Chapter 6. The Verb: Connecting Concepts

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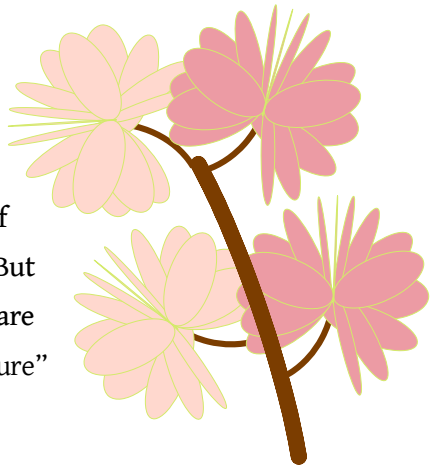


Most words in Nwehu Nuswei don't have a fixed grammatical role. However, as mentioned previously, one FAMILY of NN words is designated "the verb": *Xuhu.* This FAMILY expresses many ideas relating to the connection of concepts within messages. Many – if not most – messages will contain one of the words in this FAMILY, functioning as the primary connector of concepts. But other messages will be quite clear without a Lɪɪɪ *Xuhu* FAMILY word, as there are several ways of connecting concepts within a message. The "Message Structure" chapter, and particularly §4.6, discuss the alternatives more fully.

This chapter discusses concept-connection within messages in three sections: a background discussion, an explanation of ideas that can be expressed in the Lɪɪɪ *Xuhu* FAMILY, and a discussion of other ways by which NN can connect ideas within messages.

6.1. Background

In the most general sense, words that express WAVE or field CONCEPTS are used to connect the FOCUS of a sentence – what the speaker is primarily talking about – with other (new) concepts which the speaker wishes to bring to the hearer's attention.

Connection

↙ ↘

Concept A *Concept B*
(focus) *(new)*

These connections fall into two broad categories –

WAVE – action – DYNAMIC :

connecting a concept that causes or undergoes a change or action, possibly with a recipient of the action; or

FIELD – state – STATIC :

attributing a state-of-being or quality to a concept (see §1.3.1 for discussion of **WAVE** and **FIELD**).

Let's take a handful of representative concepts and combine them in different ways to illustrate how verbs connect them in English:

- is : connects a state-of-being (in the present) – a "field" in the physics sense, with something elsewhere
- John : name of a human male, a physical being, a "particle" in the physics sense
- kick : application of force with a foot, can be considered as a PARTICLE (the act) or a *WAVE* (the action)
- white : a combination of photon wave-lengths (color), normally used as a *FIELD* (state-of-being)
- ball : a spheroid object, often used in games, and in speech generally used as a *PARTICLE*
- little : a state-of-being or *FIELD* of size less than other objects of a similar type
- fall : moving (a *WAVE*) from higher to lower position unintentionally or without control

In the broad connection category of *WAVE*, we can connect these concepts with the word *kick*, which refers to an action:

John → kick → ball (Good English: John kicks the ball.)

The speaker makes a connection between 'John' and 'ball' using the action 'kick', which in this context means that John used his foot to apply sudden force to move the ball. This type of connection is known in traditional grammar as a "transitive" construction. (The English sentence adds the concept of present time and possibly generality – that is, the sentence leaves open the possiblity that John performs this action more than once).

Also in the WAVE category, we can connect the focus with an action that lacks a separate recipient:

John → fell (Good English: John fell.)

Here the speaker is connecting the concept 'John' with the concept 'fall' – known traditionally as an "intransitive" construction. (This example happens to be in the "past perfect" tense, including the notion that the action was completed some time before the statement was made.)

In the FIELD connection category, a speaker can attribute a state-of-being to the focus:

Ball ← white (Good English: The ball is white)
John ← small (Good English: John is small)

The speaker connects 'ball' with the attribute (FIELD) 'white'; and connects 'John' with the state-of-being (FIELD) 'small'.

Notice that the "Good English" examples introduce other concepts besides the simple connection between focus and the main idea the speaker is connecting. 'Kicks' and 'is' contain embedded information about the time of the connection relative to the time of the message, as opposed to 'kicked' or 'was'. 'Fell' not only refers to a time previous to the message, but indicates that the action was completed, as opposed to 'was falling'. Now we turn our attention to some of the more complex ways connecting words are used.

6.2. Concepts

Verbs in most (if not all) languages embed concepts that pertain to the statement as a whole, or relating to specific entities being discussed. These are expressed in various ways, not only in verbs; NN provides one or more ways to express many of these concepts. 𝔇ρ 6.1 lists these concepts and their variants, together with indications of how they can be expressed in NN. More complete explanation follows.

Display note:
Concepts represented directly in the verb are presented first.
In the NN column,
X- means that a vowel or consonant of the word *Xuhu* is used to indicate the concept
C2: the second consonant of the word beginning X-
Concepts represnted in the verbs of many languages, but not in NN, are listed below. In the NN column,
H--- means a stand-alone word in the *H* family expresses the concept
hu-- means a word beginning with (silent) *hu-* is added following a word to express the concept

𝔇ρ 6.1: Connection Concepts

Concept	Variations	NN
Time direction	Past Present Future timeless, general	*X- -w* *X- -u* *X- -i* *X- -wi*
Time span	Short span, immediate Mid span Long span	*X- -e* *X- -a* *X- -o*

Concept	Variations	NN
COMPLETION	COMPLETED (Perfect) ONGOING (Imperfect)	*X*- C2 obstruant *k c t p g j d b* *X*- C2 continuant *h x s f r y n m*
CONTINUITY	PUNCTUAL PROGRESSIVE DURATIVE – REPETITIVE unstated	*X*- C2 palatal *x y c j* *X*- C2 apical *s n t d* *X*- C2 labial *f m p b* *X*- C2 velar *h r k g*
WAVE vs. FIELD	DYNAMIC (WAVE, action) STATIC (FIELD, state-of-being)	*X*- C2 voiced *r y n m g j d b* *X*- C2 voiceless *h x s f k c t p*
Conditional	FACTUAL SPECULATIVE (conditional)	Default *Xw--*
EVIDENTIALITY	Certainty Possibility Doubt unstated	*Xo--* *Xa--* *Xe--* *Xu--*
Clause subordination	Main clause Subordinate clause	Default *Xi--*
Purpose of message	Statement Question Request or suggestion Command	Default *-hute* (§8.2.11) *-huta* *-huto*
Level of social respect	Informal Formal	Default *-huti* (§8.2.11)
Assertion - Negation	Positive (asserting) Negative (denying)	Default *-hutw* (§8.2.11)
FOCUS – ACTOR – OBJECT	FOCUS is ACTOR FOCUS is passive FOCUS is ACTOR who is also OBJECT	*-husi* (§8.2.3) *-husw* *-huswi*
Person and Number	First person Second person Third person Singular Plural COLLECTIVE	*Hife* (§7.3.1) *Hifa* *Hifo* *Hifi* *Hifw* *Hifwi*

