Naki noun class system sketch
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Background
This description highlights the regular system; irregular plurals are not particularly rare, though the class memberships are still generally regular.

Class numberings are meant to correspond to Proto-Bantu, though proper reconstruction has not been done in this regard. Class 3/6 appears to collapse 3/4 and 5/6.

Tone should be reasonably accurate in surface terms. Some levels may be mistranscribed since a four-level distinction was only recently unambiguously uncovered, but places where a formal distinction is purely tonal should accurately reflect which class has a lower/higher tone than the other.

Orthographic conventions attempt to follow the “General Alphabet of Cameroon Languages”.

Coda obstruents are written using the voiced series b,d,g but the phonetic realization can be devoiced in all positions and fricated in alveolar and velar positions.

Example nouns
Class 1/2: ṣkūŋ/bùŋkūŋ ‘chief’
Class 3/6: gí/góŋ ‘egg’ (regular vowel alternation triggered by coda “ŋ” in plural)
Class 7/8: ànyēnə/bìnyēnə ‘bird’ (prefix does not look like class 7, but some concords do)
Class 9/10: shè/shé ‘fowl’
Class 14: ūŋo ‘fufu’ (not clearly distinct from class 6 formally—see below)
Class 6a: ŋgú ‘water’
Class 19/18: fìbúd/mbúd ‘cat’ (some variation in attitudes towards tone on prefix ‘m’)

Pronoun system
Preverbal ("subject") forms are written without tones since TMA marking interacts with their form, making it difficult to determine the underlying pattern. The vowel often elides with a following TMA-marking vowel.

**Preverbal personal pronouns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg</th>
<th>Pl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>ki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>wə</td>
<td>be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>lu</td>
<td>bu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-preverbal personal pronouns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sg</th>
<th>Pl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>mī</td>
<td>sī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>wə̀</td>
<td>bè</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>lù</td>
<td>bù</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Uniquely for the area, 1p preverbal is clearly distinct from 1p non-preverbal.

There is also an antilogophoric pronoun for 3s with form "we".

No compound pronouns (like in Noni) were found during elicitation.

**Class pronouns**

1. (= 3s) 2. (= 3p)
3. wí 6. nú
7. kí 8. bí (preverbally: byə)
9. yì 10. yí
14. (= 3)
16a. mú
19. fī 18. (= 6a)

Class pronouns can show different tones in preverbal position but, except for class 8, show same segments. See above for remarks on the difficulty of determining the tone of preverbal pronouns.
Possessive forms

Class 1
wâm  wà
wɔg  wè
wî  wibû

Note: In elicitation, the rise is sometimes realized as a plain low.

Class 2
bâm  bâ
bɔ  bè
bî  bíbû

Class 3
wâm  wà
wɔg  wè
wî  wibû

Class 6
nâm  nà
nɔg  nè
nì  nûbû/nibû

Class 7
kâm  kà
kɔg  kè
kî  kibû
Class 8
byâm  byà
byãg  byè
bì    bibù

Class 9
yâm   yâ
yõg   yê
yî    yibû

Class 10
yâm   yâ
yõg   yê
yî    yibû

Class 6a
mâm   mà
mõg   mè
mî    mûbû

Class 14 (= 6)

Class 19
fyâm  fyà  Note: Some details of this paradigm need to be re-checked.
fyõg  fyê
fi    fibû

Class 18 (= 6a)
Demonstratives

the/that

1. wayne 2. bá
3. wayne 6. ná
7. kó 8. byó
9. yè 10. yé
14. (=3)

6a. mó
19. fyé 18. (=6a)

Note: Speakers translate ‘that’ in elicitation contexts with these elements. However, in texts they have a distribution closer to an article, and they also translate these elements is ‘the’. There is another element which seems only to mean ‘that’ (see below).

this

1. wayne/wayne 2. bán/bôní
3. wayne/wayne 6. nôn/nôní  (Note: Younger speaker not raised in village had “nôní”.)
7. kân/kôní 8. byân/byêní
9. yôn/yêní 10. yôn/yêní
14. (=3)

6a. môn/môní
19. fyon/fyoní 18. (=6a)

Note: In elicitation speakers report no difference in meaning between the two forms. The tone on the final vowel was not always consistent in the two syllable forms, and I transcribe the one that seemed most dominant in more careful (whistled) elicitation. However, I would not read too much into the alternations of that tone at this point.
that
1. wè 2. bó
3. wé 6. nó
7. ké 8. byé
9. yè 10. yé
14. (= 3)
6a. mó
19. fyé 18. (= 6a)

Note: The formal similarity between clas 1 and the antilogophoric pronoun may be of interest.

Associatives
1. wī 2. bū
3. wī 6. nū
7. kī 8. bī
9. yī 10. yī
14. (= 3)
6a. mū
19. fī 18. (= 6a)

Note: There seem to be no tonal distinctions on associatives.

Numbers ‘one’ and ‘two’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘one’</th>
<th>‘two’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>mū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>mū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/8</td>
<td>āmū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>mī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>(wī?)mū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/18</td>
<td>fīmū</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ‘one’ behaves like a noun, not an adjective in showing ‘a-’ not ‘ki-’.
Note: I’d like to double-check the vowel on ‘one’
Not: One conservative speaker in one session gave a prefix.
“Quantifiers”: ‘other’, ‘which’, and ‘all’

‘other’
1. jò  2. bùdò
3. jō  6. dō
7. àdò  8. bidò
9. jò  10. jō
14. (= 3)
6a. mdō
19. fidō  18. (= 6a)

‘which’
1. ŋgì  2. bùngì
3. ŋgì  6. ŋgì
7. āŋgì  8. bīngì
9. ŋgì  10. ŋgì
14. (= 3)
6a. mŋgì
19. fîngì  18. (= 6a)

‘all’
2. bùnsòn
6. nûnsòn
8. bînsòn
10. yînsòn
6a. mûnsòn
18. (= 6a)

(Note: I need to doublecheck this paradigm.)