This chapter focuses on the morphology of the Pondi verb. The structure of verb phrases is covered in (§6.2).

4.1 Basic verbal morphology

A verb in Pondi consists, minimally, of a verb stem. Verbs generally also contain a single suffix, typically either one of three finite suffixes that indicate tense-aspect-mood (TAM)\(^1\) distinctions or a dependent-marking suffix that affixes to a medial verb. (Only some imperatives and some medial verbs may occur without any overt suffix.) Although there seems to exist just a single morphological slot available for suffixes, there is a small, closed class of auxiliary verbs, which follow the main verb with which they are associated (§6.2.1). The degree to which these are independent words, however, as opposed to, say, suffixes may be a diachronic question. Preceding the verb stem there is also a slot available for prefixes, the functions of which are not entirely clear. Object-marker proclitics may come before the affixed verb, cliticising typically to the beginning of the verb stem (when no prefix is present) or to the prefix (when present) (§5.3.2).

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\(^1\) The label ‘TAM’ is overly general for the Pondi verbal categories, since the three basic suffixes encode only aspect and mood—not tense. It is used here given its usefulness in crosslinguistic comparison.
Pondi exhibits a basic three-way TAM distinction, which corresponds to a set of three basic verbal suffixes. The three basic categories are imperfective (§4.2), perfective (§4.3), and irrealis (§4.4). The associated morphemes for these grammatical categories are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Basic TAM suffixes in Pondi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect/mood</th>
<th>Verbal suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imperfective [IPFV]</td>
<td>-i ~ yï</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfective [PFV]</td>
<td>-apï ~ -ngapï</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irrealis [IRR]</td>
<td>-la ~ -nda ~ -(y)a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since, phonetically, word-final -i is always pronounced [a] (§2.2.6), it should be noted that the surface forms for the imperfective and perfective suffixes are [a] and [ap] ~ [ngap], respectively.

The irrealis suffix has the allomorph -nda, which occurs when following a nasal. Similar irrealis suffix allomorphy is found in Ulwa, where the alternation is between -na and -nda, the latter occurring whenever the preceding consonant is a sonorant. The conditions for -nda in Pondi are, however, slightly different, as they are conditioned by the immediately preceding segment (whether a consonant or a vowel) and they are conditioned not by all sonorants (liquids and glides do not trigger the allomorph -nda), but rather by nasals alone. Additionally, the form -ya sometimes occurs as an allomorph of the irrealis suffix -la. It is seen in verbs with stems ending in -l plus a high vowel, such as kïlï- ‘die’ and oli- ‘cut, chop’, and seems to represent a sort of haplology taking the form of palatalisation (i.e. l → y / l V [+high] _). In other words, underlying forms such as /kïlïla/ and /olila/, are realised as [kïlïya] and [oliya], respectively. In an alternative analysis, the /l/ is simply deleted, and the [y] emerges as an epenthetic glide (§2.5.6).

The perfective suffix -apï has a phonologically conditioned allomorph -ngapï, which appears with verbs whose stems end in a nasal. (There is no apparent general phonological rule underpinning this allomorphy, as this alternation does not appear elsewhere in the grammar of the language.) For example, the verb am- ‘eat’ has the form amï in the imperfective, but the form amngapï in the perfective. Similarly, the verb nan- ‘wash’ has the form nangapï in the perfective. Note that the alveolar nasal assimilates and