Concept	Variations	NN
Animacy and Potency	Animate Inanimate Quasi-animate Unstated animacy Unstated, Low, Moderate, or High energy unstated	*-hubi* (§8.2.16) *-hubw* *-hubwi* *-hubu* (usually omitted) *-hube, -huba, -hubo* *-hubu* (usually omitted)
Possession	General relationship, 'having' Degrees of possession Origination, producing Subordination to something/one Assisting in making	*-hufu* (§8.2.4) *-hufe, -hafa, -hufo* *-hufi* *-hufw* *-hufwi*
Bio-social status	Female gender Flex gender Male gender Unstated gender Young age Adult age Old age general (person)	*-hume* (§8.2.8) *-huma* *-humo* *-humu* (usually omitted) *-humi* *-humwi* *-humw* *-humu* (usually omitted)

Details follow. Multiple concepts are introduced, some of which are explained in later sections of this chapter, indicated with § number within this chapter.

6.3. Purpose of the Message

In the sections that follow, there are several definitions followed by "Interactions" sub-sections. These "Interactions" are offered to explain how the various features of verbs affect one another, and make clear what might otherwise be puzzling.

6.3.1. Purpose of Message

MESSAGES have both semantic and social meanings: they convey INFORMATION, and they affect social relationships. In this section, we look at the types of INFORMATION MESSAGES convey, and how NN represents these. MESSAGE types were introduced in the chapter, "Message Structure"; we will look at them from a somewhat different perspective here. First, we consider three common types of MESSAGES: STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS, REQUESTS and COMMANDS. Some messages relate information about actions, others about states of being. Then we turn to assertion and negation.

6.3.2. WAVE vs. FIELD

This distinction is fundamental to the MESSAGE, so every NN verb is by nature either a WAVE verb (DYNAMIC) or a FIELD verb (STATIC).

- WAVE – DYNAMIC – **Action**: indicated in the second consonant of the verb by **voiced** quality (*r y n m g j d b*). The message is about something happening or changing. "Kenji kicks the ball."
- FIELD – STATIC – **State of Being**: the second consonant is **unvoiced** (h x s f p c t k). The MESSAGE is about a FIELD, a state of being. "The ball is brown."

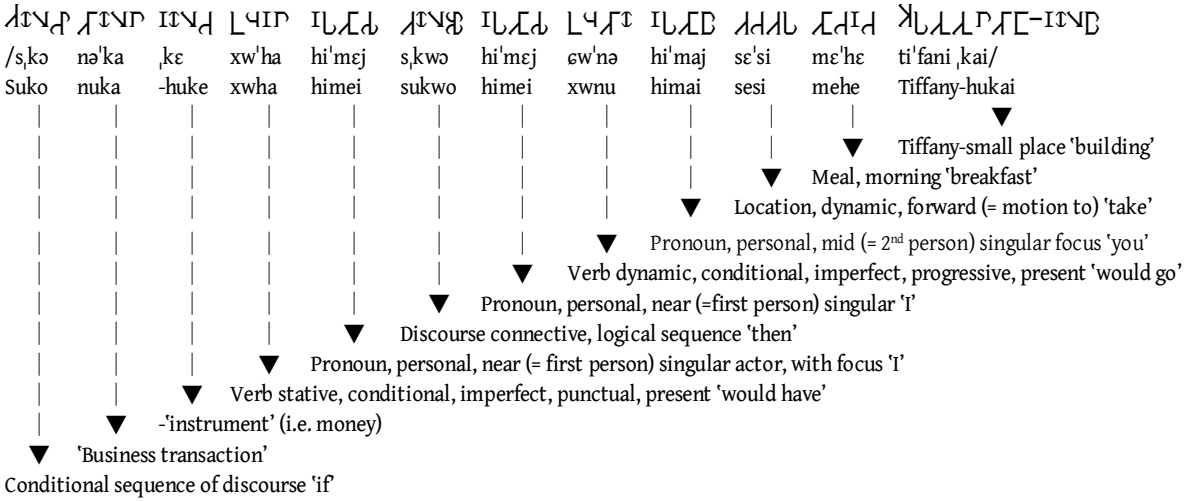
6.3.3. Real vs. speculative (CONDITIONAL)

People often speculate about situations which might be possible, but in actually are not – often, because a critical condition has not been met. Various languages have several ways of indicating messages as containing speculation; NN has two related mechanisms for this.

The first is the EVIDENTIALITY spectrum (doubtful – possible – certain §6.3.4) marked in the first vowel (*e – a – o*) of the verb. The second mechanism is the CONDITIONAL marker (*w*), also in the first vowel of the verb.

CONDITIONAL indicates something the speaker does not think will happen because a condition is not met. 'If I had the money, I would take you to breakfast at Tiffany's.' 'Had' and 'would' are used in English instead of 'have' and 'will' because the speaker believes the condition (having money) will not be met. In NN, this type of message is put together as an "IF – THEN (- ELSE)" construction. The IF clause begins with *suko*, and the THEN clause begins with the *sukwo*. The verbs both begin with *xw-* indicating speculation.

Ɒᵽ 6.2: 'If I had money, I would take you to breakfast at Tiffany's.'



Interactions:

- EVIDENTIALITY: (first vowel of the verb *e – a – o*). The speaker may shade the message by indicating evidentiality of either the *if* clause or the *then* clause.
    - DOUBT (*Xwe-*) in the IF clause indicates speaker has little confidence that the CONDITION will ever be met; in the THEN clause, indicates that even if the CONDITION is met, the result is unlikely to be realized.
    - POSSIBILITY (*Xwa-*) in the IF clause indicates speaker believes there is a possibility the CONDITION could be met; in the THEN clause, believes there is only a possibility that if the CONDITION is met, the result will be realized.
    - CERTAINTY (*Xwo-*) in the IF clause, speaker is fully confident the CONDITION will (eventually) be met; in the THEN clause, regardless of the likelihood of the CONDITION being met, if it is met, the result is certain to be realized.

