

# Lahpet Sketch Grammar

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# Introduction

**Lahpet** is a constructed language that I made for the eighth semiannual speedlanging challenge in March of 2021. The name's a placeholder, but it might stick. I've used names of drinks as placeholders for projects in the past including *Sodapop*, which never ended up getting renamed.

Since it's a speedlang, it was made over the course of two weeks with a couple of constraints. Glides couldn't contrast in place or rounding (they don't, but I do have placeless nasal vs oral glides). There had to be some sort of non-tonal, non-stress suprasegmental, which took the form of the glottalization prosody and the lengthening process at the end of prosodic phrases. There also had to be some sort of contrastive length, which I got with geminate consonants along with the suprasegmental lengthening, which is very occasionally contrastive.

As for the grammar, there had to be insubordination, which I have in questions, and maybe in the focus morphology, although the more I develop that, the less insubordinate it feels. There had to be asymmetrical negation, which takes the form of a negative copula for otherwise verbless predicates and a constraint that negative verbs always take focus morphology in verbed predicates. Pronouns had to be an open class, in this case with body parts, kinship terms, roles and other nouns taking on pronominal functions. Indefinite noun phrases had to be marked, here with a suffix that marks indefinites and a few other things.

I did five each of the stest sentences and 5MOYDS. I did stest 36, 53, 108, 192 and 200, as well as 5MOYDS number 1425, 1426, 1427, 1432, and 1433. I list at least fifteen possible words that can have pronominal reference in the pronouns section.

Other than the speedlang constraints, I had some personal goals with Lahpet. I've wanted to keep a journal and to-do lists in a conlang for a while. In fact that's what Mwanele started out for back in 2018. But I got attached enough to the setting I created for Mwanele, Anroo, Seoina, and other conlangs of mine that I didn't want to add words for things that wouldn't be relevant (or exis-

tent!) in the setting. I work in bioengineering and live in a city in 2021, so a lot of what I would want to put in a journal or a to-do list doesn't work with those languages. So I wanted to leave ye olde vaguely premodern setting behind for a language that lets me talk about subway signaling delays and IR spectroscopy.

I also just wanted to make a personal language. I didn't burden myself with diachronics, and I created things that were as naturalistic as I thought it was interesting to create. I kept things away from fusional because at the end of the day I want to use Lahpet for journaling *offline*, and don't want to have to memorize declension tables. Some of the things here are probably too close to other conlangs I've made (SVCs! No agreement! Weird focus marking! Participles!) but I'm okay with that. More exploration in the fall speedlang!

So far Lahpet is meeting the goals I set for it. I'm excited to keep working on it and learn to read and write it! Maybe I'll even pick a name for it someday.

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# Abbreviations

ADJ	Adjective	MED	Medial
AUX	Auxiliary	NAME	Personal name
CL	Classifier	NDF	Indefinite
DIR	Direct realis	NDR	Indirect realis
DIST	Distal	NEG	Negation
DP	Discourse particle	NMZ	Nominalizer
FOC	Focus	PL	Plural
GEN	Genitive	PLACE	Place name
IRR	Irrealis	PROX	Proximal

# 1 Phonology

Lahpet has a medium-sized inventory of both consonants and vowels. Consonants may be long or short and there are several morphophonological alternations between long and short consonants. There is a stress system which interacts with consonant length. Two interesting suprasegmental processes involve lengthening of vowels towards the end of prosodic phrases and a prosodic glottalization applied to words and phrases in certain positions.

## 1.1 Segmental Phonology

Lahpet has eighteen consonant phonemes. Stops show a fortis-lenis contrast, otherwise voicing is only contrastive in sibilants. The three sounds /j ɟ ç/ take qualities from adjacent vowels.

	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Dorsal
<b>Stop</b>	p b	t d		k g
<b>Nasal</b>	m	n		
<b>Fricative</b>	v	s z	ʃ ʒ ç	h
<b>Liquid</b>		l	j ɟ	

These are the underlying consonants that I'm positing for Lahpet, but there are many consonants which surface due to allophony. All consonants except /h/ can be geminated. Some affixes and other processes act like there's a floating mora, which I'll call /Q/ when it comes up, which geminates the following segment.

Several sounds reduce or are lenited intervocalically.

$$(1.1) \quad /b d g l/ \rightarrow [\beta r \gamma r] / V\_V$$

Fortis plosives are aspirated word-initially and after fricatives. The sibilant /s/ can also be aspirated word-initially.

(1.2) /p t k s/ → [p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup> s<sup>h</sup>] / #\_

(1.3) /p t k/ → [p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup>] / {s, ʃ}\_

Postalveolar sibilants undergo fortition when they're geminated.

(1.4) /ʒ: ʒ:/ → [tʃ: dʒ:]

The three phonemes /j ɟ ç/ change depending on the vowels they're adjacent to. I *think* all of them only occur intervocalically.

After /u o/		Elsewhere	
short	long	short	long
w	v:	j	ʒ:
ɰ	v:	ç	ʃ:
ṽ	m:	ḷ	ɲ:

Here are the consonants that surface. These are what get represented by the orthography.