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2 The stem-final front vowel /i/ or /ï/ does seem to play a role in conditioning this allomorph, though, since we do not find such haplology in verbs like la-la ‘put [IRR]’ or the several compounds containing it (§6.2.2).
deletes before a following prenasalised velar stop. A similar phonological process occurs in the irrealis forms: all stem-final nasals successfully trigger the irrealis allomorph -nda, but alveolar nasals delete before the following prenasalised alveolar stop. Furthermore, verbs with stems ending in the alveolar nasal -n exhibit the imperfective suffix [yi] as an allomorph of /i/-—that is, the final nasal palatalises before the imperfective suffix. This allomorphy is unique to this suffix; it does not occur with the homophonous imperative ending [-i] (§4.5). These changes are all illustrated in the paradigms for verbs with nasal-final stems (Table 4.2). Here, the examples of verbs with stem-final alveolar nasals (‘give’ and ‘take’) are both irregular, exhibiting suppletive or missing forms (shown with brackets and a null sign, respectively). Note also that the bilabial nasal does not delete before heterorganic prenasalised stops (thus the perfective and irrealis forms for ‘eat’).

### Table 4.2. Paradigms for verbs with nasal-final stems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Verb stem</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘eat’</td>
<td>am-</td>
<td>ami</td>
<td>amngapï</td>
<td>amnda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘wash’</td>
<td>nan-</td>
<td>nanyï</td>
<td>nangapï</td>
<td>nanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cough’</td>
<td>kusan-</td>
<td>kusanyï</td>
<td>kusangapï</td>
<td>kusanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘count’</td>
<td>tin-</td>
<td>tinyï</td>
<td>tingapï</td>
<td>tïnda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘give’</td>
<td>an-</td>
<td>[ale] &lt; ala-</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>anda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘take’</td>
<td>n-</td>
<td>[liyï] &lt; li-</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>nda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs that exhibit nonfinite forms ending in -m (§4.8, §8.1.4) also exhibit this allomorphy. It is thus not clear whether [m] is a nonfinite suffix or part of the verb stem. The verbs whose stems putatively end in -m are presented in Table 4.3 (note that brackets indicate suppletive forms, and the null sign indicates a missing form).

### Table 4.3. Paradigms for verbs with stems ending in (covert) -m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Verb stem</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Irrealis</th>
<th>Nonfinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘sew’</td>
<td>ka(m)-</td>
<td>ke³</td>
<td>kangaï</td>
<td>kanda</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘see’</td>
<td>andi(m)-</td>
<td>[ale]</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>andinda</td>
<td>andim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘hit/kill’</td>
<td>asi(m)-</td>
<td>asiyi</td>
<td>asingapi</td>
<td>asinda</td>
<td>asim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘carve/blow’</td>
<td>lu(m)-</td>
<td>luwï</td>
<td>luwapï</td>
<td>lumunda²</td>
<td>lum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ /a + /l —> [e] (§2.5.1).
⁴ This irrealis form is anomalous in that it retains the /m/, adding an epenthetic [u] to separate the /mnd/ cluster.
The available data are unfortunately limited. First, I do not have any examples in my corpus of \( ka(m) \)- ‘sew’ being used in a nonfinite way, nor with the ending -\( m \), so its inclusion is speculative. Second, the verb \( asi(m) \)- ‘hit, kill’ exhibits variation in the perfective form: my corpus contains some examples of this verb with the -\( api \) suffix and some examples with the -\( ngapi \) suffix, without any apparent semantic difference.\(^5\) Nevertheless, based on the current state of the evidence, I offer what I see as the best account of the data: there is a small set of verbs ending in a covert -(\( m \)).

This underlying final nasal is seen in the surface forms of nonfinite verb forms, but otherwise is not overtly present, even though it triggers suffix allomorphy in the perfective and irrealis finite forms. The verb \( am \)- ‘eat’ does not belong to this class, since the status of its final \( m \) is not in question (it is always present). The variability seen in the perfective form of \( asi(m) \)- ‘hit, kill’ may reflect the loss (perhaps due to grammatical attrition) of this underlying final -(\( m \)).

Finally, some allomorphy is also apparent in the imperfective suffix. A phonological rule of vowel coalescence produces the ending -\( e \) in the form \( ke \) ‘sew\(^{\text{IPFV}} \), from the root \( ka- \) ‘sew’: /\( a \)l/ + /\( i \)l = [\( e \)]. Also, glide insertion results in forms such as usiyï ‘split\(^{\text{IPFV}} \), from the root usi- ‘split’.

