adverb. According to Blaymires it is a deictic. In example (146) it looks like it is used as a preposition. However, apah is the only of the words in this section which can occurs clause final which automatically excludes it from being a preposition. It is not however used as a postposition in example (147) or (148) but maybe as the deictic which BL mentions. Based on these findings it would appear that the marker carries one function as a preposition and one as an (also possibly emphatic) demonstrative.

(146) Iesu t- əm- aiir apah nɨtən rəha Jutia e taon Petlehem e niən Kig Herot
Jesus 3SG- PST- be.born PREP land POSS Judea PREP town Bethlehem PREP when king Herod
Asol in t- əm- at- ərəmərə lan.
great 3SG 3SG- PST- CONT- rule 3SG.DAT
‘Jesus was born in land of Judea in the town of Bethlehem at the time King Herod Big was ruling.’
(Matt 2:1)

(147) Io apah.
1SG DEM
‘It is me.’ (Matt 14:27)

(148) Nəhau kit apah.
water ART DEM
‘A water there.’ (Acts 8:36)

2.4.9.3 ə-kəm. According to Nehrbass, ə-kəm is a dative marker for indirect objects. It is used for indirect object marking in North Tanna, but it is never used together with the dative pronouns mentioned in 2.3.1.2.

(149) Em- ot- ehm rəha -n məhau t- əm- ər apah par, ən
1.EXCL.PST- PL- see POSS -POS.3SG star 3SG- PST- climb/increase there DIR and
ek- oat- uwa məmə ek- ot- os əpən nisiaiən kəm ən in.
1.EXCL.NPST- PL- come COMP 1.EXCL.NPST- PL- carry -DIR respect PREP 3SG
‘We saw his star rise in the east, and we are coming that we will give honor to him.’ (Matt 2:22)

2.4.9.4 o. o is the second dative marker mentioned in Nehrbass, and it is not used with the dative pronouns either. It mostly translates to ‘to’ in North Tanna. Both o and ə-kəm should be considered prepositions here because they mark the nouns function in the clause.

(150) Kən Uhgin t- əm- ən -iəhau ilat e napilaiən məmə o- k- (e)s- ot- ətlig -pən
and God 3SG- PST- say -DIR 3PL PREP dream COMP FUT- 3PL- NEG- PL- return -DIR
-ən o Kig Herot Asol.
-NEG PREP king Herod big

49
‘And God forbade them {lit. told them down} in a dream that they would not return to King Herod
Big.’ (Acts 10:28)

2.5 Numerals

The numeral system in NT includes both North Tanna and Bislama numerals. The numerals presented in
Tryon's word list (Tryon 1976) shows a quinary system, that is, the numerals are based on the number five,
such as kariləm kaiu (‘five’ and ‘two’), meaning ‘seven’. This system seems to have been abandoned in
the NT translation, and numbers one to four are North Tanna, while five and up are Bislama loan words.

2.5.1 Cardinal numbers

Numerals, as with all other modifiers, follow the noun. Numbers above ten are created by adding the
numerals, decimal number first, with no apparent modification or other markers. Tables 17 and 18 show
different formations of numerals found in North Tanna.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tryon</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>kičlah</td>
<td>kitiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>ka-iu</td>
<td>kaiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>kesəl</td>
<td>kisiil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four</td>
<td>kə-wet</td>
<td>kuwit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>kariləm</td>
<td>faif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six</td>
<td>kariləm kečlyah</td>
<td>sikis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven</td>
<td>kariləm kaiu</td>
<td>sepin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight</td>
<td>kariləm kəsəi</td>
<td>eit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine</td>
<td>kariləm kəwet</td>
<td>nain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>kariləm kariləm</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: Numerals in North Tanna