6.3.4. Evidentiality

EVIDENTIALITY in NN is generally the degree of certainty with which a speaker creates a statement. In English, messages are often preceded or followed by accompanying expressions like, "I think...", "It seems...", "...for sure." In many messages, the degree of certainty is as important as the assertion of the message itself, so

- EVIDENTIALITY: (first vowel of the verb *e – a – o*)
    - DOUBT (*Xe-*) indicates speaker has little confidence in the truth of the statement:
      Rebw~-hiku xefw nufwe 'The ball~ might have been brown' .
    - POSSIBILITY (*Xa-*) speaker believes there is a strong possibility the statement is true, but is not sure:
      Rebw~-hiku xafw nufwe 'I believe the ball~ was brown'.

- CERTAINTY (*Xo-*) speaker is fully confident in the truth of the statement:
  Rebw~-hiku xofw nufwe 'The ball~ was certainly brown'

Default (*Xu- Xi-, Xw-, Xwi-*): evidentiality not mentioned:

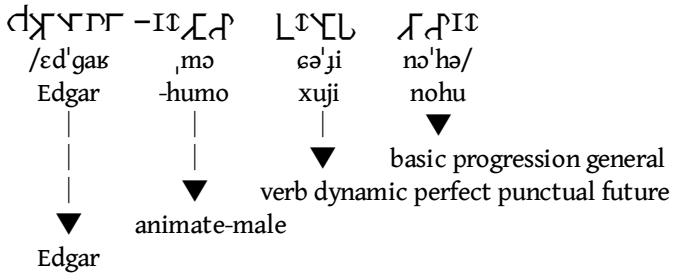
Rebw~-hiku xufw nufwe 'The ball~ was brown'

6.3.5. Clause subordination

Subjunctive verb forms are used in some languages to indicate that the verb is part of a dependent clause. For example, if Ryan says, 'Edgar will go', someone could report, 'Ryan said that Edgar would go', where 'would' is the subjunctive form of the verb rather than the future indicative because it is part of a subordinate clause. In NN, subordination can optionally be indicated by clause-level subordinator particles, beginning the clause with *sutai* and ending it with *sutwai* marking the clause boundaries; and by using the clause subordination indicator within the verb of the subordinate clause. For clarity, either one or the both of these mechanisms should be used.

Examples, beginning with the indicative, then the subjunctive...

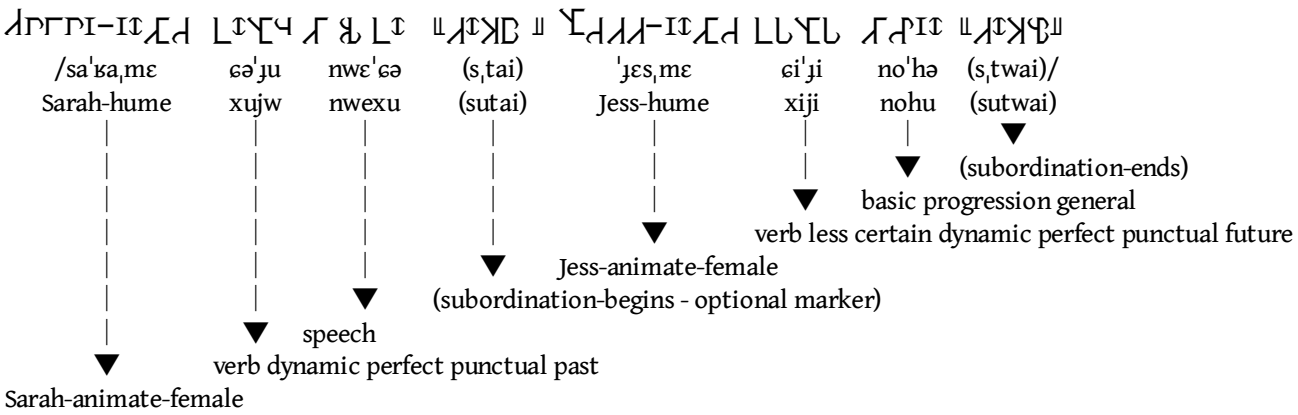
Ɗρ 6.3 – *STATEMENT*:



Literal English, 'Edgar-man[8] will move'
Good English, 'Edgar will go.'

Ɗρ 6.4 – *STATEMENT* (+ optional opening subordination particle) + *CLAUSE SUBORDINATION* verb (+ optional closing subordination particle):

8 MARKERS like *-humo, -hume* can be attached to names in NN to indicate both grammatical role and bio-social information.



Literal English, 'Sarah-woman did speech quote Jess-woman will move unquote'
Good English, 'Sarah said that Jess would go'

6.4. Other Important Message Concepts

NN assumes that most MESSAGES are STATEMENTS – that is, attempts by the speaker to inform the hearer about something. Normally, NN MESSAGES are interpreted as such, but three other possibilities can be indicated by adding a MARKER of the *Hutu* SPECIES immediately following the verbal word.

- QUESTION: add *-hute*
- REQUEST or SUGGESTION: add *-huta*
- COMMAND: add *-huto*

Interactions with other words in a sentence:

- QUESTION *-hute*
  - EVIDENTIALITY: (first vowel of the verb *e – a – o* §6.3.4)
    - DOUBT (*Xe-*) indicates speaker expects a negative answer to the question ("You don't like that, do you?") *Tepi xefa-hute?* (*Tepi* 'pleasure')
    - POSSIBILITY (*Xa-*) speaker expects candid answer ("Do you really like that?") *Tepi xafa-hute?*
    - CERTAINTY (*Xo-*) speaker expects positive answer ("You like that, don't you!") *Tepi xofa-hute?*
  - LEVEL OF SOCIAL RESPECT: (add *-i* to FUNCTIONAL §6.4.3)
    - formal (*-hutei*) polite question. *Tepi xufa-hutei?*
  - CONDITIONAL (first vowel of the verb *w* §6.3.3)
    - CONDITIONAL (*Xw-*) renders the question hypothetical. *Tepi xwfa-hute?*
- REQUEST or SUGGESTION *-huta*
  - EVIDENTIALITY (first vowel of the verb *e – a – o* §6.3.4)

        - DOUBT (*Xe-*) request is a casual suggestion. *Sehei xeya-huta* 'Come on in' (*Sehei* 'movement toward center of an enclosure')
        - POSSIBILITY (*Xa-*) request is advice, hope. *Sehei xaya-huta* 'Better come in', 'I hope you'll come in'
        - CERTAINTY (*Xo-*) request is serious. Sehei xoya-huta 'You should really come in'
    - Level of Social Respect: (add *-i* to FUNCTIONAL §6.4.1.1)
        - FORMAL (*-hutai*) polite request ("Please...") *Sehei xuya-hutai* 'Please come in'
    - CONDITIONAL (first vowel of the verb *w* §6.3.3
        - CONDITIONAL (*Xw-*) adds a further level of politeness. *Sehei xwya-hutai* 'Would you please come in?'
- COMMAND *-huto*
    - EVIDENTIALITY (first vowel of the verb *e – a – o* §6.3.4)
        - DOUBT (*Xe-*) command is a hope. *Sehei xeya-huto.* 'I hope you'll come in'
        - POSSIBILITY (*Xa-*) command is general expectation. *Sehei xaya-huto.* 'I expect you to come in'
        - CERTAINTY (*Xo-*) command is urgent. *Sehei xoya-huto!* 'Get the h—l inside!'
    - LEVEL OF SOCIAL RESPECT: (add *i* to FUNCTIONAL §6.4.1)
        - FORMAL (*-hutoi*) polite command ("Please...") *Sehei xoya-hutoi* 'Please, you must come in'
    - CONDITIONAL (first vowel of the verb *w* §6.3.3)
        - CONDITIONAL (*Xw-*) adds a further level of politeness. *Sehei xwya-hutoi.* 'Would you please come in.'

