

Necthiøth

/ 'néxt^hjøt^h /

A Constructed Language

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Introduction

Necthøth is a language.

1.1 Interesting things

No case marking, free word order. “Clairvoyant” morphological alignment.

No morphological tense/aspect, mood-heavy.

Obligatory affect marking - does the speaker think this is good or not.

1.2 Morphological typology

Mostly isolating. Slightly agglutinative. Predominantly concatenative, although ablaut and metathesis can squash things around a little.

Suffixes, compounding, clitics.

1.3 Verbs

Verbs obligatorily marked for person and affect, and optionally for mood.

Other things marked adverbially as separate particles, or (more likely) just missed out completely and left to context.

1.4 Nouns

Unmarked. Can act as head for adjectives, possessors, or clitic indefinite articles.

We also have pronouns.

1.5 Modifiers

Tied onto preceding noun or verb. Can be formed from pretty much anything. Generally marked with prefix “e”. Exceptions (numerals).

Decimal number system.

1.6 Order

Very free word order - topic or new information given initially, other stuff given later or often just missed off completely. Slight tendency towards OVS; OSV and SOV frowned upon in formal speech, although considered fine in informal.

Noun phrase -

- (1) noun quant poss-GEN e-adj article
- (2) *Méephua-thong cuam t̄-r̄i e-mungo ui.*
 coin-gold three 1SG-GEN ADJ-valuable INDEF.
 'My three valuable gold coins.'

Verb phrase -

- (3) verb-PERSON-MOOD-ATT e-adv
- (4) *Khi-ts̄-n̄-ph e-nimakh.*
 read-1SG-FUT-GOOD ADJ-quiet.
 'I will read quietly.'

Grammatical relations

2.1 Morphosyntactic alignment

Free word order, and no case marking on the noun.

- (5) *Runekoth-on i iuflaphu-tf̥-ph Thíci.*
wine-container IRRELEV find-1SG-GOOD Thíci.
'Thíci found a bottle of wine.'
- (6) *Thíci iuflaphu-tf̥-ph runekoth-on i.*
Thíci find-1SG-GOOD wine-container IRRELEV.
'Thíci found a bottle of wine.'

Normally use animacy hierarchy. In order:

1st person > 2nd person > Proximate 3rd person > Obviate 4th person
> Proper Names > Humans > Non-Human Animates > Inanimates

For two nouns on the same animacy level, the current topic is more animate than other nouns, and definite nouns are more animate than non-definite nouns.

- (7) *A-corfian tuazar-má-l si iø.*
TOPIC-orange eat-3PL-TOPICGOOD person PL.
'Oranges - people eat them.'

If still ambiguous, agent repeated at end of the clause.

- (8) *Nial tza-tha-no-Ø Tsaiith Nial.*
Nial hit-face-3SG-BAD Tsaiith Nial.
'Nial punched Tsaiith in the face.'

If person marking obviously different, then assumed to be a separate pronoun.

- (9) *Isóø-nga-n me.*
bite-3-BAD dog.
'The dog bites.'
- (10) *Isók-lau-n me.*
bite-2SG-BAD dog.
'You are biting the dog!'

“Inverse voice” marks cases where the agent isn’t the most agent-worthy argument of the clause.

- (11) *Isóø-nga-n me-tua ko-tzua*
bite-3-BAD dog-INV 2SG-INV.
‘The dog is biting you!’

Person marking on verbs generally agrees with the nominative.

In relative clauses and clause-chaining, the person marking could be described as agreeing with the absolutive. But in practice, it’s better described as “in transitive sentences, the person marking marks the person who is not carried forward from the earlier clause”.

- (12) *Si cet-ia e-rikh tuazara-tø-ké-ph, klautláo-nø-khi.*
man month-TEMP ADJ-before eat-1SG-SUBJ-GOOD, sleep-3SG-RELBAD.
‘The man who I ate with last month is asleep.’
- (13) *Si cet-ia e-rikh tuazara-tø-ké-ph, tuazara-nga-c e-uair slainil.*
man month-TEMP ADJ-before eat-1SG-SUBJ-GOOD, eat-3-RELBAD ADJ-quick plum.
‘The man who I ate with last month eats plums quickly.’
- (14) *A-slainil, tuazara-tø-s e-fuangkhé.*
TOPIC-plum, eat-1SG-TOPICBAD ADJ-slow.
‘As for plums, I eat them slowly.’
- (15) *Púukhu pla-ksá-tø-s phu-tua.*
else sick-become-1SG-TOPICBAD 3-INV.
‘Otherwise, they make me sick.’