In addition to these three basic finite TAM suffixes, there are medial verb suffixes, which affix to verbs heading the predicate of dependent clauses. These include the simultaneous suffix -\( e \) (§4.9) and the conditional suffix -\( se \) (§4.10).

The prefix slot may include one of the following prefixes (Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4. Verbal prefixes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Function?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a-</td>
<td>perfect ([\text{PRF}])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l-</td>
<td>detransitiviser ([\text{DETR}])</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The functions of these two prefixes remain largely obscure to me. The prefix \( a- \) is discussed in §4.6 and the prefix \( l- \) is discussed in §4.7.

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\(^5\) The form usiyï (which looks morphologically imperfective and is indeed the form used to encode imperfective aspect) is frequently used with apparent perfective meaning. This behaviour is similar to that of some deponent verbs, which lack designated perfective forms, instead relying on imperfective morphology to encode both imperfective and perfective meaning (cf. mal-i ‘go\(^{\text{IPFV/PPFV}} \), §4.12).
4.2 The imperfective aspect

The imperfective aspect presents states and events as unbounded in time. The imperfective suffix -ï signals that the event or state to which the verb refers is or was continuous, habitual, iterative, or otherwise without defined end. Imperfective-marked verbs are not encoded in any way for tense: they may refer either to past or present time (they may not, however, refer to future time, since future time is always indicated with the irrealis suffix).

The following examples illustrate some uses of the imperfective aspect.

An uncompleted event.

(4.01) meyamba tatï kapï usï
      meyamba   tatï   kapï   us-ï
      yesterday   papa   house   build-IPFV
    ‘Yesterday papa was building a house (but he didn’t finish it).’

A habitual event.

(4.02) mï kandam nambi amï
      3sg.subj   sugarcane   water   eat-IPFV
  ‘He eats (tends to eat) sugar.’ (literally ‘water-eats’, i.e. ‘drinks’)

An iterative action.

(4.03) alkï kulam mï lasiyï
      person   boy   3sg.subj   DETR-hit-IPFV
  ‘The person is hitting the boy.’

A continuous or progressive action.

(4.04) anale kanam minjame ndami
      woman.pl   now   banana.pl   3pl.obj=eat-IPFV
  ‘The women are eating bananas now.’
4.3 The perfective aspect

The perfective aspect, on the other hand, is applied to events that are viewed as having reached their logical conclusion. The perfective suffix \(-apî \sim -ngapî\) signals that the event to which the verb refers has concluded. Like the imperfective aspect (§4.2), the perfective aspect does not encode tense per se, although it is almost always associated with past time. When perfective-marked verbs occur with adverbs like kanam ‘now’, the event is most likely being viewed by the speaker as having just occurred. The perfective aspect can—also like the imperfective aspect—never refer to future time.

The following sentences illustrate some uses of the perfective aspect.

A completed event.

(4.05) meyamba tatî kapî mawsapî
    meyamba  tatî  kapî   ma=us-apî
    yesterday  papa  house  3SG.OBJ=build-PFV
    ‘Yesterday papa built the house.’

A past action with present consequence.

(4.06) o awse amngapî
    2SG.SUBJ  Q-thing.PL  eat-PFV
    ‘What have you eaten?’

An action that has immediately transpired.

(4.07) kanam alkî kulam mî lasiyapî
    kanam  alkî  kulam  mî   l-asi-apî
    now  person  boy  3SG.SUBJ  DETR-hit-PFV
    ‘Just now, the person hit the boy.’
4.4 The irrealis mood

In contrast to the two other major TAM suffixes, the irrealis suffix -la -nda does not encode aspect, but rather mood. While the irrealis suffix is the only verbal suffix available to the speaker when referring to future time, this same suffix can also be used when referring to present or past time. It is used whenever encoding something nonfactual (events in future time are necessarily nonfactual). The following sentences illustrate some uses of the irrealis mood.