6.4.1. Social Aspects

Language is a primary medium for expressing social relatioinships. Many languages encode social relationships into their verbs. NN leaves many such social factors to be expressed in MARKERS, which will be touched on here and elaborated upon in several other chapters.

6.4.1.1. Politeness

It seems every language implements various ways to affirm social respect or "politeness" among participants. One way NN provides this is simply by adding *-i* to the *-hutu* MARKER. Simply adding *-huti* to a statement is a basic form of showing respect for the listener. As indicated in §6.4.1, this can be combined to indicate a respectful QUESTION *-hutei,* polite REQUESTS *-hutai,* and polite COMMANDS *-hutoi.*

Another social indicator in REQUESTS and COMMANDS is making the verb CONDITIONAL by adding *w* to the first vowel: *Xw--.* This is similar to English speakers' use of *would,* as in "Would you bring me a glass of water?"

6.4.1.2. *Bio-social status*

Most human society is organized based on the age, gender, and social standing of its people (which NN groups together as BIO-SOCIAL STATUS). In some languages, these factors must be reflected in verbs. Aside from the verb-based social respect mechanisms mentioned in the previous section, NN makes available bio-social status indicators as MARKERS to be attached to entities mentioned in a message. These are not required for producing grammatically correct messages in NN, but may be socially required in some cultures.

- AGE: *-humi* 'young', *-humwi* 'adult', *-humw* 'elder'
- GENDER: *-hume* 'female', *-huma* 'flex gender', *-humo* 'male'
  AGE and GENDER can be combined: for example, *-humoi* 'young male, boy', *-humwe* 'elder woman'.
- SOCIAL STATUS: *-huje* 'equal or humble social level', *huja* 'respected level', *hujo* 'honored level';
  Level of skill or EXPERIENCE: *-huji* 'student, low status', *-hujwi* 'craftsman, respected', *-hujw* 'teacher, honorable'. STATUS and EXPERIENCE can be combined: for example *-hujai* 'respected (advanced) student', *-hujwei* 'master craftsman'. The MARKER *-huje* 'equal or humble social level' can be used to indicate equal status between speaker and listener, indicating a familiar, firendly and informal relationship.

6.4.2. Assertion - Negation

Negation of statements, requests, and commands is straight-forward:

- STATEMENT *-hutw*
  - Added to the verb, this negates the action or assertion;
    Hoimoi sehwa xucw 'He/she went out' vs. *Hoimoi sehwa xucw-hutw* 'He/she did not go out'
  - Added to an entity in the message, this negates the specific concept or quality
    Rebw~-hiku xufa nufwe 'The ball~ is brown' vs. *Rebw~-hiku xufa-hutw nufwe* 'The ball~ isn't brown'
    (The symbol ~ in examples indicates that the word is only tentatively assigned)
- REQUEST *-hutwa*
  - Added to the verb, a request not to perform the action
    Sehei xuya-hutai 'Please come in' vs. *Sehei xuya-hutwai* 'Please don't come in'
- COMMAND *-hutwo*
  - Added to the verb, a command not to perform the action
    Sehei xuya-huto. 'Come in' vs. *Sehei xuya-hutwo.* 'Don't come in'

QUESTIONS when negated by *-hutwe* are more complex, especially in combination with conditional and levels of EVIDENTIALITY. This may be discussed further elsewhere.

6.4.3. FOCUS – ACTOR – RECEIVER

In many languages, the form of the verb changes depending on whether the FOCUS of the MESSAGE[9] is the initiator of action ("active voice"), the recipient of action ("passive voice"), or initiates an action upon themselves ("middle voice"). In NN, this is not reflected in the verb itself. Normally, context makes this

9 The **Focus** of a message is whatever the speaker wishes to draw primary attention to.

clear, but if the speaker wishes, it can be clarified by the use of MARKERS attached to the word representing the FOCUS. See the discussion in §7.2.2, §7.2.3, and §8.2.3.

- FOCUS is ACTOR: -*husi*
- FOCUS is RECEIVER: -*husw*
- FOCUS is both ACTOR and RECEIVER: -*huswi*

6.4.4. Person and Number

Many languages require verbs to assume forms which "agree" in person and / or number with the FOCUS of the sentence. NN does not have this requirement. If the speaker wishes, the role of entities participating in a message can be explicitly clarified using DEICTICS (ARTICLES or PRONOUNS) in the noun phrases. Details are discussed in §7.2.5 and §7.2.6.

6.4.5. Possession-like Relationships

A frequent function of MESSAGES involves connecting some entity with another entity in a relationship centered on origination, membership, or possession. Languages handle these relationships in various ways, but many use verbs like "have" (English), "tener" (Spanish), "持つ" (/motsu/ Japanese).

In NN, such relationships are treated as FIELDS associated with a PARTICLE. The relationship (the FIELD) is expressed using a word of the SPECIES ꟾɪᕁ - *Huf*- "Relationals". The simplest form is ɪɪᕁɪ *hufu*, implying possession of a general type of "having". This SPECIES offers a rich variety of relationship-types, and is discussed in §8.2.4.

Olaf has [a] ball. ᑯᖋᒥᒋᕁ ɪɪᕁɪ ᒪɪᓇɪ ᒥᒐᕁᔦ. *Olaf hufu xuku rifw~.*

or

Olaf's ball ᑯᖋᒥᒋᕁ-ɪɪᕁɪ ᒥᒐᕁᔦ. *Olaf-hufu rifw~.*

6.4.6. Animacy and potency

In some languages, certain verb forms reflect the ANIMACY of their FOCUS – that is, whether or not the primary entity in the message is sentient or alive. In NN, ANIMACY can optionally be expressed in DEICTICS (Chapter 7). SPECIES *Sup*- expresses POTENCY, the level of energy or threat seen by the speaker in a particular entity.