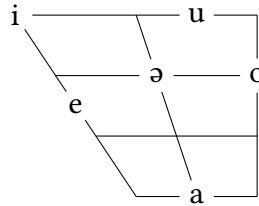
	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Dorsal
<b>Stop</b>	p p: b:	t t: d d:	tʃ: dʒ:	k k: g:
<b>Nasal</b>	m m:	n n:	ɲ:	
<b>Fricative</b>	v v: β	s s: z z:	ʃ ʃ: ʒ ʒ: ç	h
<b>Liquid</b>	w ṽ ɰ	r l l:	j ḷ	

The following table shows the orthography for the consonants, corresponding to the phones in the table above. There's going to be a conscript too, but that's a problem for after the speedlang challenge, or at least, after the relay.

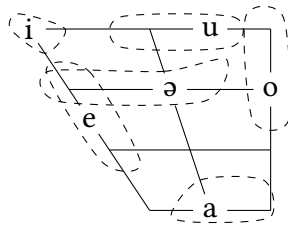
	Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Dorsal
<b>Stop</b>	p pp bb	t tt d dd	tx dj	k kk gg
<b>Nasal</b>	m mm	n nn	nnh	
<b>Fricative</b>	v vv b	s ss z zz	x xx j jj hy	h
<b>Liquid</b>	w mh hw	r l ll	j nh	

Lahpet has six vowels: the classic cardinal five, plus a schwa.





The phoneme /u/ tends to be fronted towards [ʊ], while /o/ can move up to [u]. The schwa tends to be high-mid and can become [ø] or [ʌ] when stressed. /e/ ranges along the front unrounded part of the vowel space, but unlike /o/, doesn't raise as high as /i/ even when stressed. /a/ ranges around the low part of the vowel space but tends towards the back. Here's a vowel trapezoid with the ranges the vowels tend to take.



In stressed syllables, vowels can be tensed, and in unstressed syllables they can be laxed.

$$(1.5) \quad /u \ o \ \partial/ \rightarrow [\text{ʊ} \ u \ \text{œ}] \ / \ [+STRESS]$$

$$(1.6) \quad /a \ e \ i \ u/ \rightarrow [\text{ɐ} \ \text{ɛ} \ \text{ɪ} \ \text{ʊ}] \ / \ [-STRESS]$$

After palatal consonants, /u ə/ are fronted.

$$(1.7) \quad /u \ \partial/ \rightarrow [\text{ʊ} \ \text{œ}] \ / \ \{\text{f}, \text{ʒ}, \text{j}, \text{ç}, \text{ʝ}\}_-$$

There are diphthongs too, at least /au iu ai oi ei/ but probably more. They can exist in syllables with coda consonants and /au ai/ contrast, which suggests that they really are underlyingly diphthongs rather than vowel+glide combos.

## 1.2 Stress

Lahpet has stress. Primary stress *tends* to fall on the second-to-last syllable in a word, and words *tend* to get footed in trochees moving leftward.

Geminate consonants can only exist after stressed syllables. Usually when morphology produces a geminate consonant, it attracts stress, and geminate consonants that end up after unstressed syllables get degeminated.

As you can tell from all the hedges, stress assignment has been running on pure vibes for this challenge and has been left as a problem for next week.

## 1.3 Sentence-level Prosody

### Vowel lengthening

The vowel in the last syllable with primary stress in a prosodic phrase is lengthened if and only if it's in an open syllable. Syllables before geminates act like they're closed (back to the /CVQ.CV/ [CVC:V] analysis of geminates). I'm still not entirely sure where prosodic phrases end, but I know a few things:

- Constituents that are in specific positions for information structure reasons are always preceded and followed by prosodic breaks. That includes topics, focuses, and antitopics. I don't want to say they are always their own prosodic phrase, because you could imagine something like a clause getting topicalized, where the clause has a bunch of prosodic phrases in it.
- The subject of a clause is always its own prosodic phrase.
- Postpositional phrases are always their own prosodic phrase when used adverbially. When they're adnominal I think they can be if they're heavy enough or if they're contrastive, but don't tend to be.
- There's always a prosodic phrase break after the verb (maybe including SFPs, but those never take primary stress anyway).
- Verb complements are part of the same prosodic phrase as the verb unless they're focused. Verb satellites are always part of the same phrase as the verb.
- Some direct objects are their own prosodic phrase and others are part of the same phrase as the verb. If a direct object is separated from the verb by anything then there's a phrase break after it. Sometimes there's a phrase break between the object and the verb anyway and I don't know why.

In sentence 1.8, there are three prosodic phrases: **New York'an** is topicalized so it's got a break after it. **Malsara** is the subject, so it gets broken off from what's after it. **Tona valxuraju** is the verb phrase and doesn't have anything to break it up into pieces, so it's left as another phrase. The primary stress in **New Yórk'an** falls on a closed syllable, so the vowel doesn't get lengthened. The primary stresses in **malsára** and **tona valxuráju** both fall on open syllables, so those stressed vowels do get lengthened.