2.2 Valence increasing operations

The basic clause structure in Necthiøth takes no more than two noun arguments, because without explicit any more than that gets confusing.

- (16) **Snof-no-ph Khóuaz neréetu-tua érasa-tua Nlai-tsua.*
*give-3SG-GOOD Khóuaz machine-INV book-INV Nlais-INV.
‘The machine gave the book to Nlais?’

Most common structure for valence increasing is to add a preceding clause. Causatives are a clear example.

- (17) *Khóuaz klée-no-Ø, ngut tsa-ngla-n.*
Khóuaz enter-3SG-BAD, elk flee-3-BAD.
‘Khóuaz made the elk run away. (Lit. “Khóuaz entered, the elk fled.”)’
- (18) *Løslo klée-no-ph, ralápø tislørano-lí-ph Kanil.*
Teacher enter-3SG-GOOD, letter redo-3SG-GOOD Kanil.
‘The teacher made Kanil rewrite the letter. (Lit. “The teacher entered, Kanil rewrote the letter.”)’

Ditransitive clauses in general can be created in the same way as causatives.

- (19) *A-neréetu naus-na-l érasa neréetu, snof-no-l Nlai-tsua.*
 TOPIC-machine take-3-TOPICGOOD book machine, give-3SG-TOPICGOOD Nlais-INV.
 ‘The machine gave the book to Nlais. (Lit. “The machine took the book, gave Nlais.”)’

But more often, ditransitive clauses are formed by noun incorporation in the verb.

- (20) *Snof-érasa-nga-ph neréetu-tua Nlai-tsua.*
 give-book-3-GOOD machine-INV Nlais-INV.
 ‘The machine gave the book to Nlais. (Lit. “The machine bookgave Nlais.”)’

2.3 Valence decreasing operations

Subject / object omission is very easy in Necthiøth. The most topic-worthy arguments come first in the clause, and the less topic-worthy arguments can come later or be dropped entirely. This often takes the place of a passive.

- (21) *Sa-nga-n si-tua fnótl-ua.*
 kick-3-BAD man-INV horse-INV.
 ‘The man was kicked by the horse.’

- (22) *Fnótl-ua sa-nga-n si-tua.*
 horse-INV kick-3-BAD man-INV.
 ‘The horse kicked the man.’

As such, there is no pure “passive voice” in Necthiøth that completely removes the agent - person marking on the verb.

- (23) *Sa-nga-n si-tua.*
 kick-3-BAD man-INV.
 ‘The man was kicked (by it).’

The zero-person marking could be used, but carries pragmatic overtones of “was generally done by everyone / everything / it just happened, there was no distinct agent”.

- (24) *Sa-mal-n si-tua.*
 kick-0-BAD man-INV.
 ‘The man was kicked (in general, everyone was doing it / it just happened).’

Reflexives marked on the subject.

- (25) *Kócua-nái sa-no-ph.*
 Kócua-REFLEX kick-3SG-GOOD.
 ‘Kócua kicked himself.’

In some cases, not clearly marking the agent and patient can be used as an impromptu “middle voice”. Considered grammatically questionable, but still regularly used.

- (26) *Lanez-mo-ph Zéph Mláisung.*
 kiss-3SG-GOOD Zéph Mláisaung.
 ‘Zéph and Mláisaung kissed (one another).’

Object incorporation possible, for repeated/habitual events or for instruments.

2.4 Comparatives

A few different structures here.

Examples: "Today Løria caught more fish than I did."

- (27) *Ful-ia tse kúu-tø-ph, Løria tse uaun kúu-no-ph.*
 day-TEMP fish hunt-1SG-GOOD, Løria fish greater hunt-3SG-GOOD.
 'Today I caught fish, and Løria caught more fish.'

- (28) *Ful-ia tse komiēm kúu-tø-n, Løria tse uaun kúu-no-ph.*
 day-TEMP fish few hunt-1SG-BAD, Løria fish greater hunt-3SG-GOOD.
 'Today I caught a few fish, and Løria caught many fish.'