- ANIMACY: *supi* 'ANIMATE', *supw* 'INANIMATE', *supwi* 'QUASI-ANIMATE'[10]

10 **QUASI-ANIMATE:** an entity that appears to the speaker to have some, but not all, the characteristics of living creatures. See discussion in §7.1.1 of the chapter, "Pronouns and Articles".

- POTENCY: ***supe*** 'lower energy, lower threat', ***supa*** 'moderate energy, roughly equal to speaker', ***supo,*** 'high energy, high potential'

GENUS *sup-* is detailed in §8.2.22 of the chapter, "Functional Words"

6.5. Time in the Verb

6.5.1. Time direction

NN expresses time as a quasi-spatial dimension. The word-family *S---* represents space-time in eight dimensions, one of which is time, represented in GENI 𐑕𐑧𐑯- *Sen-* (dynamic) and 𐑕𐑧𐑛- *Sed-* (static). Each dimension is understood to have directionality, either positive (*---i*) or negative (*---w*). In the time dimension, positive direction is toward the future, negative is toward the past. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 14, "Representing Space and Time".

These time-word GENI are capable of clarifying many complex time-related situations, but for everyday use most languages use the verb to express normal time-relationships. The NN verb's last vowel duplicates the time relationships expressed in the last vowel of the 𐑕𐑧-- *Se--* words. This is how time-direction is expressed:

- FUTURE: *-i* is added to the end of the last vowel.
  Xuhi '...will...'
- PAST: *-w-* is added to the last vowel.
  Xuhw '...was...'
- TIMELESS: *-w-i* is added to the last vowel.
  Xuhwi '...is (in general)'

- PRESENT: with neither *-w* not *-i* in the last syllable, present tense is assumed.
  Xuhu '...is...'

			Base	Timeless	Past	Present	Future
Field (Stative)	**Continuing**		xuh	xuhu	xuhw	xuha	xuhi
		Punctual	xux	xuxu	xuxw	xuxa	xuxi
		Progressive	xus	xusu	xusw	xusa	xusi
		Durative	xuf	xufu	xufw	xufa	xufi
	Completed		xuk	xuku	xukw	xuka	xuki
		Punctual	xuc	xucu	xucw	xuca	xuci
		Progressive	xut	xutu	xutw	xuta	xuti
		Durative	xup	xupu	xupw	xupa	xupi
Wave (Dynamic)	**Continuing**		xur	xuru	xurw	xura	xuri
		Punctual	xuy	xuyu	xuyw	xuya	xuyi
		Progressive	xun	xunu	xunw	xuna	xuni
		Durative	xum	xumu	xumw	xuma	xumi
	Completed		xug	xugu	xugw	xuga	xugi
		Punctual	xuj	xuju	xujw	xuja	xuji
		Progressive	xud	xudu	xudw	xuda	xudi
		Durative	xub	xubu	xubw	xuba	xubi

Dp 6.5: Simple, basic verb (is not conditional or part of a subordinate clause, and does not indicate evidentiality)

6.5.2. Time span

NN offers speakers a way to express how long, or how far in the past or future, a state or action occurs.

Three optional time-spans can be expressed:

- NEAR: *-e* is added to the final vowel.
  Xuhe immediate present, *Xuhei* immediate future, *Xuhwe* immediate past
- MID: *-a* is added to the final vowel.
  Xuha general present, *Xuhai* intermediate future, *Xuhwa* recent past
- FAR: *-o* is added to the final vowel.
  Xuho present broadly, *Xuhoi* distant future, *Xuhwo* distant past

	General		Future		Past		Timeless	
Unspecified distance	xuhu	Unspecified	xuhi	Future in general	xuhw	Past in general	xuhwi	Irrespective of time, always
Close	xuhe	Present near, 'right now'	xuhei	Future very short-term 'very soon'	xuhwe	In the very recent past 'just now'	xuhwei	Timeless but in our vicinity
Mid	xuha	Present in general 'now'	xuhai	Future mid-term 'down the road'	xuhwa	Mid-term past, the last few years	xuhwai	Generally but not necessarily forever
Far	xuho	Present broadly speaking 'these days'	xuhoi	Future far distant 'in coming ages'	xuhwo	Distant past 'ages ago'	xuhwoi	Eternally, 'for ever and ever'

Dp 6.6: Time in Nwehu Nuswei verbs illustrated with the simple F*IELD (stative) continuing form.*

A more detailed, graphic illustration of time and span is given below in §6.6.

6.5.2.1. *Sequencing in Past and Future*

Many languages have verb forms or verbal expressions to explain a sequence of events. In English we use 'had' with a past form of verb to refer to something that happened before something else. To convey a sequence like (1) I went in and (2) I went out, we have a choice in both English and NN:

- I went in before going out
  Himei segi xugw, hurw segw xugw
  (lit. 'I inward did, afterwards outward did', where 'did' is the general-past form)

- I had gone in, then went out
  Himei segi xurwa, segw surwe
  (lit. 'I inward did$_1$, outward did$_2$', where 'did$_1$' is mid-distance past, 'did$_2$' is near-distance past)

The first choice is to use a sequencing word such as *huri* 'before' or *hurw* 'after' with a verb-form that does not distinguish TIME DISTANCE; the second choice is to use verb forms with TIME DISTANCE, making a sequencing word unnecessary in NN.

With the second choice, the distance from present indicated by the verb-form clarifies which action came first. This works as well discussing the future as the past. It corresponds to "past perfect" (or "pluperfect") tense, or "future perfect" for the future, with the added advantage of enabling a sequence of three actions in NN rather than only two in English.

COMPLETED vs. ONGOING

All NN verb forms indicate whether the action or state-of-being is COMPLETED or ONGOING. In traditional terms, COMPLETED is known as "perfect", ONGOING as "imperfect".

- COMPLETED: the action has reached its normal conclusion, or the state-of-being is permanent, inherent in the focal entity. Indicated by an **obstruant** (*k c t p g j d b*) as the second consonant of the verb.
- ONGOING: the action is in progress, or the state-of-being is not permanent, not inherent in the focal entity. Indicated by a **continuant** (*h x s f r y n m*) as the second consonant of the verb.