(1.8) **New York'an, malsara tona valxuraju.**

[ <b>niu'jorkan</b>	<b>mal'sa:re</b>	<b>tone</b>	<b>valʃu'ra:ʒu</b>	]
New York -n	malsara	tona	val -xura -ju	
PLACE	-GEN	<i>house.price</i>	<i>heavy cost - drag</i>	-DIR

“In New York, real estate prices are *so* expensive.”

Sometimes prosodic phrase breaks can be contrastive, since they reflect things about the structure of the sentence. Sentences 1.9a and 1.9b have the same segmental contents, but they've got different structures, different prosodies, and different meanings. In sentence 1.9a, **Karo'n** is a possessor modifying **lon**. **Karo'n lon** is the verb's object and its own prosodic phrase. Since the last stressed vowel of the phrase is in a closed syllable, nothing happens, you just get a prosodic break. This sentence is saying that someone, dropped because they're clear from context, doesn't want to eat Karo's steak.

Sentence 1.9b has a different structure and meaning: **Karo** is the topic of this sentence, and hanging topics are marked with the genitive. Since it's topicalized, it's followed by a prosodic break, and since its last stressed vowel is in an open syllable, it gets lengthened. That leaves **lon meddimu** as one prosodic phrase. This sentence sets Karo as the topic and says something like 'As for Karo, he doesn't want steak.'

(1.9)a. **Karo'n lon meddimu.**

[ <b>'karon</b>	<b>'lon</b>	<b>'med:imu</b>	]
Karo -n	lon	me-i	-mu
NAME -GEN	<i>steak</i>	NEG-	<i>want</i> -FOC

“[I] don't want Karo's steak.”

b. **Karo'n, lon meddimu.**

[ 'ka:ron      ,lon    'med:imu      ]  
 Karo -n    | lon    me-i    -mu  
 NAME -GEN    *steak*    NEG- want -FOC  
 “[As for] Karo, he doesn’t want the steak.”

**Glottalization**

Lahpet has a prosodic glottalization process. On words that undergo this process, the last primarily stressed syllable gets assigned a glottal feature, which spreads rightwards to the end of the prosodic phrase.

This feature has a couple of effects: fortis stops tend to become ejectives, especially when starting stressed syllables, vowels become creaky, sonorants with their own morae become creaky too, phrase final syllables can have glottal stops added to the end, especially when they have primary or secondary stress.

This is probably going to expand as I develop this language further, but so far there are three places where this glottalization prosody shows up: topic and focus can get assigned this glottal prosody when they’re contrastive, phrases in lists can have glottal prosody assigned to the last prosodic phrase in each element of the list, and nouns can get glottalization prosody when they’re used to address someone.

Here’s an example with a contrastive focus. Underlined bits are focused and receive glottalization prosody.

(1.10) ***Allen’an goi ari ummu, Paul’an dimmu.***

[ 'a:ɛnən      ,goiʔ    ari      'um:ɐ      'p'ol:ən      'dim:ɐ      ]  
Allen -n    goi    ari    un -mu    Paul -n    dimmu  
 NAME -GEN    *book*    *direct*    *read* -FOC    NAME -GEN    NEG.FOC

“I read *Allen’s* book through, not *Paul’s*.”

Since it’s the author you’re contrasting, the glottalization starts at the primary stressed syllable in the author. If it were the *book* you were contrasting (‘I read Allen’s *book*, but not his Twitter feed.’) then it would start at **goi** ‘book’ instead.

## 2 Word Classes

Lahpet has open noun, verb, adjective, and adverb classes. Pronouns are also an open class, if they're considered to be separate from nouns. There's a closed class of postpositions and various types of particle.

This chapter will give an overview of the classes, how they work, and common lexicalization patterns. For the open classes it will also discuss common derivational morphemes.

### 2.1 Nouns

The largest word class is nouns. Nouns are words that can take number, definiteness, and case marking. They most often refer to people, places, things, or actions. Nouns referring to states are usually derived from adjectives or verbs.

The citation form of a noun is its nominative singular definite form. (Or not definite, but...unindefinite?) If other forms aren't predictable, then I'll give the nominative singular indefinite or nominative plural definite form in the dictionary.

#### **Pronouns**

Lahpet has an open class of words which can be used as pronouns. These are very commonly body parts or kinship terms with attached possessive/demonstrative terms. Proximal body parts and medial kinship terms tend to refer to the speaker, medial body parts and proximal kinship terms tend to refer to the listener, and distal body parts or kinship terms tend to refer to others. Body parts are often chosen to be somehow relevant to the action, for example feet for verbs of motion, hands for controlled actions, and the mouth for speech or attitude verbs. Kinship terms are often used for family members even when specific body part metaphors would be appropriate, and fictive kinship is common.

In professional settings or transactions, both people might refer to themselves with their respective roles (e.g. ‘Can customer pass cashier their bags?’)

## Derivational Affixes

### -ra

-ra derives words for groups of certain sizes. It most often takes numbers, but can attach to other quantifiers.