This construction conveys "Løria caught many more fish than me", rather than necessarily meaning the literal "I didn't catch many fish".

- (29) *Ful-ia na e-tse foth tøs Løria foth kúu-thá-ph, na Løria-ri uaunoph.*
 day-TEMP amount ADJ-fish list 1SG Løria list hunt-1PL-GOOD, amount Løria-GEN greater-3SG-GOOD.
 'Today, of the quantities of fish that Løria and I caught, Løria's quantity was greater.'

This is a more archaic construction, and in modern Necthiøth could come across as being overly pedantic. But sometimes pedantry is useful. Included here for completeness.

2.5 Questions

"Or" used as a question marker, both for polar and non-polar questions.

- (30) *Nia cwtasø-iēna-ru-ph ful-ia?*
 or somewhere-towards-2PL-GOOD day-TEMP?
 'Where did you go today?'

- (31) *Nia notsaz lótslera-mua-lau-ph?*
 or guitar play-can-2SG-GOOD?
 'Can you play the guitar?'

Maybe something about leading questions.

Nouns and Noun Phrases

3.1 Number

Obligatory plural marking, but only for humans.

- (32) *phoc*
doctor
'the doctor'
- (33) *phoc iø*
doctor PL
'the doctors'
- (34) *phoc iø fénkual*
doctor PL five
'five doctors'

For inanimate objects, plurals marked only by determiners. Usually omitted.

- (35) *fiol*
banana
'the banana'
- (36) *fiol caf*
banana some
'some banana(s)'
- (37) *fiol fénkual*
banana five
'five bananas'

3.2 Possession

Possessors marked with genitive suffix, come after the thing they're possessing.

- (38) *Érasa tos-e*
book 1SG-GEN
'my book'
- (39) *Nø Énau-e*
head Énau-GEN
'Énau's head'

3.3 Pronouns

Animate/inanimate distinction, singular/plural only distinguished for animate persons. First, second and third person, plus proximate/obviative “3rd person vs 4th person” distinction.

	1	2	3	4
Inanimate			<i>phu</i>	<i>noc</i>
Animate Singular	<i>tøš</i>	<i>koz</i>	<i>fa</i>	<i>nác</i>
Animate Plural	<i>thø</i>	<i>kakh</i>	<i>fuiø</i>	<i>náciø</i>

3.4 Location

Various locational suffixes.

- (40) *Cantøpu-rá*
city-LOC
'at/in the city'

- (41) *f#l-ia*
day-TEMP
'today / during the daytime'

In general, “-elin” suggests “towards a specific target” (coming to my house), while “-ién” suggests a less precise target (coming to the area).

- (42) *Kléema-n phu-elin*
come-3PL-BAD this-elin
'They are coming to this place'

- (43) *Kléema-n phu-ián*
come-3PL-BAD this-ién
'They are coming to this area/neighbourhood'

However, there are still plenty of exceptions. For example, when speaking of a gift being given to someone, it is always said to be given “someone-ién”. And thinking about something is thinking “something-elin”, regardless of how vague or broad-reaching that subject is.

- (44) *Raláthia køzián sno-tfø-n#-ph.*
cake 2SG-ién give-1SG-FUT-GOOD.
'I'll give you some cake.'

- (45) *Kaufnaur ranauc-tø-ké-ph n#r-ilin náa-tø-iu-n e-cet.*
instruction send-1SG-SUBJ-GOOD such-elin think-1SG-OPT-BAD ADJ-careful.
'I will have to think carefully about what instruction to send.'

- (46) *caíithiara-thak i*
cave-inside IRRELEV
'inside a cave'

- (47) *áufmat-ue*
river-into
'into the river'
- (48) *tam-aph*
road-through
'across the road'
- (49) *nær-aph*
storm-through
'through the storm'
- (50) *thæthør-it no-ri*
shoulder-atop 3SG-GEN
'on his shoulder'
- (51) *ralakhe-la*
table-onto
'onto the table'
- (52) *nauli-sør*
bed-under
'under the bed'
- (53) *e-paúukhép-sør*
ADJ-brown-under
'brown-haired'
- (54) *khefæl-uø*
gate-ahead
'in front of the gate'
- (55) *pouar-ikh*
tree-behind
'behind the tree'

3.5 Articles

Definite article unmarked.