Future time/prediction.

(4.08) kïmbïlo alkï kulam mï lasinda
        kïmbïlo  alkï  kulam  mï  l-asi-nda
        tomorrow  person  boy  3SG.SUBJ DETR-hit-IRR

‘The person will hit the boy tomorrow.’

Future time/intention.

(4.09) kïmbïlo nyï name asinda
        kïmbïlo  nyï  name  asi-nda
        tomorrow  1SG  pig.PL  hit-IRR

‘I’ll kill lots of pigs tomorrow.’

Volition (‘want’, ‘would like’, etc.).

(4.10) wan kandam nambi amnda
        wan  kandam  nambi  am-nda
        2PL  sugarcane  water  eat-IRR

‘Would you like to eat some sugarcane?’ (literally ‘drink’)

Necessity (‘should’, ‘must’, etc.).

(4.11) kanam nyï kapï usila
        kanam  nyï  kapï  us-la
        now  1SG  house  build-IRR

‘I should build a house now.’

Ability (‘can’, ‘could’, etc.).

(4.12) kanam nyinjin kulam ambo kawla
        kanam  nyi-njin  kulam  ambo  kaw-la
        now  1SG.POSS.NPL  boy  NEG  sleep-IRR

‘My son can’t sleep now.’
4.5 The imperative mood

The imperative form of a verb is (generally) simply the verb stem—that is, there is often no overt TAM suffix on the verb, as seen in the following example.

(4.13) kapī maws
kapī ma=us
house 3sg.obj=build
‘Build the house!’

Although imperative forms generally take no suffix, the prefix a- (§4.6) may appear on the verb, as in the following.

(4.14) ke alik
ke a-lik
sago PRF-prepare
‘Prepare the sago!’

Verb stems that end in a covert -m exhibit this final segment in their imperative forms, as seen in examples (4.15) and (4.16).

(4.15) anandim
an=andim
1pl=see
‘Look at us!’

(4.16) namal asim
namal asim
pig hit
‘Hit the pig!’

An epenthetic suffix ì may occur at the end of the imperative forms following certain consonants (such as /l/), presumably to aid in pronunciation or add stress to the final segment, as in the following.

(4.17) amalì
a-mal-ì
PRF-go-IMP
‘Go!’
The irregular imperative form of *be (at)* is discussed in §4.11. The verb *eat* also seems to have an irregular imperative form. It appears to have the detransitiviser prefix *l-* (§4.7) fossilised to the verb root (cf. the basic TAM paradigm for Ulwa ‘eat’: *am* [ipfv], *amap* [pfv], *landa* [irr]). To confuse matters, it seems that the verb *eat* always takes the perfect prefix *a-* in its imperative forms, giving the appearance (perhaps only superficially) that the prefixes *a-* and *l-* are co-occurring. The following sentences exemplify the imperative forms of ‘eat’.

(4.18) minjamo *alam*
  
  minjamo       a-*lam*  
  banana        prf-cat.imp  
  ‘Eat a banana!’

(4.19) *malam*
  
  ma=*a-*lam  
  3sg.obj=prf-cat.imp  
  ‘Eat!’ (literally ‘Eat it!’)

More examples of imperatives are provided in §8.3.

4.6 The perfect prefix *a-*

The prefix *a-* is one of only two prefixes in the language (the other, *l-* is discussed in §4.7). It only occurs with perfective or imperative forms in my corpus, and it never seems to be obligatory. Perhaps cognate with the Ulwa adverb *ta* ‘already’, this prefix may indicate that an event occurs or occurred before some reference point (i.e. perfect aspect). Its exact aspectual nuances are, however, not fully known, and it could perhaps instead be considered a completive marker. The fact that it is morphologically part of the verb (and not simply an adverb meaning ‘already’ that precedes the verb) is apparent in example (4.19), since it (along with the verb stem) hosts the object-marker proclitic. The following pairs of sentences contrast perfective-marked verbs that contain this prefix (4.21, 4.22) with those that do not (4.20, 4.23).