- **ne** ‘two’ → **nera** ‘duet, duo, pair, couple’
- **ti** ‘eight’ → **tira** ‘octet, octuple’
- **ho** ‘cup, mug’ → **hora** ‘cupful’

### -xia

-xia derives nouns for periods of time characterized by a particular thing. It can take adjectives, verbs, or other nouns.

- **dan** ‘to wait’ → **danxia** ‘waiting time, cooldown’
- **irai** ‘sun’ → **iraixia** ‘sunny spell’
- **more** ‘skillful’ → **morexia** ‘prime, high point’

It can also derive names for sections of processes and for regions of spectra.

- **kin** ‘to cut, to divide’ → **kinxia** ‘the cutting step’
- **ammid** ‘amide’ → **amidjia** ‘amide band (e.g. in FTIR)’

## 2.2 Verbs

Verbs head sentences and can take the negative prefix **me-** and verb suffixes like **-ju**, **-le**, and **-mu**. (I know it’s a bit tautological to say verbs can take verb suffixes and verbs suffixes are the ones that go after verbs, but ‘words that take **-mu**’ does pick out a clear word class, so I’m gonna go with it.)

There are a few defective verbs like the auxiliary **ebba** and the negative auxiliary **dilba**, which aren’t found with the full complement of suffixes because of

other aspects of their distributions, but otherwise verbs can always take ‘verb suffixes.’

Verbs tend to encode actions, events, and states.

The citation form of a verb is its irrealis/imperative form, which is often but not always its bare stem. The dictionary will give the irrealis form and the nominalized form.

## Light Verb Constructions

Light verb constructions are very common. LVCs consist of a verb complement (most often an unmarked noun) followed by a light verb. The verb complement is part of the verb complex, and isn’t separated by adverbs or preverbal focus, for example. Common light verbs include **ka** ‘to do,’ **kal** ‘to give,’ **al** ‘to take,’ and **menna** ‘to throw.’

Light verb constructions are sorted in the dictionary under their preverbs/verb complements, which are almost always also lexical nouns.

## Derivational Affixes

**sal-**

You can derive verbs for collaborative actions with the prefix **sal-**.

- **laz** ‘to work’ → **sallaz** ‘to collaborate, to work together’
- **tari** ‘to see’ → **sattari** ‘to agree, to see things the same way’

## 2.3 Adjectives

Adjectives are words that can appear as adnominal modifiers without any linking morphology. They can take comparative morphology like **nis** (unless there’s some sort of semantic restriction, which will probably come up, tbd.) They usually encode states and properties. Adjectives commonly end in **-e**.

Most adjectives can be used as adnominal modifiers and as sentence predicates. Some adjectives are only attributive, and can’t be predicates.

## Derivational Affixes

**-e**

**-e** is an all-purpose, ‘of or relating to’ derivational affix. Hi, Allen.

It’s also used with verbs to make participles, which are a common relativization strategy.

**-me**

**-me** derives adjectives meaning that something lacks a particular part or property. It can take other adjectives to form antonyms.

- **dul** ‘to persist’ → **dulme** ‘unstable, fragile’
- **kokko** ‘laughter’ → **kokkome** ‘humorless’
- **mane** ‘careful’ → **manme** ‘careless, haphazard’

## 2.4 Adverbs

Adverbs encode information about the manner, time, and place of the entire event. They can also encode the speaker’s opinion on events.

Many adverbs are formed by reduplication. It’s especially common to reduplicate single-syllable adjectives to form manner adverbs.

- **jo** ‘early’ → **jodjo** ‘soon, early’
- **za** ‘days’ → **zazza** ‘daily’
- **ne** ‘good’ → **nenne** ‘well’

## 2.5 Postpositions

Postpositions are words that take nouns in the genitive case to show relations. They have some properties of nouns, for example they can take deictic prefixes and the genitive case, but they can’t be marked for indefiniteness or number, and phrases they head can’t be objects of verbs.

True postpositions are a closed class, but there are compound postpositions consisting of relational nouns followed by true postpositions, such as **mon le** ‘by, due to, through the work of’ lit. ‘with whose hands.’



## 2.6 Determiners

Determiners are words that modify noun phrases, usually either to quantify them or give deictic information. Numerals pattern as determiners. They take the linker/classifier **-n** when attached to most noun phrases. I wonder if that's the same **-n** as the genitive and topic marker, or if it's just a homophone.

## 2.7 Particles

Particles are a bit of a leftover class. They include words that don't inflect and that mostly carry grammatical meaning.

Particles include...

- **Sentence-final particles:** particles that go after the verb and usually mark some sort of pragmatic information
- **Verb satellites:** adverbial particles that are tightly bound to a verb
- **Conjunctions:** particles that join together words and phrases

# 3 Verbs

## 3.1 Verb Endings

Lahpet verbs have six forms. They don't all code for separable, orthogonal categories, so I'm going to describe them all together.