- (56) *Mainaipe*
craftsman
'the craftsman'

Two indefinite articles - one for introducing a new noun into the discourse, one for throwaway references.

- (57) *Mainaipe ui*
craftsman INDEF
'a craftsman (introducing a new craftsman into the narrative)'

- (58) *Mainaipe i*
craftsman IRRELEV
'some craftsman / a craftsman (an example, or not really relevant to the narrative)'
- (59) *Nez naus-lau liphø-rano snof-lau poua, nez mias-na-ph e-uaun, fa-ién n# tsata-nga-n*
ifthen take-2SG rain-too give-2SG tree, ifthen grow-3-GOOD ADJ-greater, 3SG-towards such speak-3-BAD
si i.
man IRRELEV.
'He heard from some guy that trees grow faster when you give them too much water.'

(This section needs more detail about when you'd actually use INDEF)

3.6 Demonstratives

Separate class to articles - you can have both.

- (60) *nauie e-nga ui*
chair ADJ-this INDEF
'this chair (that we've not spoken about yet)'

Two-way distance contrast - believed to have developed from proximate-obviative pronouns. Topicalisation (see later on) has largely replaced obviative pronouns in discourse, but the distinction is preserved in demonstratives.

Pronominal demonstrative "this" uses third-person (current third-person-inanimate) pronoun.

- (61) *phu naus-lau-iu-n*
this take-2SG-OPT-BAD.
'You must take this / you must take it.'

Pronominal demonstrative "that" uses fourth-person pronoun.

- (62) *noc thii-nga-n?*
that what-3-BAD?
'What is that? / what is it?'

Adnominal demonstratives formed from adjective marker plus verb person-marker for third or fourth person.

- (63) *psam e-nga*
mountain ADJ-this
'this mountain'
- (64) *psam e-sia*
mountain ADJ-that
'that mountain'
- (65) *psa-nga-ph*
mountain-3-GOOD
'it is a mountain'
- (66) *psasn-ie-ph*
mountain-4-GOOD
'?it is a mountain'

3.7 Nominalisation and denominalisation

Various productive methods of forming nouns from verbs.

- (67) *katiáa-tø-ph*
chop-1SG-GOOD
'I chop (something)'
- (68) *katiakh*
chop
'the chopper / person who chops / lumberjack'
- (69) *po-katiakh*
P-chop
'chopee / thing that is chopped'
- (70) *katiáa-ngal-ph tøs*
chop-0-GOOD 1SG
'I am a lumberjack / I generally chop things'
- (71) *katiáa-tø-thái-ph* *thai*
chop-1SG-NOUN-GOOD NOUN
'the act of chopping things'
- (72) *katiakh tøs-e*
chop 1SG-GEN
'my chopping (action nominal)'
- (73) *katiáa-ngal-e*
chop-0-GEN
'chopping, the act of chopping things'
- (74) *katiáa-nga-tlá-i-ph* *thai*
chop-0-NOUN-GOOD NOUN
'lumberjack-being / the act of being a lumberjack'

Also ways of forming verbs from nouns and back again.

- (75) *fez*
stone
'the stone'
- (76) *fez-ma-ph*
stone-3-GOOD
'it is a stone'
- (77) *fez-ma-thái-ph* *thai*
stone-3-NOUN-GOOD NOUN
'its stone-being / its act of being a stone / its stoneness'

- (78) *fez-mal-e*
stone-0-GEN
'stone-being / stoneness'

Adjectives and adverbs very easily formed from nouns.

- (79) *lokhung e-fez ui*
statue ADJ-stone INDEF
'a stone statue'

Verbs and Verb Phrases

4.1 Person marking

Same system as pronouns. Animate/inanimate distinction, singular/plural only distinguished for animate persons. First, second and third person, plus proximate/obviative “3rd person vs 4th person” distinction.

	1	2	3	4
Inanimate			<i>nga</i>	<i>sie</i>
Animate Singular	<i>tø</i>	<i>lau</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>køzi</i>
Animate Plural	<i>tha</i>	<i>ru</i>	<i>ma</i>	<i>corø</i>

Verbs are obligatorily marked for the person of one of the noun arguments, normally the nominative.

- (80) *Niás ta-no-Ø sailng-ue.*
 Niás throw-3SG-BAD well-into.
 ‘Niás threw a yam down the well.’

