

0.2. SOUND SYSTEM

The phonemes of Siroi are twenty-one consonants and five vowels. The consonants are the stops p, t, k, b, d, g, mb, nd and ŋg; the nasals are m, n and ŋ; the fricatives f, s, dʒ and ndʒ; the liquids l and r; the semi-vowels w, y and ny. The vowels are i, e, a, o and u.

The voiceless stops, unaspirated intervocalically, have aspirated and unaspirated variants occurring in free variation initially and finally. Except for k the voiceless stops have final unreleased variants. The phoneme g has a variant [ʔ] occurring medially and finally. The phoneme f has a variant [h] occurring in free variation with [f] intervocalically. The phoneme r has a variant [ʀ] occurring in free variation with [r] initially and intervocalically.

The voiced alveopalatal fricative is spelt as z and ŋg as ng.

Stress is grammatically predictable and is not written. Primary stress occurs on the stem, and if there is a multi-syllable stem, on its second syllable. Reduplicated stems take this stress on the repetition. There are a few exceptions to this rule which are as follows:

- (1) Compound words take primary stress on the initial root.
- (2) Pronouns and the irregular verb 'give' take primary stress on the final syllable.
- (3) Exclamations take primary stress on the initial syllable.
- (4) Zero class verbs take primary stress on the first order suffix.

0.3. MORPHOPHONEMIC RULES

Various phonemic changes result from the combination of certain phonemes when morphemes are combined in sequence.

0.3.1. Additions

(1) /w/ is added when a vowel-initial tense suffix follows a vowel. Second and third person present suffixes are exceptions.

kutu-β-	+	-aig	=	kutuwaig	'they emptied it'
empty-it		3p.ip			
sa-β-	+	-it	=	sawit	'I said to him'
say-him		1s.ip			

(2) /u/ is added when:

a. a consonant-initial potential suffix or the dependent suffix -mba follows a consonant. Zero class syllabic-stemmed verbs and verbs taking dual or plural object suffixes are exceptions.

didl-k-	+	-be	=	didikube	'let us pull'
pull-cm		lp.po			
map-t-	+	-mba	=	maptumba	'rest and..'
rest-cm		dep			

b. the irregular verb mb- 'ascend' takes a past tense suffix.

mb-	+	-na	=	mbuna	'he went up'
ascend		3s.pa			

(3) /i/ is added when:

a. a consonant-initial immediate past suffix follows a single-consonant stem.

t-	+	-kik	=	tikik	'we (dual) took it'
take.it		ld.ip			
k-	+	-gig	=	kigig	'we (plural) did'
do		lp.ip			

b. a consonant-initial past suffix follows a consonant. Zero class syllabic-stemmed verbs and the irregular verb mb- 'ascend' (see Section (2) b.) are exceptions.

buk-ng- throw-cm	+ -naig 3p.pa	= buknginaig	'they (plural) threw'
kat-n- hit-you	+ -geŋ lp.pa	= katnigeŋ	'us (plural) hit you'

(4) /s/ is added when the nominalisation clitic -nu occurs on a verb and follows a consonant.

kat- hit	+ -nu ns	= (wai) katanu	'those who clap (their hands)'
ndale-k- bind-cm	+ -nu ns	= (tango) ndalekanu	'a bound (man)'

(5) /k/ is added when the attributive clitic -ok follows a vowel.

ambo before	+ -ok att	= ambokok	'ancient'
duge bush	+ -ok att	= dugekok	'wild'

0.3.2. Contractions

(1) A vowel-initial root or derivational suffix following a vowel loses its initial vowel.

ngaro skin	+ isu bone	= ngarosu	'body'
tugu base	+ -am ls	= tugum	'near'

(2) A consonant-final root followed by a consonant loses its final consonant.

not that	+ sin over.there	= nosin	'over there'
not that	+ nzin down.there	= nonzin	'down there'

(3) Present tense suffixes -ate and -ade lose the initial vowel when preceded by a vowel.

bulu-β- light-it	+ -ate 3s.pr	= bulute	'he is lighting it'
sa-β- say-him	+ -ade 3p.pr	= sade	'they tell him'

(4) Prenasalised consonants become nasals when preceding the dependent suffix -mba.

kund- grate	+ -mba dep	= kunmba	'grate and..'
dubi-sing- follow-us	+ -mba dep	= dubisiŋmba	'follow us and..'