The base form, usually a bare stem, is the irrealis (IRR) which is used for commands, counterfactual or potential statements, and future tense statements. There are two forms for finite realis verbs: direct (DIR) for events that the speaker has some direct knowledge of, or that the speaker personally attests to the truth of, and indirect (NDR) for events that the speaker doesn't have direct knowledge of. There's a suffix used when something in a clause is focused (FOC) or under negation. There's a nominalizing suffix (NMZ) used for different sorts of nonfinite clauses, and there's a participle-forming suffix, glossed as ADJ since it's formally identical and functionally similar to the general adjective-forming suffix.

Here are paradigms for four example verbs. **Ka** 'to do' is a vowel-final verb. **Dul** 'to stay' is a consonant-final verb which keeps its stem consonant. **Al** 'to take' is a stop-final verb (due to sound changes, there are a lot of verbs that used to end in /d/ now end in /l/ but still pattern as if they ended in a stop). **Kon** 'to pass by' is a nasal-final verb, which shows assimilation.

	<b>ka</b>	<b>dul</b>	<b>al</b>	<b>kon</b>
<b>IRR</b>	ka	dul	al	kon
<b>DIR</b> -ju	kaju	dulju	adju	konju
<b>NDR</b> -le	kare	dulle	alle	konle
<b>FOC</b> -mu	kamu	dulmu	ammu	kommu
<b>NMZ</b> -ba	kaba	dulba	abba	komba
<b>ADJ</b> -e	kane	dure	adde	kone

## Mood

Lahpet has three forms which are specified for mood: irrealis, direct realis, and indirect realis.

The irrealis form is used for future events, commands, and some modals. It doesn't show up in nominalized clauses, because those are underspecified for stuff like this, but it will probably be used in some postverbal complement clause types. These will definitely get used in conditionals, once I find a way to do conditionals that I like.

### (3.1) Danan yurai ari kon.

dan -n yurai ari kon  
*friend* -GEN *brother* *direct* *pass.by.IRR*

“My friend’s brother will come right over.”

### (3.2) Damei al, naxoni abba dil ya!

dame -i al naxon -i al -ba dil ya  
*pear* -NDF *take.IRR* *orange* -NDF *take* -NMZ NEG.IRR DP

“Take a pear, don’t take an orange!”

Right now, plain irrealis can also have a possibility modal reading. So sentence 3.1 could be followed by something like **ho ebba na memmimu** ‘*but I don’t know if he will,*’ and understood along the lines of “My friend’s brother might come right over, but I don’t know if he will.”

I’m planning for some sorts of modality to take realis marking too. One thought I had is to have an auxiliary verb that lexicalizes modal base, and then have possibility modals take irrealis and necessity modals take either direct or indirect realis marking. Maybe which one they take could be lexically conditioned, or maybe the necessity ones could make some distinction that the possibility ones don’t. Maybe this doesn’t make sense and has no real-world correlates though. I haven’t thought this out yet.

Realis verbs are for past or present things, which you definitely think happened. If you know they happened from direct evidence, you use the direct realis ending **-ju**. If you only know from indirect evidence or hearsay, you use the indirect ending **-le**.

What constitutes ‘direct evidence’ is a bit fuzzy. If you directly witnessed an event happening or a state holding, then it’s fair game to use **-ju**. If you saw the aftermath and it’s very clear what happened, then you can probably also

use **-ju**. If you see something and it takes a bit of reasoning to work out your conclusion, that inference is starting to push you into **-le** territory. If somebody told you something, that's gonna be a **-le**.

When you're talking about other peoples' feelings and attitudes, you generally have to use **-le**. If you observed someone seeming afraid, you can say **evvemo xalle** 'they are.NDR afraid' or you can say **evvemo xabba tiraju** 'they seem.DIR afraid,' but you can't say \***evvemo xajju** 'they are.DIR afraid.'

### Nominalization

The suffix **-ba**, glossed as NMZ for 'nominalizer,' is used for a number of subordinate clause constructions. Nominalized clauses are unspecified for mood (unlike subordinate clauses with the complementizer **xe**).

#### (3.3) Yoko Hiroxi an beigel womba xeya palle.

Yoko Hiroxi a -n beigel won-ba xeya pal -le  
 NAME NAME PROX-CL *bagel eat* -NMZ *suggestion show*-NDR

"Yoko suggested to Hiroshi to eat my bagel." (5MOYD #1432)

Subordinate clauses that are objects of postpositions take the nominalized form. These are common with adverbial clauses, such as the one below with **sin am** 'at the time of.'

#### (3.4) Peppa ebban sin am, logi abe nutxaju.

peppa ebba -n si -n am logi abe nutxa-ju  
 child AUX.NMZ-GEN *time*-GEN *while coffee freely drink*-DIR

"When I was a kid, I was allowed to drink coffee."

*lit.* "During the time of being a child, I freely drank coffee."

(5MOYD #1433)

The nominalized form is also used to form polar questions.

#### (3.5) En goi umpaxaba na, Karo?

en goi um -paxa -ba na Karo  
 DIST *book read*-finish-NMZ DP NAME

"Did he end up finishing that book, Karo?"