- (81) *Ne tang isongø-lph.*
 cat mere watch-3-GOOD.
 ‘The cat just watched.’

Often this person marking is used instead of a pronoun - very pro-drop.

- (82) *Corafian tuazara-tø-ph.*
 orange eat-1SG-GOOD.
 ‘I ate an orange.’

Person marking in relative clauses and clause-chaining could be described in terms of an ergative-absolutive distinction, with the person-marking agreeing with the absolutive. But in practice, it’s better described as “in transitive sentences, the person marking marks the person who is not carried forward from the earlier clause”.

- (83) *Snøfez mia-tsá-ph phu-rá, fáa-thá-c ngø-ia.*
 fruit grow-1PL-GOOD this-LOC, harvest-1PL-RELGOOD near-TEMP.
 ‘The fruit that we grow here will be harvested soon.’

- (84) *A-tlo e-nga-r, ngø-rá-lau-løn, nia tuazara-sáup-lau-s koz-tua.*
 TOPIC-animal ADJ-this-LOC, near-LOC-2SG-TOPICOPT-BAD, or eat-leg-2SG-TOPICBAD 2SG-INV.
 ‘As for the animals here, you shouldn’t go near them or they’ll bite your leg off.’

4.2 Affect

Verbs are obligatorily marked for how the speaker feels about the event being described. Morphologically marked affects are Positive, Negative, and (much rarer) Ambivalent.

- (85) *Kháuflak luas-lau-ph.*
 bear kill-2SG-GOOD.
 ‘You’ve slain the bear! (Oh frabjous day! etc.)’
- (86) *Kháuflak luas-lau-n.*
 bear kill-2SG-BAD.
 ‘You’ve murdered the bear! (Oh noes!)’
- (87) *Kháuflak luas-lau-th.*
 bear kill-2SG-AMBIV.
 ‘You’ve killed the bear... (and I have mixed feelings about this...)’

Various particles can be used to mark finer nuances.

4.3 Mood

Mood is morphologically marked on the verb.

Subjunctive

Historically been a general irrealis mood. In modern usage, only used as a dependency marker, in relative clauses or chained clauses.

- (88) *Fa cantøpu-eli-no-ké-n nu-ie phamíi-tøn.*
 3SG city-towards-3SG-SUBJ-BAD such-because surprise-1SG-BAD.
 ‘It surprised me that he went to the city.’
- (89) *Nauie náu-lau-ké-n, cikhe-nga-khi.*
 chair sit-2SG-SUBJ-BAD, broken-3-RELBAD.
 ‘The chair which you are sitting on is broken.’

Optative

Incorporates the affect marker. OPT+GOOD marks something that the speaker wishes or desires.

- (90) *Niak-ap-lau-iu-ph neso.*
 year-through-2SG-OPT-GOOD hundred.
 ‘May you live a hundred years.’

OPT+BAD marks that the clause has some external obligation or duty to be the case.

- (91) *Phoc-elin-lau-iu-n.*
 doctor-towards-2SG-OPT-BAD.
 ‘You should go to the doctor.’

In the Optative, the affect marker is separated from its normal use - OPT+BAD makes no statement over whether the speaker thinks it good that such a thing is required.

- (92) *Raláthia snúsé-lau-iu-n, n# maclungaph ulo.*
 cake roast-2SG-OPT-BAD, such good-3-GOOD hypothetical.
 ‘You should bake a cake, that’d be a good thing to do.’

Imperative

- (93) *Kia niáane-lau-phá-n!*
 NEG late-2SG-IMP-BAD!
 ‘Don’t be late!’

First person imperatives are perfectly fine, and generally convey more of a hortative mood “Let’s do X”.

- (94) *Tuazara-thá-phá-ph!*
 eat-1PL-IMP-GOOD!
 ‘Let’s eat!’

Future tense

The future tense is morphologically marked in the same way as the other moods. Necthiøth could be considered to have a Future/Nonfuture tense distinction.

- (95) *Flør focuiá-nga-n#-ph cna e-nga cet-ia cuam.*
 crops full-3-FUT-GOOD field ADJ-this month-TEMP three.
 ‘In three months, this field will be full of crops.’

Often, hypothetical situations will be described in the Future tense/mood.

