Speedlang challenge 8 Presentation

Syb by /u/awopcxet

1. Document and showcase your language, explaining and demonstrating how it meets all of the elements of the challenge.

Phonology

Inventory

	Bilabials	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasals	m [m̥]	n [n̥]	(ɲ) (ɲ̥)	(ŋ)	
Stops	p b	t (d)	(c) (ɟ)	k (g)	ʔ
Fricatives	f v	s (z) (ʃ) (ʒ)	(ç)	x (ɣ)	h
liquids		r l [ɬ]			
Approximants			j		

(allophone)
[marginal]

	Front	Central	Back
High	i y iː yː ĩ ĩː		u uː ũ ũː
Mid	e ø eː øː ẽ ẽː		o oː õ õː
Low	a aː ã ãː		

A quick introduction to the phonology is in order to demonstrate that Syb follows along with the phonology criteria of the challenge.

The word:

Onsets are restricted to:
Nasals - [m n], [ɲ] if the following vowel is /i, y/, [ŋ] only appears in nasally harmonized syllables.
Stops - [p t k ʔ], [c] may appear before /i y/ but not [k].
Fricatives - [f fː v s x h], [ʃ ç] may appear before /i y/ but not [s h].

Liquids - [r l].
Approximant - [j].
Plosives, nasals and fricatives followed by r - [mr nr pr tr kr ʔr fr sr xr hr].
Affricate - [tʃ] before /i y/ but not [t].
No onset consonants.

Medials are restricted to but exceptions may occur in compounds:
Nasals - [m n], [ɲ] if the following vowel is /i, y/, [ŋ] only appears in nasally harmonized syllables.
All voiceless nasals see marginal use here.
Stops - [b d g ʔ], [ɟ] appears only before /i y/ but not [g].
Fricatives - [f v z ɣ h], [ʒ ç] may appear before /i y/ but not [z h].
Liquids - [r l], [ɬ] see marginal use.
Approximant - [j]
Stop initial clusters - [b] followed by any voiced segment or [h ʔ].
Nasal initial clusters - [m n] followed by any voiceless segment. Nasal on nasal clusters only occurs on nasalized syllables. [n̥, m̥] may occur in the same type of clusters as voiced nasals but those are a lot rarer.
Approximant initial clusters - [j] followed by [p t k c f s x ç ʃ m n r l ɲ] [ŋ] can only occur in nasalized syllables.
Affricate - [ts]
Fricative initial clusters - [f] may occur before any other medial position segment except the stop initial clusters.

Codas are restricted to:
Nasals - [m n].
Approximant [j].
Stops - [b] but only after /i y/.
Fricatives - [f h] these are the rarest codas.
No coda consonants.

Nucleus have very few restrictions:
Long vowels may only appear after stops (except the glottal) nasals and [x].

Stress is assigned to the penultimate syllable unless the last syllable is closed. Suffixes never take the stress but mostly pull the stress towards the last syllable in the root.

As can be easily seen above, Syb only has 1 glide [j] as no other approximants occur, not even as an allophone.
The criteria for quantity distinctions in the language is fulfilled by the distinction of long and short vowels. Some examples where they contrast are the words **te** *water* and **tee** *sun* and **aka** *to want* and **akaa** *to fall (volitional)*.

To confirm the third criteria, the suprasegmental feature that isn't tone or stress. We need to look into Syb's consonant-vowel nasal harmony.

Let's start with some examples. For ease, we will look at some nouns and their accusative form.

Kẽnojy [ŋẽˈno.jy] → **Kẽnõjĩ** [ŋẽˈnõ.jĩ] *Answer*

Sakrova [saˈkro.va] → **Sãkrõvã** [sãˈŋrõ.vã] *Bear*

Syaje [ʃyˈʔa.je] → **Syãjẽ** [ʃyˈʔã.jẽ] *Speaker*

Pota [ˈpo.da] → **Mõnã** [ˈmõ.nã] *Person*

Nasality spreads from right to left from a nasal that infects the preceding vowel which then spreads further, Turning vowels into nasal vowels and stop consonants into nasals. This is blocked by the glottal stop. This [+nasal] feature is spread along most of the word and is therefore a suprasegmental feature.

Grammar

Pronouns

Syb has two types of pronouns. Pronouns are deeply connected to honorifics. The base pronouns shown in the table below and the title pronouns which some will be shown below.

Base Pronouns	sg	du	pl
1p	Na	Nã	Nãnã
2p	Su	Sũ	Suzu
3p	Ta	Tã	Tata

These base pronouns are mostly used in casual situations between friends, imperatives and for grammatical functions in relative clauses. Otherwise may be seen as rude.

Then there are the title pronouns. Pronouns used to represent someone's station, occupation or role in discussion. Some are as listed below.

Hũ - [ˈhũ] one A pronoun you use to be really humble, especially when used about yourself. Is often seen as mocking or rude when used for others.