## 3.2 Irregular Verbs

### The Supporting Verb

Lahpet has a null copula for positive declarative sentences, but sometimes you really wanna have a verb to carry other morphology. For cases like this, you can use the supporting verb. It's a defective verb, with only focused, nominalized, and participle forms. The focused form is **emmu** and is used when you move focused constituents to the preverbal position in sentences that otherwise lack verbs, and wouldn't really have a preverbal position at all.

(3.6) **En gazaran, tin pallo emmu.**

e -n gazal -n ti -n pallo emmu  
 DIST -CL *compound* -GEN *eight* -CL *carbon* AUX.FOC

“This compound has *eight* carbons!”

The participle is **ne** and can be used to make relative clauses from verbless clauses.

(3.7) **Olle yatxi ne goiha sax kal.**

o-le yatxi ne goi -ha sax kal  
 MED- *with* *need* AUX.ADJ *book* -PL *loan* *give*

“I'll lend you the books you need.”

(STEST 192)

The nominalized form is **ebba**.

(3.8) **Peppa ebban sin am, logi abe nutxaju.**

peppa ebba -n si -n am logi abe nutxa-ju  
*child* AUX.NMZ -GEN *time* -GEN *while* *coffee* *freely* *drink* -DIR

“When I was a kid, I was allowed to drink coffee.”

*lit.* “During the time of being a child, I freely drank coffee.”

(5MOYD #1433)

### 3.3 Verb Serialization

Lahpet allows for several types of verb compounding. I'm thinking about them in terms of verb serialization (this sort of compounding is described in that way for Alambak and Lakhota at least).

Symmetrical SVCs take both verbs from open classes of verbs and are often resultatives, compound event SVCs, or coordinate compound SVCs. Asymmetrical SVCs take one verb from an open class and another from a closed class, and tend to convey grammatical information.

#### Symmetrical SVCs

There's going to be symmetrical SVCs but I didn't make any for the torch or any of the 5MOYDS so none yet!

#### Asymmetrical SVCs

##### Aspectual SVCs

Some minor verbs convey aspectual meaning. Two common verbs used to make durative or habitual aspect are **xura** 'to drag' and **dul** 'to stay.' The main difference between them is that **xura** tends to have a negative connotation whereas **dul** is neutral or positive.

(3.9) **Manme sai poi xenxurare.**

manme sai poi xen -xura -le  
*careless all.over poi spin -drag -NDR*

“He keeps carelessly spinning poi (and I've seen things broken).”

(3.10) **Xaroha jodjo mekkondulmu.**

xaro -ha jodjo me-kon -dul -mu  
*train -PL early NEG -pass.by -stay -FOC*

“The trains don't usually arrive early.”

## 4 Nouns

### 4.1 Number

There's a plural marker **-ha**, which becomes **-hon** with the genitive ending and loses its **h** after some consonants.

(4.1) **Xaroha jodjo mekkondulmu.**

xaro -ha jodjo me -kon -dul -mu  
*train -PL early NEG - pass.by - stay -FOC*

“The trains don't usually arrive early.”

(4.2) **Adjo damehon oman le dimmu.**

adjo dame -ha -n om -n le dimmu  
*cheese pear -PL -GEN side -GEN with NEG.FOC*

“The cheese isn't next to the pears.”

When a noun is quantified by a number, it doesn't take plural marking.

(4.3) **En gazaran, tin pallo emmu.**

e -n gazal -n ti -n pallo emmu  
*DIST -CL compound -GEN eight -CL carbon AUX.FOC*

“This compound has *eight* carbons!”

There are some pluralia tantum, but I can never remember the correct singular and plural forms of that word so I'll note those with (*pl. tant.*) in the dictionary. These are words that always appear in the plural form, even when referring to something singular. They'll still lose the plural marker when indefinite, since those markers don't coexist. The only times you'll see plural marking on light verb complements is if the complement is derived from a pluralia tantum.

## 4.2 Case

There are two cases: an unmarked core case used for arguments of the verb, and a marked oblique case used for most other things. The oblique case started out marking possessors and objects of postpositions, which are pretty nouny themselves, so I started glossing it as GEN for genitive. In this document I'll call the core case 'nominative' and the oblique case 'genitive.'

The genitive case is marked with a suffix **-n**. If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with a stop, the stop is assimilated and the genitive takes the allomorph **-nna**. Otherwise, if the last syllable ends in a consonant, it takes the allomorph **-an**.

### (4.4) Xaro komban na, do gallan hano.

xaro kon -ba -n na do galla -n hano  
*train pass.by -NMZ -GEN from road usage -GEN away*

"The road is closed since the train's about to come by." (5MOYD #1425)

### (4.5) Danan yurai ari kon.

dan -n yurai ari kon  
*friend -GEN brother direct pass.by.IRR*

"My friend's brother will come right over."

Hanging topics are also marked with the genitive case. Even postpositions will sometimes take the genitive case when they head a hanging topic.