(151) Kən nikuti wit neen min k- əm- ot- əsə -pən e nəptən itəm t- əwir, kən k- əm-
and seed wheat some PL 3PL- PST- PL- fall -DIR PREP ground REL 3SG- good and 3PL- PST-
ot- oe -in noa -lat, neen noa -lat wan -hanrit, neen noa -lat
PL- bear.fruit -TM fruit -POSS.3PL some fruit -POSS.3PL one hundred some fruit -POSS.3PL
sikiste, neen noa -lat tate.
sixty some fruit -POSS.3PL thirty

‘And some wheat seeds fell on the ground which is good, and they bore their fruit, some one
hundred fruit, some sixty fruit, and some thirty fruit.’ (Matt 13:8)
eleven lepen, lepin, lefen
twelve tuelef
thirteen tatin
twenty tuente
twenty five tuente-faif
thirty tate
thirty nine tate-nain
sixty sikiste
one hundred wan-hanrit
twenty thousand tuente-taosan

Table 18: Numerals in North Tanna

2.5.2 Ordinal numbers

There are no special ordinal numbers in North Tanna, but they can be expressed by the cardinal numeral preceded by the verb *ol* (‘do, make’, according to Nehrbass).

(152) *Itəm t- əm- aupən m- aiir t- əm- ol marit, kən m- imis, m- (ə)s- that 3SG- PST- precede CVB- be.born 3SG- PST- do be.married and CVB- die CVB- NEG-
ɪləs -ən nəti -n kit, kən pia -n təm t- at- ol kəiu carry.large.object -NEG child -POSS.3SG ART and brother -POSS.3SG REL 3SG- CONT- do two
lan tit nəutahlimis.
3SG.DAT ? widow
‘The first one born married, and died, and did not have a child, and his second brother married the widow.’ (Matt 22:25)

(153) *Kən in min t- əm- imis m- (ə)s- iləs -ən nəti -n kit, kən itəm and 3SG PL 3SG- PST- die CVB- NEG- carry.large.object -NEG child -POSS.3SG ART and REL
 t- at- ol kisiəl lan ne ilat rafin m- uwɨn m- ətoaras -pən itəm 3SG- CONT- do three 3SG.DAT and 3PL all CVB- go.away CVB- do.until.certain.time -DIR REL
 t- at- ol sepɨn, k- əm- ot- ol nat kitiəh əm. 3SG- CONT- do seven 3PL- PST- PL- do thing one only
‘And he also died and did not have and child, then the third one of them all going on until the seventh, they did the same thing.’ (Matt 22:26)
2.6 Interrogation

2.6.1 Content questions

Interrogative clauses for content questions use a number of question words. The content interrogatives are treated differently among themselves, some take prefixes or other markers, other appear in different positions in the clause. For example, *hia*, 'where' usually but not always occurs clause finally, while *kuwəh*, 'how many', always follows the NP. There is no morphological marking for interrogation in the rest of the clause, and many interrogatives occur in situ, i.e. it takes the same position as the corresponding participant in an non-interrogative clause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BL gloss</th>
<th>BL</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>pah</td>
<td>pah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where</td>
<td>hie</td>
<td>hia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many</td>
<td>kush</td>
<td>kuwəh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when PST</td>
<td>nahjan</td>
<td>nəghan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when FUT</td>
<td>onahjan</td>
<td>onəghan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what</td>
<td>naka</td>
<td>naka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>why</td>
<td>o naka</td>
<td>o naka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: Interrogatives in North Tanna

(154) ?Pah u rəha -k mama, kən pah u pia -k min?  
who DEM POSS -POSS.1SG mother and who DEM brother POSS.1SG PL

‘Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?’  (Matt 12:48)

(155) ?Ik 2sg n- øt- atig hia?  
2SG 2- CONT- dwell where

‘Where are you staying?’  (John 1:38)

(156) ?Pɨret kuwəh u n- ak- oat- os?  
bread how.many DEM 2- NPST- PL- carry

‘How many breads have you?’  (Matt 15:34)

(157) Ek- oat- os pɨret sepin ne nəm økəku nən məsin øm.  
1.EXCL.NPST- PL- carry bread seven and fish little ? ? DEM

‘We have seven breads and just a few small fishes.’  (Matt 15:34)

Both *onəghan*, 'when future tense’ and *nəghan* ‘when past tense’ are rather infrequent in the New Testament, which means there is not much data to make many claims about the function. There are some examples though, which show that the future form always is clause initial, while the past form is always final.
The o- is reminiscent of the verbal future prefix, which raises the question if interrogatives share more features of verbs, and might be considered a subgroup of some kind. However these is no evidence of any other shared treatment, so this will have to be left for now.