Hinoj - [çĩˈnoj] ruler, king, queen (one that demands) . A pronoun used by rulers or people who claim themselves so. Should always be referred to with honorifics.

Malaje - [maˈla.je] listener. A pronoun used by a listener asking questions or talking to the speaker. Also used by the interviewer when speaking to their interviewee.

Syaje - [ʃyˈʔa.je] speaker. A pronoun used for addressing the speaker, not only of a meeting, but also the speaker a speech. Rarely used for addressing themselves. Also used for the interviewee by the interviewer.

An important part of Syb honorifics is the use of determiners as person marking.

L(a)- *this*- is used when referring to yourself in a humble way.
O- *that*- is used when referring to a person close to your location in a humble way.
Ny- *that over there*- is used when referring to a person far away or not within sight in a humble way.
Unless you want to seem rude, you never add a determiner to refer to the person you are talking to.
Note: These determiners are only used for pronouns used as 1p or 3p and not for 2p or noun usage.

Examples of pronouns in use can be found at the end of the document.

Negative sentences:

Negative sentences can easily be constructed by placing the negative copula -**vo**- after the main verbs which steals all the extra morphology of the main verb. Can be shown in the example below.
I ate an apple - **Na ũ lũmã nẽm'ẽ** [na ũ ˈlu.na ˈnẽm.ʔẽ] 1p.sg indef apple-acc eat-pst.prf
I didn't eat an apple - **Na ũ lũmã nẽ voẽ** [Na ũ ˈlũ.mã nẽ ˈvo.ʔẽ] 1p.sg indef apple-acc eat neg.cop-pst.prf
This one wished not to hear king's answer - **Lãhũ hĩnoj kẽnõjĭ mala võkã**
[lãhũ çĩnoj ŋẽnõjĭ mala võŋã] prox-one king answer-acc hear neg.cop-opt.prf

Definite marking:

Syb doesn't mark definite noun phrases but does mark indefinite noun phrases in 4 different ways. This makes it so that indefinite nouns don't take number morphology.
Ũ - singular indefinite marker
Ã - dual indefinite marker
Sø - plural indefinite marker
Vo - negative indefinite marker
Examples for all of them are as listed below.
Na ũ lũmã nẽ voẽ - *I didn't eat an apple* [Na ũ ˈlũ.mã nẽ ˈvo.ʔẽ] 1p.sg indef apple-acc eat neg.cop-pst.prf
Ta ã kãnsã uj prej'ẽf - *It was grabbing two rocks* [ta ã ˈŋãn.sã uj ˈprej.ʔẽf] 3p.sg du.indef rock do hand-pst.imprf
Sø vova ũ sãkrõvã akiraf - *some wolves are fighting a bear* [sø ˈvo.va ũ sãˈkrõ.va aˈɟi.raf] pl.indef wolf indef bear-acc fight-prst.prf
Vo pota sãkrõvã ãkĭrãnẽ kõ prej - *no person could ever fight a bear by hand* [vo ˈpo.da sãˈŋrõ.vã ãˈɲĭ.rã.nẽ ŋõ prej] neg.indef person bear-acc fight-pot.prf with hand

Insubordination:

There are two main types of insubordination in Syb and some set phrases. The main types are repeated questions and polite requests.

Repeated Questions
When you first ask a question, you use the usual main clause structure like (a) and when you have to repeat the question like in (b), omitting **Ne ūmsyb'ē** *i said*

(a) *"Who did you speak to?"*
jipota su kõ syb'ē?
[jiˈbo.da su ŋõ ˈʃyb.ʔẽ]
who 2p.sg with speak-pst.prf

(b) *"Who did you speak to?"*
jipota su syb nõ?
[jiˈbo.da su ʃyb ŋõ]
who 2p.sg speak with

Pay notice to the loss of verbal morphology and the change from SOV to SVO

Polite Requests
When politely telling someone to do something you can ellide part of the sentence if the ellided part referees to something positive like *i think it would be good/healthy*. (a) shows an unellided form whilst (b) shows the shorter form.

(a) **Su hĩkãrãnẽ y jeka**
[su çĩˈŋã.rã.nẽ y ˈje.ga]
2p.sg practice-prf.con be good
I think it would be good if you practice

(b) **Su hĩkãrãnẽ**?
[su çĩˈŋã.rã.nẽ]
2p.sg practice-prf.con?
Why don't you go practice?

This is only possible with the verb in one of the conditional forms.

Set phrases
There exists some set phrases that would be hard to understand in any other way than via insubordination. Like the very short sentence in (a).

(a) [**ne nejraib**] **Ib y** [**jeka**]
[ne ˈnej.ra.ʔib, ib y ˈje.ga]
[1p.sg wonder-con.impf] if be [right]
[*i wonder*] *if i am* [*correct*]

The information in brackets are parts that have ellided away. This results in the short set phrase **Ib y**. Can also be generalized to *"i wonder if it is correct"*.