(4.20) tatï *nim luwapï*
  
  tatï       *nim*       lu-apï  
  papa        canoe       carve-pfv  
  ‘Papa carved the canoe.’
The perfect prefix \textit{a-} may serve the clarifying function of marking perfective aspects in verbs that make no morphological distinction between perfective and imperfective forms (such as for the verb \textit{i-} ‘come’, as in examples 4.22 and 4.23; see §4.12). For example, the verb \textit{si-} ‘sit’ is deponent in that it only has the two basic TAM forms: \textit{si-i-} ‘sit-IPFV’ and \textit{si-la} ‘sit-IRR’, lacking a designated perfective form. The perfect prefix may thus help signal perfective aspect, as in the following example.

(4.24) \textit{kulam min asiyi}

\textit{kulam min a-si-i}  
\textbf{boy 3DU PRF-sit-IPFV}  
‘The (two) boys have already sat down.’

In imperatives, I assume that the prefix \textit{a-} adds some urgency to the command (i.e. ‘do it already!’) (§8.3).

### 4.7 The detransitiviser prefix \textit{l-}

Pondi has no known morphological means of increasing valency. There are no applicatives in the language, nor does it seem that causatives can be formed with less than two clauses (this is, however, speculative, based solely on how permissive constructions are formed in the language, §8.1.3). There may, however, be a morphological means of decreasing valency (or, perhaps better put, of signalling a relatively low level of semantic transitivity). I do not know whether passive constructions (of any
sort) exist in the language," but there do seem to be some constructions that resemble antipassives. The prefix \(l\)-, which is glossed here as ‘DETR’ (‘detransitiviser’) is indeed hard to decipher. Based on its likely cognacy with Ulwa \(na\)- ‘DETR’, I present here a discussion of some of its possible morphosyntactic functions.

In Ulwa, the presence of an immediately preverbal oblique necessitates the demotion of the logical object to oblique status (Barlow 2019b). In Ulwa this demotion to oblique status is signalled through an oblique-marking enclitic \(=n\) on the demoted object, without any additional verbal morphology. The transitivity-reducing prefix \(na\)-, on the other hand, is typically employed in Ulwa without any demoted object. In Pondi, too, the presence of an immediately preverbal oblique can trigger a sort of valency reduction. Here, however, no oblique marking is necessary on the logical object; rather, the prefix \(l\)- appears on the verb.

The following pair of sentences seems to illustrate this sort of ‘detransitivisation’. Here, the verb \(nambi\ pu\)- ‘bathe’ has a grammatical object when it functions as a transitive verb (e.g. ‘bathe the child’); the theme argument (that which is bathed) occurs between the two elements (4.25); when, however, the theme is not in this position, the verb takes the prefix \(l\)- (here exhibiting a phonologically conditioned allomorph \(lï\)-, with the high central vowel breaking up the word-initial consonant cluster \(lp\)-) (4.26).

(4.25) meyamba naïi \textbf{nambi kulam} mapwapï
  meyamba naïi \underline{nambi} \underline{kulam} \underline{ma}=pu-apï
  yesterday mama water boy 3SG.OBJ=bathe-PFV
  ‘Mama bathed the boy yesterday.’

(4.26) meyamba naïi \textbf{kulam nambi lïpwapï}
  meyamba naïi \underline{kulam} \underline{nambi} l-\underline{pu}\-apï
  yesterday mama boy water DETR-bathe-PFV
  ‘Mama bathed the boy yesterday.’

---

6 See Barlow (2019a) for discussion of the typologically unusual ‘syntactic passive’ construction in Pondi’s sister language Ulwa.