Interactions

- WAVE vs. FIELD
  - WAVE: In a DYNAMIC verb, COMPLETED vs. ONGOING is fairly straight forward: if the point of the message is that action is finished, a DYNAMIC-COMPLETED form of the verb is used. The second consonant is a voiced obstruant (g j d b). If the message is conveying that the action is ONGOING, the second consonant is a voiced continuant (r y n m).
  - FIELD: The second consonant of an ONGOING FIELD verb is a voicless continuant (h x s f). In a STATIC verb, the semantic difference between COMPLETED and ONGOING is not the same as in WAVE verbs. In FIELD verbs the COMPLETED form refers to a permanent state-of-being, while the ONGOING form signals a temporary situation. This is discussed in detail, with examples, in the section on CONTINUITY below.
    Many languages do not require distinuishing between states-of-being that are permanent or inherent, and those that are not. One language that does is Spanish, which has two verbs 'to be': the verb 'ser' indicates conditions which are (normally) permanent, in contrast to the verb 'estoy':
    - "Soy chileno" (first person singular present of 'ser')
      Himei xugo cile-hufwa
      'I am Chilean'
    - "Estoy en Chile"
      Himei xuru cile seki
      'I am in Chile'
  - Many speakers of Spanish as a second language have difficulty mastering this distinction. The structure of NN verbs makes this choice obligatory, as it is in Spanish, which is unfortunate since it violates a basic goal of NN: to make as many distinctions as possible optional, especially if they are distinctions not found in many languages.

Suggested option for those who prefer not to make this distinction: use the COMPLETED form for all FIELD verbs.

6.5.3. CONTINUITY

- PUNCTUAL expresses a state or action that occurs briefly, usually as a single action or a temporary state. Expressed by using a **palatal** sound in the second consonant (*x c y j*).
- PROGRESSIVE expresses a process or continuous state. Expressed using an **apical** sound in the second consonant (*s t n d*).
- DURATIVE/REPETITIVE expresses a long-lasting state or a repetitive action. DURATIVE is generally associated with STATIC verbs, but with DYNAMIC verbs, either long-lasting or repetitive actions can be implied. The context can be used to determine which interpretation is most appropriate. Expressed using a **labial** sound in the second consonant (*f p m b*).
- Unstated: If the second consonant is **velar** (*h r k g*), CONTINUITY is not specified.

Interactions

There may seem to be a certain amount of semantic overlap between the concepts of PUNCTUAL and COMPLETED, PROGRESSIVE and ONGOING. The difference is this:

- CONTINUITY refers to the nature of the action or state itself;
- COMPLETED vs. ONGOING refers to the status of the action or state at the time referred to in the message.

More specifically:

- **CONTINUITY: PUNCTUAL.** A brief or pulse-like action or temporary state-of-being
  - COMPLETED. Done at the time referred to in the message
    - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** A brief action that has been completed: *Xujw*
      'Bob kicked the ball.'
    - Verb: **STATIC.** A state which was inherent but has now ceased to exist: *Xucw*
      "Eduardo Frei fue chileno." 'Eduardo Frei was Chilean.' (The former President of Chile died 1982-01-22)
  - ONGOING.
    - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** A brief action that is in progress: *Xuyu*
      'Bob is kicking the ball.'

        - Verb: **STATIC.** A non-inherent or temporary state: *Xuxw*
          "Bachelet estaba en Temuco." 'Bachelet was in Temuco.'

- **CONTINUITY: PROGRESSIVE.** An ongoing process or a state-of-being
    - COMPLETED. A process or state-of-being has reached its conclusion.
        - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** A process that has been completed: *Xudw*
          'Tokyo Skytree was completed in 2012.'
        - Verb: **STATIC.** A state-of-being which continued up to a point and then ceased: *Xutw*
          'Marcel had measles when he was five years old.'
    - ONGOING. An action or state-of-being continues.
        - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** An ongoing process. *Xunu*
          'The Sahel region is expanding southward.'
        - Verb: **STATIC.** A state-of-being that involves change. *Xusu*
          'Lucinda is more beautiful every day!'
- **CONTINUITY: DURATIVE/REPETITIVE.** Process or state-of-being continues or repeats indefinitely.
    - COMPLETED. A repititive process or state-of-being has ceased.
        - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** Repetitive process completed. *Xubw*
          'The shelling ended at 2 A.M.'
        - Verb: **STATIC.** Continuing state-of-being ends. *Xupw*
          'Janet had shingles for five years.'
    - ONGOING. Repetitive process or ongoing state-of-being continues.
        - Verb: **DYNAMIC.** An repetitive action continues indefinitely. *Xumu*
          'The Earth revolves around the Sun.'
        - Verb: **STATIC.** Long-term state-of-being continues. *Xufu*
          'The asteroid's mass is about 2,000 tonnes.'

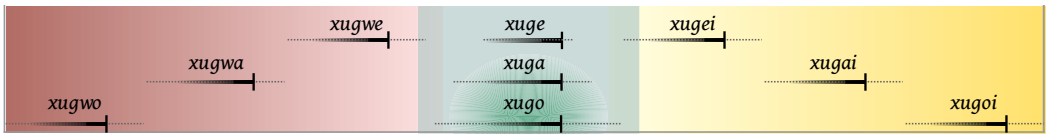
(The multiplicity of these verb forms may seem daunting, but it is quite acceptable to use the "unstated' forms ⌊ɪ↘ɪ *xuku* and ⌊ɪ⌐ɪ *xuru*, especially for beginners and in "basic Nwehu Nuswei" writing styles.)

6.6. Illustrations of Time in the Verb

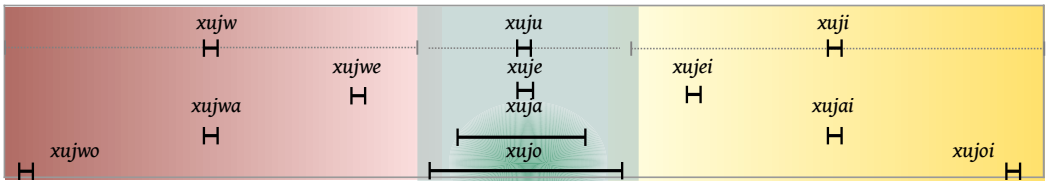
The next four displays illustrate how dynamic and static verbs represent time direction, span, completion, and continuity, using the default for real (not conditional) and evidentiality (unstated), in statements.