- (96) *Ulo a-fa riales ui klée-no-n#-Ø cantøpu-ue, riøzu caf muph#z-ma-n...*
 hypothetical TOPIC-3SG stranger INDEF enter-3SG-FUT-BAD village-into, fur some request-3-BAD...
 ‘Suppose a stranger comes into the village and asks for some furs...’

The Future tense is also used to describe events that have already happened, but sufficiently far away for news to reach the speaker.

- (97) *Riam Siáte pheno-l-ph iic e-n# n# nuá-athø-ph.*
 plausible Siáte win-3SG-FUT-GOOD game ADJ-ball such think-1SG-GOOD.
 ‘I think it’s likely that Siáte will have won the ball game.’

4.4 Tense and aspect

Apart from the Future mood described above, tense in Necthiøth is morphologically unmarked.

Zero person marking can be used to suggest a repeated/habitual aspect.

- (98) *Líi-ngal-ph fa.*
 build-0-GOOD 3SG.
 ‘He builds / he is a builder.’

Apart from that, tense and aspect - if required - are generally marked with separate particles or location constructions.

(Some examples?)

4.5 Predicate nominals

There is no distinct copula “to be” in Nectiøth. Typically, predicate nominals are formed by taking the predicate noun or adjective and conjugating it as if it were a verb.

- (99) *Psa-nga-ph e-phær phu.*
 mountain-3-GOOD ADJ-green this.
 ‘This is the green mountain.’

- (100) *Nøcnaf-na-n fez e-nga.*
 heavy-3-BAD rock ADJ-this.
 ‘This rock is heavy.’

4.6 Locatives

Locative clauses are formed in a similar way to predicate nominals.

- (101) *Luacaina-rá-nga-ph zecau.*
 jar-LOC-3-GOOD bean.
 ‘The beans are in the jar.’

4.7 Possessive clauses

For possessive clauses, the possessee is marked with the genitive then inflected as a verb.

- (102) *Nø-rí-no-Ø e-løkh.*
 mind-GEN-3SG-BAD ADJ-strange.
 ‘He has a strange mind.’

- (103) *Foth zmuf cuam fian ranolc e-fokhe foth-e-tø-ph. Nia thik snúsé-tø-iu-n?*
 list yam three lemon cow ADJ-dead list-GEN-1SG-GOOD. or something cook-1SG-OPT-BAD?
 ‘I have three yams, a lemon and a dead cow. What should I cook?’

4.8 Existential clauses

Existential clauses use a zero-person marker.

- (104) *É-mal-ph ralakhe-it.*
 pen-0-GOOD desk-on.
 ‘There is a pen on the desk.’

Weather clauses use this construction.

- (105) *Liphø-mal-n.*
 rain-0-BAD.
 ‘It is raining.’

4.9 Compounding

Object incorporation for repeated actions:

- (106) *Ngúukhac-psa-no-ph pløngaphia cuam.*
 climb-mountain-3SG-GOOD week-through-TEMP three.
 'He went mountain-climbing for three weeks.'

or for instruments:

- (107) *Tom rorana-fnúíz-mo-Ø.*
 lock open-hammer-3SG-BAD.
 'He opened the lock with a hammer. (He hammer-opened the lock.)'

Clause combinations

5.1 Relative clauses

Postnominal relative clauses.

Can relativise either the subject or the direct object of the sentence.

The relative clause takes the subjunctive mood, and the non-relative clause is marked separately. In the indicative mood, this marking takes the form of a different affect affix.

- (108) *A-tòksath e-nga e-pau, cøn thiáa-nga-ké-l re-nga-khi raul.*
 TOPIC-log ADJ-3 ADJ-big, axe cut-3-SUBJ-TOPIC.GOOD sharp-3-REL.BAD surely.
 ‘The axe that cut this big log must have been sharp.’

- (109) *Si mu-thá-ké-ph t#-nga-khi naisar-ikh-ia fengkual.*
 man want-1PL-SUBJ-GOOD depart-3-REL.BAD minute-behind-TEMP five.
 ‘The man who we wanted left five minutes ago.’

In other moods, the marking takes the form of alternate mood affixes.