### (4.6) New York'an, malsara tona valxuraju.

New York -n malsara tona val -xura -ju  
 PLACE -GEN *house.price heavy cost -drag -DIR*

"In New York, real estate prices are so expensive."

## 4.3 Definiteness

Indefinite nouns, who either don't have clear referents, or whose referents haven't been established in discourse, tend to take the suffix **-i**.



(4.7) **Damei loraju, loju, evvemo xalle.**

dame -i lo -ra -ju lo -ju e -vemmo xal -le  
*pear* -NDF *take-try*-DIR *take*-DIR DIST-*stomach* *rise*-NDR  
 “He tried to take a pear, took one, and was afraid.” (5MOYD #1426)

Referential indefinites, especially ones that the speaker is introducing to discourse and expects to keep referring back to, are often introduced with a demonstrative and the indefinite suffix.

(4.8) **Genju en yujai, an goiha loraxuraju.**

gen -ju e -n yuja -i a -n goi -ha lo -ra -xura  
*enter*-DIR DIST-CL *man*-NDF PROX-CL *book*-PL *take-try-drag*  
 -ju  
 -DIR

“A man came in, and he kept trying to take my books.”

Indefinite pronouns and question words used as indefinite pronouns always take the suffix **-i**.

When question words (that are being used as *bona fide* question words) or noun heads of questioned phrases take the suffix **-i**, that implies that the question doesn't have a singular answer. This construction is used with 'name some' type questions rather than 'name all' type questions.

(4.9) **Xinin mare kommu na?**

xin -i -n mare kon -mu na  
*who*-NDF-GEN *at.home* *pass.by*-FOC DP  
 “Who did you visit at home?”

(4.10) **Ommo xane vai wommu na?**

o -mo xane va -i wom -mu na  
 MED-*mouth* *what* *food*-NDF *eat* -FOC DP  
 “What kinds of foods are you eating?”



cases, both people might use the same word for themselves and for the person they're talking to! In cases where the relationship is asymmetrical, you don't have that confusion. If you're buying from a vendor at a market, you might call them **parami** 'seller' and yourself **tomami** 'customer.' They'll return the favor by calling themselves **barami** and you **tomami**.

In addition to words taken from open classes, there are some words that are only used as pronouns, such as **kenokenno** 'each other' or **xin** 'who.' These tend to have specific grammatical functions.

(4.12) **Kenokennon kon ari konle.**

kenokenno -n    kon    ari    kon -le  
*each.other* -GEN    *past*    *directly*    *pass* -NDR

"They went right past each other."

(5MOYD #1427)

## 5 Closed Word Classes

### 5.1 Postpositions

Lahpet has a medium-sized closed class of postpositions, which come after nouns to mark oblique roles, especially locative and relational ones. Postpositions are fairly nouny: they can get marked with the genitive case when topicalized and they can take deictic prefixes. Some of them are very transparently related to nouns, such as **mare** ‘*at someone’s house, chez*’ which is from **mal** ‘*house, home.*’ I think they really are postpositions though, and not relational nouns, because they can’t take definiteness or plural marking and they can’t occur heading phrases that are arguments of verbs.

Postpositions come after their noun phrase complements, which are marked in the genitive case.

- (5.1) a. **nen zin le**  
ne -n    zi -n    le  
*two-CL   day-GEN   with*  
“in two days”
- b. **saklan laban en**  
sak-lan    laba-n    en  
*glass-clear   sky-GEN   on*  
“in the clear blue sky”

In addition to basic prepositions, there are compound postpositions, consisting of a positional noun plus a postposition, or rarely of two postpositions.

**am**

**Am** is used to mark periods of time during which something happens or happened, for example **min illan am egi** ‘*there for three years.*’

It can also take subordinate clauses to make ‘when’ or ‘while’ clauses. Some speakers will also use **sin am** ‘*during the time of*’ for this.

(5.2) **Peppa ebban sin am, logi abe nutxaju.**

peppa ebba -n si -n am logi abe nutxa-ju  
*child AUX.NMZ -GEN time -GEN while coffee freely drink -DIR*

“When I was a kid, I was allowed to drink coffee.”

*lit.* “During the time of being a child, I freely drank coffee.”

(5MOYD #1433)

**do**

**Do** marks goals, intended recipients or benefactors, locations of movement towards (but not to), goal clauses (in order to).

(5.3) **Yaron do binui kaju.**

yaro -n do binu -i ka-ju  
*friend -GEN for pancake -NDF do -DIR*

“I made pancakes for [my] friend.”

(5.4) **Ovvemo kokko kabban do kaju.**

o-vemmo kokko kal -ba -n do ka-ju  
*MED -stomach laughter give -NMZ -GEN for do -DIR*

“I did it so that you’d laugh.”

**en**

**En** is a locative preposition for position on a surface. Things in the sky are **laban en**. It’s also used for locations in images, on screens, or in projections.

**kon**

**Kon** marks things being moved past or by. It's also used for stations on fixed routes.

(5.5) **A Xaro okkon nen hagon le kon.**

A xaro o-kon ne -n hago -n le kon  
 A train MED-past two-CL minute-GEN with pass

“The A Train will arrive in two minutes.”