(158) ẻgətun, ik n- əm- uwa ikin -u nəghan?
    teacher    2SG 2- PST- come place -DEM when.PST

    ‘Teacher, when did you come here?’ (John 6:25)

(159) ənəghan ənəmənən rəha Uḥgin o- t- uwa?
    when.FUT rule/power POSS God FUT- 3SG- come

    ‘When will the rule of God come?’ (Luk 17:10)

O naka, ‘why’ consists of what might be the dative preposition o and naka, ‘what’.

(160) ʔEk- ot- un naka?’ o ʔEk- ot- ənim naka?’
    1.EXCL- PL- eat what or 1.EXCL- PL- drink what

    ’What will we eat?’ or ’What will we eat/drink’ (Matt 6:31)

(161) ik n- ək- əruru nat naka itəm Uḥgin t- olkeike məmə o- t- os -ipən kəm
    2SG 2- NPST- not.know thing what REL God 3SG- want COMP FUT- 3SG- carry -DIR PREP
    ik.
    2SG

    ‘You do not know the thing that God wants to give to you.’ (John 4:10)

(162) ʔKən t- əm- ohamnu pia -n o naka?
    and 3SG- PST- kill brother -POSS.3SG PREP what

    ‘And why did he kill his brother?’ (1 John 3:12)

There is also another interrogative word which BL does not discuss, tahro. It is used very frequently in NT, and is often translated to ‘how is it that..’. Since its meaning is not exact, it is glossed as simply a question particle.

(163) ʔTahro n- ak- ot- əgin pik?
    Q 2- CONT- PL- fear much

    ‘How is it that you are so afraid?’ (Matt 8:26)

2.6.2 Polar questions

Yes/no-questions normally do not use any marking, but Nehrbass mentions a conjunction and question marker, o, which can be found in NT as well. It is possible that this o is the same as the preposition mentioned in section 2.4.9.4. The word order for polar questions remains SVO.
And in his eyes, do you think that he loves you more than birds? Yes!’ (Matt 6:26)

‘Do you think that your worry {lit: much thinking} can make your life long? No!’ (Matt 6:27)

‘You know/understand these things, or no?’ And they said to him, ”Yes.”’ (Matt 13:51)
3 Summary and further work

This sketch grammar has been written partly as a contribution to linguistic research, and also as an experiment to investigate the possibilities and restrictions of using Bible texts as the language source. This chapter is a summary of working on this sketch and will mention relevant findings, and discuss areas of suggested further research.

The work here is mostly based on the North Tanna New Testament, but without using Blaymires (1995) and Nehrbass (2012) as a complement, much more time would have been needed to be able to produce the same results. Having other sources with basic information on grammar or lexicon should then be a big help to anyone interested in undertaking this same type of project. Working with translations only is more time consuming, especially when most of the analysis is done manually. On the other hand, it is equally important not to stay too faithful to the external sources. They might give correct information but they do not include all information needed, which means one must look beyond what is discussed there. For example, Blaymires mentions six aspect and tense markers, which does not mean that there are only six aspect and tense markers in North Tanna. This information can lure the reader into a false sense of security, but it should be obvious that one should always assume there is more to uncover. Another reason to be careful is when regional differences, dialects or other variations are not included in the discussion. There is not much work done on how the dialects differ grammatically. This leaves the possibility that the NT is written in a different dialect, making some of Blaymires claims about the grammar untrue for these texts. An example of this is the subject markers for verbs where some disparity was apparent for the third person singular in 2.3.3.1.