Dp 6.7: DYNAMIC COMPLETED Statement Verb Inflections

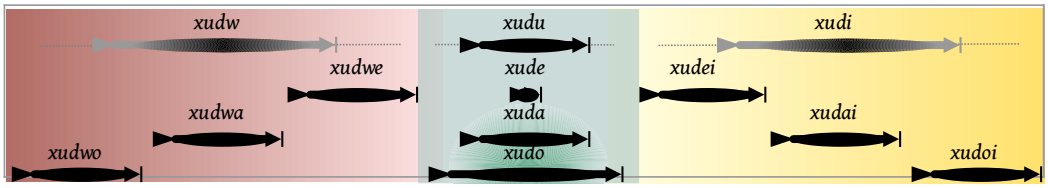
COMPLETED unstated:
C2: velar



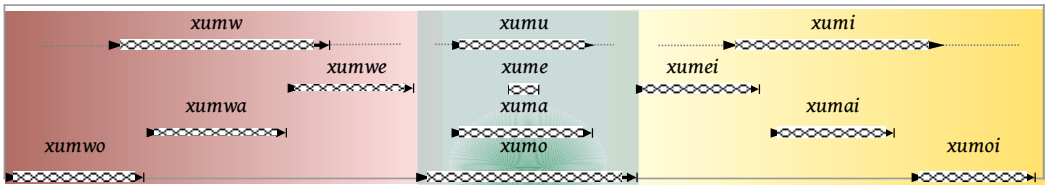
COMPLETED PUNCTUAL:
C2: palatal

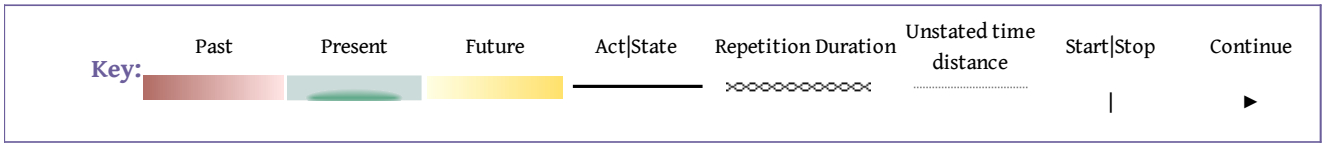


COMPLETED PROGRESSIVE:
C2: apical

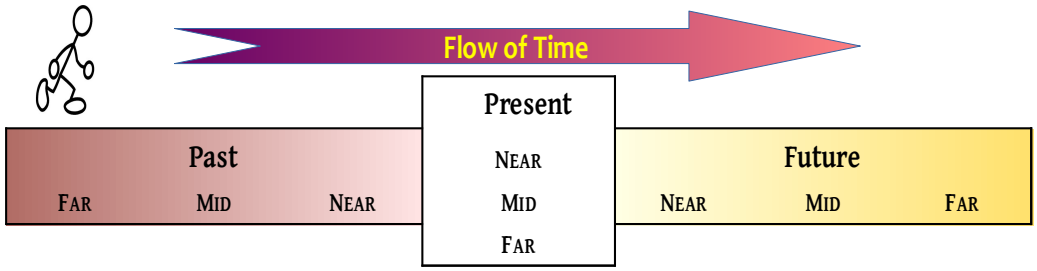


COMPLETED REPETITIVE:
C2: labial



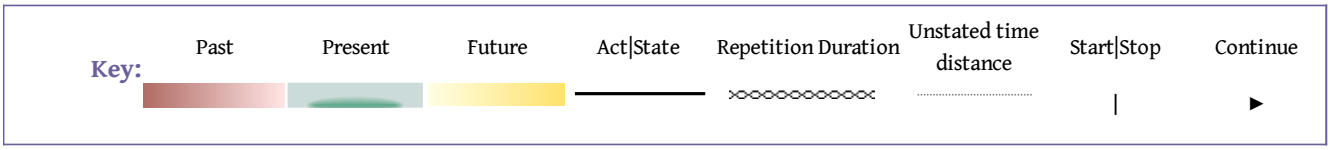


Dp 6.8: Dynamic Ongoing Statement Verb Inflections

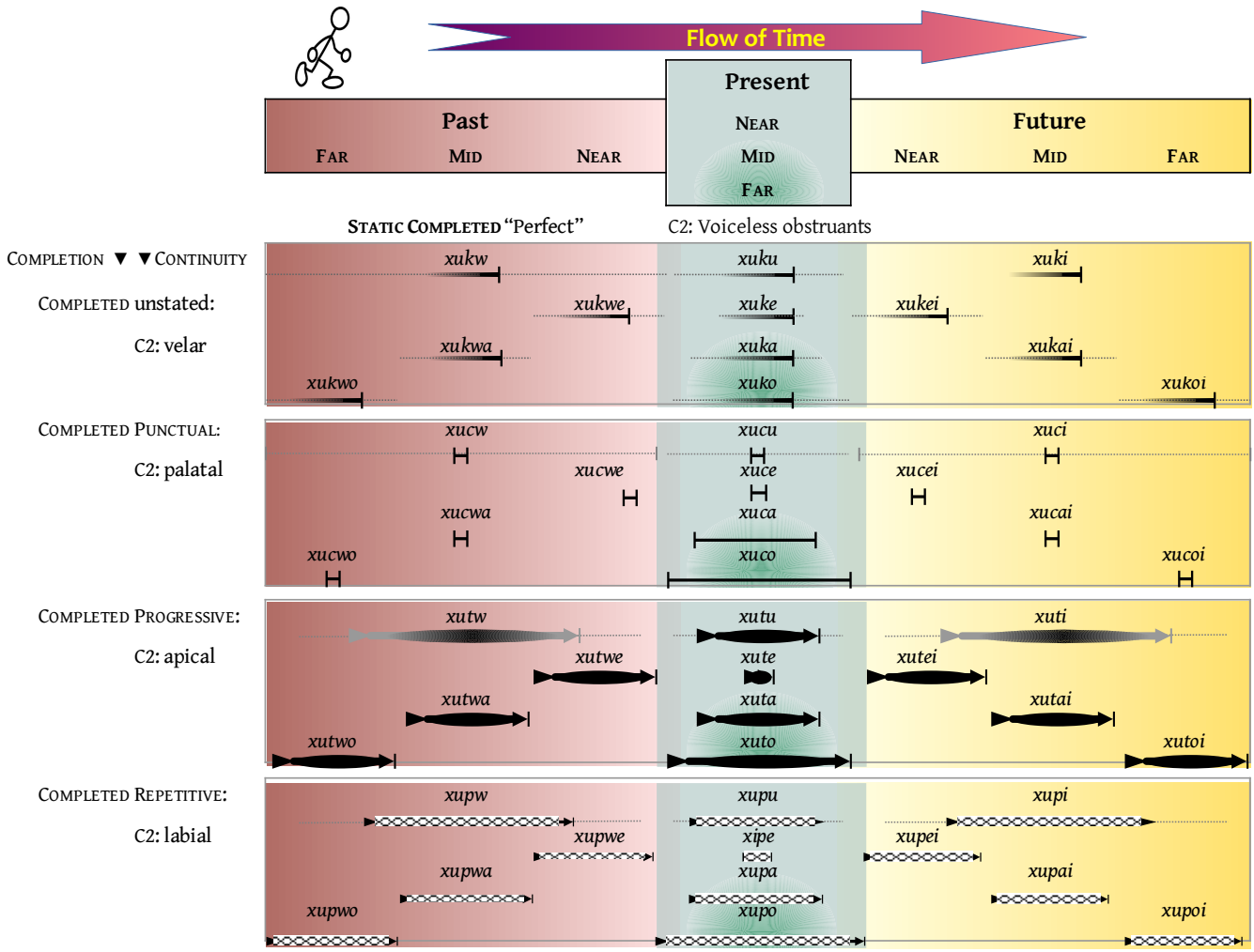


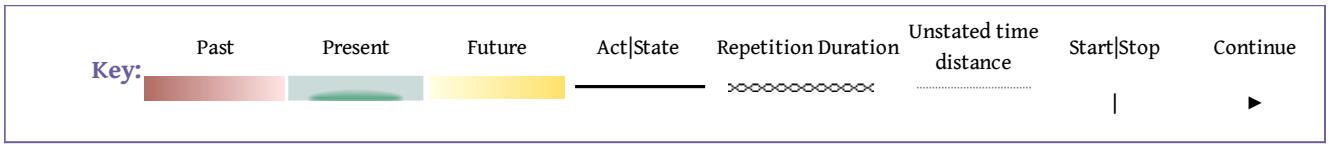
Dynamic Ongoing "Imperfect" C2: Voiced continuants

Completion ▼ ▼Continuity			
Ongoing unstated:	*xurw*	*xuru*	*xuri*