- (110) *Sailéng snof-na-ké-ph nek cantøpu-e thø-ri, elin-lau-tha-ph.*
 well give-3-SUBJ-GOOD water town-GEN 1PL-GEN, towards-2SG-REL.IMP-GOOD.
 ‘Go to the well that provides our town’s drinking water.’

5.2 Topicalisation

Topicalisation is marked in a similar way to the non-relative clauses above. The argument to be topicalised takes a preceding marker based on the relevant verb person marker, then any clause taking the topic as a subject or direct object receives an alternate affect or mood affix.

- (111) *Ano tsata, zomplo-no-l, páa-má-l e-sait siu-tua, poph pau*
 TOPIC-3SG speak, funny-3SG-TOPICGOOD, laugh-3PL-TOPICGOOD ADJ-often crowd-INV, but important
kia tsáta-no-l n# nuáathøn.
 NEG speak-3SG-TOPICGOOD such think-1SG-BAD.
 ‘The speaker was funny, the crowd laughed at him often, but I don’t think he said anything important.’

5.3 Morphological Marking

Generally, verbs without the topic or the relativised noun as an argument take a person marking, a mood marking (except for the indicative mood, which is unmarked) and an affect marking.

For verbs in the indicative mood, alternative affect markers are used. For verbs in other moods, alternative mood markers are used and the usual affect markers are used.

	Subjunctive	Optative	Imperative	Future	Good	Bad	Ambiv
Normal	<i>ké</i>	<i>iu</i>	<i>phá</i>	<i>n#</i>	<i>ph</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>th</i>
Relative	-	-	-	-	<i>c</i>	<i>khi</i>	<i>ng</i>
Topic	-	-	-	-	<i>l</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>ngak</i>
Relative	<i>khi</i>	<i>ie</i>	<i>tha</i>	<i>só</i>	<i>ph</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>th</i>
Topic	<i>rø</i>	<i>lø</i>	<i>tie</i>	<i>ca</i>			

(Some glosses to demonstrate)

5.4 Conjunctions

5.5 Clause chaining

Pro-verb “n#” refers to the previous clause. This is very regular, and can be used to turn a verb phrase into any kind of argument of the sentence. The verb phrase represented by the pro-verb usually takes the subjunctive mood.

- (112) *Érasa e-sia khis-no-ké-ph niáa-klena-ia e-ríkh n# zeza-no-ph.*
 book ADJ-that read-3SG-SUBJ-GOOD year-end-TEMP ADJ-before such plan-3SG-GOOD.
 ‘He plans to read that book before the end of the year.’

- (113) *A-rufmat ngua-nga-ké-s, n#-ia uamlum e-khus e-nga luas-na-s.*
 TOPIC-river flood-3-SUBJ-BAD, such-TEMP plant ADJ-all ADJ-this destroy-3-BAD.
 ‘When the river floods, all these crops will be destroyed.’

- (114) *A-pherekh tuazara-no-ké-s snønges e-uauz n#-ie plas-no-s.*
 TOPIC-Pherekh eat-3SG-SUBJ-BAD apple ADJ-rotten such-because sick-3SG-BAD.
 ‘Eating the rotten apple made Pherekh sick.’

Pragmatics

6.1 Focus

Word order determines focus. New or particularly relevant information is often introduced earlier, with already-known or obvious-from-context ideas coming later in the clause or being omitted entirely.

6.2 Negation

Negative particle. Can negate individual words or entire clauses.

- (115) *Rui-sør cuki-no-Ø khefʉl e-uø tøs-e.*
black-under steal-3SG-BAD door ADJ-front 1SG-GEN.
'The black-haired man stole my front door.'

- (116) *Kia rui-sør cuki-no-Ø khefʉl e-uø tøs-e.*
NEG black-under steal-3SG-BAD door ADJ-front 1SG-GEN.
'The black-haired man didn't steal my front door. (or: It wasn't the black-haired man that stole my front door.)'

- (117) *Rui-sør cuki-no-Ø kia khefʉl e-uø tøs-e.*
black-under steal-3SG-BAD NEG door ADJ-front 1SG-GEN.
'The black-haired man stole not my front door. (or: It wasn't my front door that the black-haired man stole.)'

6.3 Discourse markers

Plenty of these. These will usually come as the second argument in a clause, or after the verb.