2. Translate and gloss five example sentences. You can either get "syntax test sentences" by asking Zephyrus "z!stest" (RIP Leonard), in which case note down which number sentences you get, or you can pick from recent 'Just Used 5 Minutes of your Day' challenges
posted by u/mareck_ on r/conlangs, in which case note which number 5moyds you do.

"*Big mobs of people fought each other there*." 5moyd 1428
Big group people fight-pst.prf over-there-loc
Srø ffõ pota pota akiẽ ɲybtare
[srø f:õ ˈpo.da ˈpo.da aˈɟi.ʔẽ ɲybˈda.re]

"*They walked straight past each other*" 5moyd 1427
3p.pl head.acc pl-walk.upstream-pst.prf
Tata rõmlẽ røxaajøkaʔẽ
[ˈta.da ˈrõm.lẽ rø.ɣaːˈjøˈga.ʔẽ]
Note: the verb to walk upstream has further meaning to walk against the flow or against something, in this case each other.

"*[He] is seeking to take a pear, [and] took one, but is afraid.*" 5moyd 1426
3p.sg a pear-acc want do hand-subj.imp, one do hand-nmlz, pass.cop scary
Ta ũ hãsũlũmã aka uj prej'ẽvixa, hũ uj prejy, aa sakra
[Ta ũ hã.zũˈlũ.mã ˈa.ga uj ˈprej.ʔẽ.vi.ɣa, hũ uj ˈprej.y, ˈʔa.ʔa ˈsa.kra]

"*I am afraid they might expose us to the fire.*" 5moyd 1424
3p.pl expose-pot.fut fire-loc, 1p.sg pass.cop scary
Tata mĩnõjnẽ xratare, na aa sakra
[ˈta.da mĩˈnõj.nẽ xraˈda.re, na ˈʔa.ʔa ˈsa.kra]
Note: in these last two sentences, the phrase **aa sakra** has appeared twice. **Aa** is a copula verb that specifically marks something that is affected by something. The first one, the bear is scared of the situation so it is affected by the scary situation, same is true for the second sentence where the speaker admits that they find the situation scary. **Aa** takes the quality of affectation as its object.

"*I am interested in your opinion*" 5moyd 1423
1p.sg interest pass.cop-prst.impf with 2p.sg thought
Na kõmvũmtej aaraf kõ su nej
[na ŋõɱ.vũmˈtej ʔaˈʔa.raf ŋõ su nej]

3. Include an example showing at least fifteen possible pronouns (do as many as you'd like,
   but enough to make it feel like pronouns really are an open class).

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The sentences to show the pronouns are structured as in below.
This PRONOUN wishes to hear PRONOUN'S answer. (they wants to ask them a question)
This sentence ellides the prepositional phrase [to my question]

Lãhũ hĭnoj kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-one king answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This one wishes to hear king's answer*"
[ˈlã.hũ çĭˈnoj ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: Said to a ruler by one of their subjects.

Lãmalaje syaje kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-listener speaker answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This listener wishes to hear speaker's answer*"
[lã.maˈla.je ʃyˈʔa.je ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: Said during an interview or to the person on stay by an audience member.

Lakije sakrova kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-soldier bear answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This soldier wishes to hear bear's answer*"
[laˈɟi.je saˈkro.va ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: Said by a soldier to another soldier they admit is stronger/better soldier than themselves.

Lãhũmai rãnoje kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-student teacher answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This student wishes to hear teacher's answer*"
[lãhũˈma.i rãˈno.je ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: Classroom/apprentice situation where the student wants to ask a question.

Lãhũmnãhã jehije kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-patient doctor answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This patient wishes to hear doctor's answer*"
[lã.hũm.nãˈhã jeˈçi.je ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: Said by a patient to their doctor before the doctor tells them about their condition.

Na su kẽnõjĭ malafra
1p.sg 2p.sg answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*I wish to hear your answer*"
[na su ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]

Note: This sentence would never really happen outside of joking with each other. As base pronouns are mainly used in really close and casual situations, you would ask them the question without this polite set up.

Lajetibra jẽnoje kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-merchant customer answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This merchant wishes to hear customer's answer*"
[la.jeˈtʃi.bra jẽˈno.je ŋẽnõjĭ]
Note: This could be said when the merchant wants to ask what the customer is looking for. If the merchant knows of a better title for the customer, that pronoun would be used instead.

Lakije vova kẽnõjĭ malafra
Prox-soldier wolf answer-acc hear-impf.opt
"*This soldier wishes to hear wolf's answer*"
[laˈɟi.je ˈvo.va ŋẽˈnõ.jĭ maˈla.fra]
Note: It is common to refer to different soldier ranks with animal names, in this case **vova** meaning *wolf* is the name for a squad leader, a leader of a few men.