C2: velar	*xurwe*	*xure*	*xurei*
	xurwa	*xura*	*xurai*
	xurwo	*xuro*	*xuroi*
Ongoing Punctual:	*xuyw*	*xuyu*	*xuyi*
C2: palatal	*xuywe*	*xuye*	*xuyei*
	xuywa	*xuya*	*xuyai*
	xuywo	*xuyo*	*xuyoi*
Ongoing Progressive:	*xunw*	*xunu*	*xuni*
C2: apical	*xunwe*	*xune*	*xunei*
	xunwa	*xuna*	*xunai*
	xunwo	*xuno*	*xunoi*
Ongoing Durative:	*xumw*	*xumu*	*xumi*
C2: labial	*xumwe*	*xume*	*xumei*
	xumwa	*xuma*	*xumai*
	xumwo	*xumo*	*xumoi*

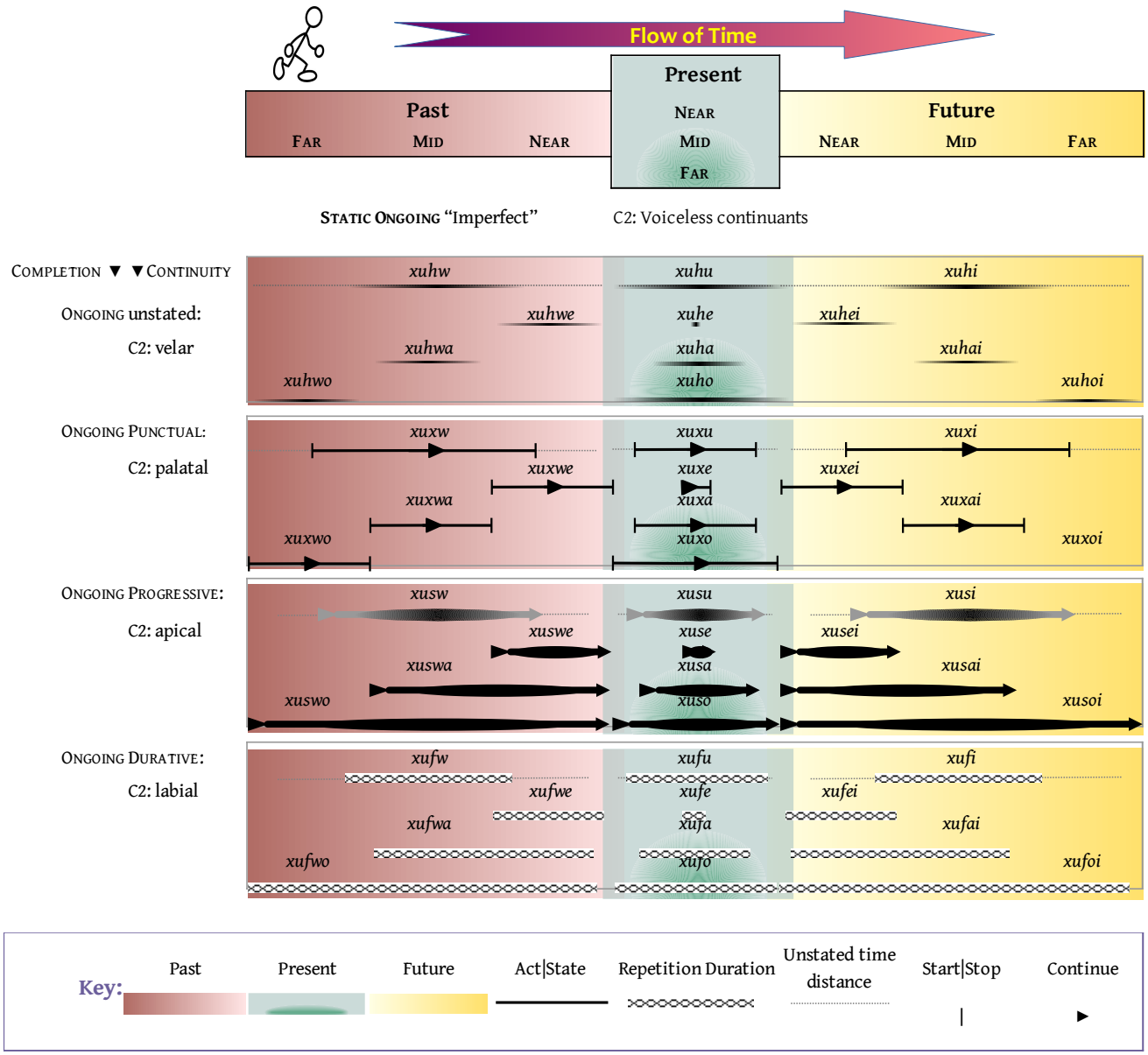


Dp 6.9: Static Completed Statement Verb Inflections





Dp 6.10: Static Ongoing Statement Verb Inflections



This concludes the chapter on the Nwehu Nuswei verb.