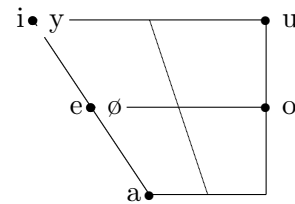
- (118) *A-uuatakoth e-koth tuazara-lau-phá-ph kutai, famákhū-lau-l inei!*
TOPIC-chicken ADJ-bake eat-2SG-IMP-GOOD urge, tastegood-2SG-TOPICGOOD wow!
'You really should try the baked chicken, it's really good!'

Phonology

Fairly nondescript, and implausibly square.

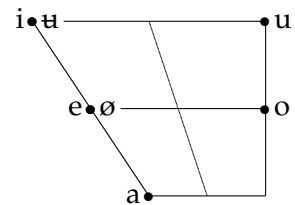
A.1 Phonemes

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Plosives Unaspirated	p	t		k
Plosives Aspirated	p ^h	t ^h		k ^h
Fricatives	f	s	ʃ	x
Nasals	m	n		ŋ
Approximants	w	l	j	r



A.2 Romanisation

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Plosives Unaspirated	p	t		k
Plosives Aspirated	ph	th		kh
Fricatives	f	s	z	c
Nasals	m	n		ng
Approximants	u	l	i	r



The allophone /ə/ has been given the romanisation ⟨1⟩.

A.3 Syllable structure

Maximally allowed syllable structure is:

(119) (C) (i,l,n,s) V (i,u) (C)

While longer consonant clusters can be allowed between syllables of polysyllabic words, in practice these will often metathesise in order of sonority; this will be detailed in section A.5.

A.4 Tone

Throughout this section, all accents will be marked in the romanisation as acute accents, and in IPA samples both high tone and low tone will be marked. Elsewhere, only non-word-initial accents will be romanised, and IPA samples will only mark the accented high-tone vowels.

Necthiøth has a two-tone pitch-accent system. Most often monosyllabic words have low tone, while polysyllabic words have high tone on the first major vowel block and low tone everywhere else. These are orthographically unmarked.

- (120) fɯl
fʏl
'sun'
- (121) nøŋgai
nóŋjàj
'act, actor'

Some polysyllabic words have an accent on a non-initial syllable. In this case, the accented syllable is pronounced as high tone, and all others in the word as low tone. These accents are orthographically marked as an acute accent.

If a word has multiple accents, only the first one will be pronounced.

- (122) nɯliáng
nʏljáŋ
'controller, driver'
- (123) féenapháph
fé:nàp^hàp^h
break-2SG-IMP-GOOD
'Break it!'

Some monosyllabic words may have an accent. These accents are generally not pronounced in single words, but will often be pronounced when combined into longer polysyllabic words by compounding or adding affixes.

- (124) suá
swà
'difficulty'
- (125) esuá
èswá
'difficult'
- (126) *Mungó-ma-ph maing cɰphi-a-máph iø-inei cantøpu-thak khaipsi.*
mùŋjómàp^h màjŋ xʏp^hjàmáp^h jójnèj xántøpùt^hàk k^hájpsi
rich-3PL-GOOD think house-GEN-3PL-GOOD PL-wow town-inside one.
'They must be very rich to own so many houses in one town.'

A.5 Allophony

A bunch of things

iau , iua → ée

VV → V_{Ri}

Umlaut $eCi \rightarrow iCi$ $oCi \rightarrow \emptyset Ci$ $aCi \rightarrow \varepsilon Ci$ $uCi \rightarrow yCi$ **Mores** $mV m, nV n, \eta V \eta \rightarrow mV, nV, \eta V$ **Dissimilation** $jo \rightarrow j\emptyset$ $j\emptyset \rightarrow j\emptyset$ $jy \rightarrow ji$ $je \rightarrow ja$ $j\varepsilon \rightarrow ja$ **Metathesis**

For plosives P_1 and P_2 , $VP_1P_2 \rightarrow V:P_2$

For fricatives F_1 and F_2 , $VF_1F_2 \rightarrow V:F_2$

Consonant clusters with different types of consonant will sort themselves: Plosive - Fricative - Nasal - Liquid.

 $V + \text{Plosive} + \text{Nasal} \rightarrow V: + \text{Nasal}$ $C + R \rightarrow CaR$ $\text{Fricative} + \text{Plosive} \rightarrow \text{Plosive} + \text{Fricative}$