7 The prefix \(na\)- in Ulwa functions much like an antipassive marker, signalling that the event encoded by the verb has reduced transitivity—that is, that it deviates from the common semantic properties of prototypical transitive clauses (Barlow 2019b).

8 It must be pointed out that overt oblique marking is only permitted on pronouns and determiners (§7.3), and I do not have examples of ‘detransitivised’ sentences with demoted object NPs containing such word classes.
The following pair of sentences illustrates a similar detransitivisation. In (4.27), the oblique argument *pemo* ‘arrow’ appears in the canonical position following the subject but preceding the object. In (4.28), on the other hand, the oblique is fronted to immediately preverbal position. Here the detransitiviser prefix *l-* appears on the verb. While the logical object (*njinulam* ‘bird’) appears to have been demoted to an oblique, it seems that the oblique argument *pemo* ‘arrow’ has been promoted not to an object but rather to a second subject (as signalled by the subject marker *mï*). This, too, which is difficult to explain fully, seems to parallel a similar phenomenon in Ulwa (Barlow 2019a), perhaps one akin to double nominative constructions in languages like Japanese.

(4.27) \[\texttt{tatï} \textit{pemo} \textit{njinulam} \textit{masiyï} \]
\[(\texttt{tatï} \textit{pemo} \textit{njinulam} \textit{ma}=\textit{asi-ï})\]
\[(\texttt{papa arrow bird} 3\text{SG.OBJ}=\text{hit-IPFV})\]

‘Papa shot the bird with an arrow.’

(4.28) \[\texttt{tatï} \textit{njinulam} \textit{pemo} \textit{mï} \textit{lasiï} \]
\[(\texttt{tatï} \textit{njinulam} \textit{pemo} \textit{mï} \textit{l}=\textit{asi-ï})\]
\[(\texttt{papa bird arrow} 3\text{SG.SUBJ} \text{DETR-hit-IPFV})\]

‘Papa shot the bird with an arrow.’

(For other examples of this phenomenon, see 4.03, 4.07, 4.08, and 8.24.)

Other uses of the prefix *l-, however, are harder to account for in terms of any reduction in valency or transitivity. Furthermore, there are also instances in which one might expect the presence of *l-* (based on its presence elsewhere with orderings of logical objects preceding obliques), but no such prefix is found, as in the following example (which may be compared with 4.28).

(4.29) \[\texttt{tatï} \textit{sewawi} \textit{pemo} \textit{ndasiï} \]
\[(\texttt{tatï} \textit{sewawi} \textit{pemo} \textit{nd}=\textit{asi-ï})\]
\[(\texttt{papa bird.pl arrow} 3\text{PL.OBJ}=\text{hit-IPFV})\]

‘Papa shot the birds with an arrow.’

Perhaps the detransitiviser prefix only appears when the logical object is non-plural (whereas here it is plural: ‘birds’). It is also interesting to note that, in (4.29), it seems that the object-marker proclitic refers to the logical object *sewawi* ‘birds’ (despite being separated from the verb) and not to the immediately preceding oblique *pemo* ‘arrow’ (the plural form of this noun is *peme* ‘arrows’). The grammar of this sentence is thus not entirely accounted for.
4.8 Nonfinite verb forms

Nonfinite verb forms in Pondi are here understood to be those that are unmarked for TAM. I exclude imperative forms (§4.5), which, although sometimes lacking overt suffixation, are understood to have a particular modal force. Also, auxiliary verbs, two of which may occur without TAM marking, are discussed separately (§6.2.1).

In certain medial verb constructions, there is a finite verb (marked for TAM), which sits at the end of a sentence, while—somewhere in the middle—sits a nonfinite (medial) verb (unmarked for TAM). In such constructions, the action encoded by the medial, nonfinite verb is understood to precede that of the finite verb at the end of the main clause. Verbs with otherwise covert final -m in their stems (§4.1) exhibit this final consonant in their nonfinite forms. Nonfinite verb forms are covered in greater detail in the discussion of subordination in §8.1.4 (see examples 8.10, 8.11, 8.12, and 8.13).