An issue that came up working with Nehrbass (2012) was that all six languages sometimes seem to fit in the same categories a bit too nicely. The word list it categorized by the english gloss, followed by word class or other grammatical information, which makes it look like all Tanna languages have exactly the same grammatical functions but only with variations in lexicon.

This type work with Bible translations has, although as expected proven to be somewhat limiting, still provided with much useful content about the North Tanna language. Considering the scope of this thesis’ possibilities, it makes a very good base on which to make general claims on North Tanna grammar. The process has at times been slow due to the manual searching of two separate translations, but it is still a quite practical means of investigating a language. First, as mentioned in section 1.4, it has been useful not to be dependent on outside factors, and mostly relying on data which is already collected. Second, the New Testament is long and varying enough to provide with plenty of examples to validate any claims on the grammar structure. This of course is not limited to the Bible or or other religious texts, and working with other types of written data could surely give the same insight.

This work has presented some notable features in North Tanna. Of most interest was the verb phrase, which takes much of the marking in the clause. It shows affixation for subject person and number, tense, aspect, negation, mood, direction and derivation. The aspectual markers includes continuous, perfect, sequential and counterfactual, and there is one possible mood marker expressing imperative. The verb
also shows marking which do not agree with BLs theories, such as the “same subject marker” $m$-, which more resembles a converb marker. The marker $-in$ was also classified differently from NH, in that it does not function as a transitive marker. Nouns proved to carry little marking but a group of them can carry the plural prefix, while others mark number with the free standing plural or dual markers. Nouns can also occur with the indefinite article $kit$, and they can occur in possessive constructions by carrying possessive suffixes. There are different groups of alienable and inalienable nouns which manifests in possessive constructions. Syntactical features were covered in the second part of the thesis, where the already mentioned transitive marker $-in$ proved to be a interesting feature. The section on subordination presented features such as conditional, complement, equational and relative clauses. Other syntactical areas discussed were serialization of verbs, which might not be considered true serial verb constructions, non-grammatical repetition, and a few cases of compounding.

Since this is a preliminary sketch of North Tanna, with a limited secondary source, naturally not all areas have been fully covered here. It would be preferable to further investigate the $m$- prefix, not least since Hammond has written quite a bit on the subject, which means there might be much to look for in North Tanna as well. The $-in$ prefix also requires more attention, along with many features of the verbal morphology. The syntactical features would also need some more work, for example subordination and serialization.

Both Nehrbass and Blaymires mention some grammatical features which have not been discussed at all in this work. In BL there is the locative suffix, briefly mentioned in 2.3.3.7, which supposedly is prefixed to nouns. NH lists some other morphological features, such as an “intentional prefix” $n$-, and the instrumentive, impersonal or animal prefix $k$-. There is also more room for investigating dialects, because there are some differences in spelling between the sources, which might or might not be due to dialects or similar. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the dialectal situation is complicated which means clarifications would be welcome.

A suggestion for further analysis could be to incorporate more computational linguistics in to the method. For this sketch I have chosen to focus less on areas which demands advanced skills in programming and computational linguistics, but for example, it could be a useful means of finding out more on the absence of evidence by analysing the occurrence of certain word classes occurring near each other. This is not a part of my own background, but I am certain there are numerous ways to improve this type of work through computational linguistics.

However for future work the very best path if of course to work with informants. As mentioned above in the introduction, informants bring many important aspects to the table, which text based research sometimes simply cannot. One such area especially, which is has not been discussed here, is of course phonology and areas such as tone and intonation. Most other aspects are not impossible to obtain without speakers, but benefit greatly from working with native speakers. Also as mentioned previously, the issue of finding features is not the problem, but rather to prove what does not exist. If done without informants, this requires large amounts of text, but even then it there may be a distinction between spoken and written
language. To summarize: considering the scope and possibilities of this thesis, using Bible text as a source has made it possible to make claims about the grammar and structure of North Tanna, and this sketch will hopefully contribute to further research in the area.
References