4.9 The simultaneous suffix -e

Although medial verbs, which imply a sequential temporal relationship with a final verb, are unmarked for TAM distinctions (§4.8), verbs in dependent clauses that imply a simultaneous temporal relationship with the verb in a main clause receive the simultaneous suffix -e. This suffix affixes to the verb in the dependent clause, without any other suffix permitted. The following sentences illustrate the use of the simultaneous suffix -e.

(4.30) o kawe name ngol ol amalï
do kaw-e name ngol ol a-mal-i
2sg.subj sleep-sim pig.pl village from prf-go-ipfv
‘While you were sleeping, the pigs left the village.’

(4.31) nyï minjamo ame kokun kapï iyï
1sg banana eat-sim snake house come-ipfv
‘When I was eating a banana, a snake came into the house.’
4.10 The conditional suffix -se

There is at least one other dependent-marking verbal suffix: the conditional suffix -se, which affixes to the verb in the protasis of a conditional sentence. This suffix, which takes the same slot as the simultaneous suffix (§4.9), indicates that the verb to which it affixes forms (part of) the predicate of a protasis in a conditional sentence (§8.6). As this suffix (generally) affixes directly to the verb stem, the verb is not in any way marked for tense, aspect, or mood (e.g. forms such as ‘if it rained’ and ‘if it is raining’ would be expressed with the same verb forms).

The conditional suffix -se may, perhaps, be analysable as containing a conditional element -s(a) plus the simultaneous suffix -e. Under this assumption, the conditional element would likely be cognate with the conditional suffix -ta in Ulwa (there are other st correspondences found between cognate forms in Pondi and Ulwa). The following sentences illustrate the use of the conditional suffix -se.

(4.33) kin lapïse nyï kapï ma=p-la
      kin lap-se nyï kapî ma=p-la
      rain fall-COND 1sg house 3sg.obj=be-IRR
      ‘If it’s raining, I’ll stay home.’

(4.34) o ambo ke amngase mun winda
      o ambo ke amnga-se mun u=i-nda
      2sg.SUBJ NEG sago eat-COND hunger 2sg.OBJ=hit?-IRR
      ‘If you don’t eat, you’ll be hungry.’ (literally ‘eat sago’)

In this second example, it seems that the stem am- ‘eat’ has been reanalysed (by analogy from the perfective form amngasi) as being amnga- ‘eat’.

More examples of conditional sentences are provided in §8.6.
4.11 The locative verb  *p*- ‘be (at)’

The common locative verb  *p*- ‘be (at)’ shows some minor stem variation. Although the imperfective form simply adds the regular ending  *-i* to the stem  *p*- (4.35), the perfective form exhibits the stem  *pi*-, producing the form  */pi-apï/ ([piyapi]), as opposed to the expected form  */p-apï/ ([papi]) (4.36). The irrealis form is regular in that it adds the ending  *-la*, although it is common for speakers to pronounce the form as  *[pïla]* as opposed to  *[pla]* (4.37)—that is, these speakers insert an epenthetic  *i* despite the fact that  */pl/ is generally a permitted consonant cluster (§2.3).

(4.35)  
\[ \text{tatï ambo kapï pï} \]  
\[ \text{tatï} \quad \text{ambï} \quad \text{kapï} \quad \text{p-i} \]  
\[ \text{papa} \quad \text{NEG} \quad \text{house} \quad \text{be-IPFV} \]  
‘Papa is not at home.’

(4.36)  
\[ \text{mï Angoram piyapï} \]  
\[ \text{mï} \quad \text{Angoram} \quad \text{pi-apï} \]  
\[ \text{3SG.SUBJ} \quad \text{[place]} \quad \text{be-PFV} \]  
‘He was in Angoram.’

(4.37)  
\[ \text{mï Madang pïla} \]  
\[ \text{mï} \quad \text{Madang} \quad \text{p-la} \]  
\[ \text{3SG.SUBJ} \quad \text{[place]} \quad \text{be-IRR} \]  
‘He will be in Madang.’

The imperative of the verb  *p*- ‘be at’ has the irregular form  *alap*, as seen in (4.38) and (4.39).

(4.38)  
\[ \text{o ambinjin kapï alap} \]  
\[ \text{o} \quad \text{ambï-njin} \quad \text{kapï} \quad \text{alap} \]  
\[ \text{2SG.SUBJ} \quad \text{NPL.REFL-POSS.NPL} \quad \text{house} \quad \text{be.IMP} \]  
‘Stay in your own house!’

(4.39)  
\[ \text{malap} \]  
\[ \text{ma=} \quad \text{alap} \]  
\[ \text{3SG.OBJ=} \quad \text{be.IMP} \]  
‘Wait!’ (literally ‘Be here!’)
4.12 The motion verbs \textit{i-} ‘come’ and \textit{mal-} ‘go’

Two very common verbs of motion (\textit{i-} ‘come and \textit{mal-} ‘go’) display interesting suppletive behaviour in Pondi and thus deserve special attention. Morphologically, they have the following forms (Table 4.5).

### Table 4.5. Paradigms for \textit{i-} ‘come’ and \textit{mal-} ‘go’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Verb stem</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Irrealis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘come’</td>
<td>\textit{i-}</td>
<td>iyï (/i-ï/)</td>
<td>ayï (/a-i-ï/)⁹</td>
<td>ila (/i-la/)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘go’</td>
<td>\textit{mal-}</td>
<td>malï (/mal-ï/)</td>
<td>(i)yapï (/i-apid/)¹⁰</td>
<td>mïla (/mal-lal/)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The imperfective and irrealis forms of \textit{i-} ‘come’ are entirely regular. This verb, however, lacks a designated perfective form. It is not alone in having such a deficit, as there are several other verbs that are deponent and use imperfective morphology to encode both imperfective and perfective aspect. Interestingly, in the case of ‘come’, however, this perfective form has migrated to become the (suppletive) perfective form of the verb \textit{mal-} ‘go’. This verb \textit{mal-} ‘go’ forms its imperfective quite regularly (\textit{mali}), but has the suppletive perfective form \textit{i-apid}. The irrealis form shows vowel mutation in the stem, a change which I believe serves a practical function. Without any such stem change, the irrealis form would be pronounced (after degemination of the consecutive /l/ consonants) as *mala; and, since final /a/ is usually reduced to [i], this would often lead to the form *mali, thereby creating a confusing homophony with the imperfective form of the same verb. The irregular change in the stem vowel of the irrealis form, however, prevents this confusion and results in an interesting metathetic relationship between \textit{mali} ‘go [IPFV]’ and \textit{mila} ‘go [IRR]’.

The adoption of \textit{(i)yapï ‘come [PFV]’} as the suppletive form to fill the perfective gap in the \textit{mal-} ‘go’ paradigm seems, however, not to have been fully accepted, as speakers sometimes use the imperfective form \textit{mali} with perfective meaning (sometimes even adding the perfect prefix \textit{a-} to clarify its perfective aspect). Similarly, as alluded to in §4.6, the perfect prefix can also be used with the morphologically imperfective form of \textit{i-} ‘come’ to clarify that it has perfective meaning (the morphologically perfective form of \textit{i-} ‘come’ would be, of course, unusable, since it has developed the meaning of ‘go’ instead).

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⁹ This is the imperfective form plus the perfect prefix \textit{a-}.
¹⁰ This is a suppletive perfective form (< \textit{i-} ‘come’); \textit{(a)mali} may also be used to mean ‘go [PFV]’.