**le**

**Le**'s main use is as an instrumental marker. It also marks time until something happens, such as **nen zin le kon** ‘*I'm coming in two days.*’

**non**

**Non** mostly marks general locations. It's used with geographical place names when considering them as an area.

It's also used for materials, for example **goman non kemai** ‘*a wooden table*’

**mare**

**Mare** is so far basically a calque of French *chez* (or rather, the case marker **še=** from my conlang Fgãse). It mostly marks location at a person's home, so **Ana'n mare** would mean ‘*at Ana's house.*’ Especially with professions, it can also more generally mean ‘at the place associated with,’ for example **isan mare** can mean ‘*at the doctor's house*’ or ‘*at the doctor's office.*’

**se**

**Se** marks the recipient or goal of a completed action. It's a general allative that contrasts with **do** in that it entails that something reached its endpoint, whereas **do** only entails motion towards the endpoint.

It's also used with geographical placenames considered as wholes.

**tiya**

To express that some quality is too much for someone or something, you can use the postposition **tiya**. The complement of **tiya** can be a person who judges something to be too much, a context in which something is too much, or an action which conflicted with something.

(5.6) **yuppan tiye son**

yuppa -n      tiye          son  
*boy -GEN too.much crowded*  
 “too crowded for the boy”

(5.7) **xaro vimban tiye gax**

xaro    vin -ba -n      tiye          gax  
*train meet -NMZ -GEN too.much late*  
 “too late to catch the train”

When there’s no clear reference point for what’s too much, you can use deictic prefixes like **ottiye** ‘*too much [for this].*’

(5.8) **Ottiya jodjo konju ba!**

o-tiya          jodjo    kon      -ju    ba  
 PROX- *too.much early come.by -DIR DP*  
 “You’ve arrived too early!”

(STEST 36)

It can also be used for relative position, for example **maran tiya kossa nu** ‘*go north of the house.*’

**5.2 Determiners****Demonstratives**

Lahpet has a three-way deictic distinction: proximal (PROX) designates things that are close to the speaker, medial (MED) things that are close to the listener, and distal (DIST) things that are far from both. When something is close to both the speaker and the listener, it’s common to use the proximal form, unless

it's specifically relevant for it to be close to the listener. It's somewhat common for these to be used to indicate possession or association, with proximal marking first-person possession, medial second-person possession, and distal third-person possession.

Generally, proximal forms start with **a-**, medial forms start with **o-**, and distal forms start with **e-**.

When used with nouns, the demonstrative determiners are **an**, **on**, and **en**. For example, **en goiha** 'those books' and **an ho** 'this cup, my cup.'

Some words, including body part and kinship term nouns, but also postpositions, can take the deictic markers as prefixes. These can have regular deictic demonstrative meanings, but they're more likely than other words to have pronominal reference, for example from **yurai** 'little brother' you get **ojjurai** 'that little brother, your little brother, first-person singular (to someone close but older).'

## Numerals

Lahpet probably has a base ten numeral system but so far I've only made the numbers that came up in the examples I wanted to translate. When they're used to quantify nouns, numbers take an ending **-n** (which I've been glossing as **cl** for classifier, but might stop glossing). You'd count as **sa**, **ne**, **mi** 'one, two, three,' but enumerate things as **san zi** 'one day' or **min mena** 'three tricks.' Nouns counted with numbers don't take the plural suffix.

## 5.3 Conjunctions

### Coordination

The particle **u** is used to coordinate noun and adjective phrases. Usually it's just used between each pair, such as **mare u hano** 'home and away'. It can be repeated before each coordinand to emphasize inclusion (like "both A and B" or "all of A, B, and C"), such as **u dameha u naxonha** 'both pears and oranges.'



## 5.4 Sentence-final Particles

### Ba

The particle **ba** is used to stress a current state that holds after a state change.

It always scopes above negation, so that negating **agi ba** ‘*he’s here now*’ to give you **agi dimmu ba** ‘*he’s not here now*’ always means ‘*he is no longer here*’ and never ‘*he did not just get here.*’

### Ya

The particle **ya** is used with commands and requests.

#### (5.9) Damei al, naxoni abba dil ya!

dame -i    al            naxon -i    al    -ba    dil            ya  
*pear* -NDF   *take*.IRR   *orange* -NDF   *take* -NMZ   NEG.IRR   DP

“Take a pear, don’t take an orange!”

#### (5.10) Man kal ya!

man    kal    ya  
*care*   *give*   DP

“Be careful!”

(STEST 108)

To request that someone give you something or tell you something, you can use the name of the thing followed by **ya**.

#### (5.11) On hiba ya.

o    -n    hiba    ya  
 MED -CL   *name*   DP

“[Tell me] your name, please.”

### Na

The particle **na** is used with questions. It can come right after the nominalized form of a verb for polar/yes-no questions or after a content question.

(5.12) **En goi umpaxaba na, Karo?**

en goi um -paxa -ba na Karo  
 DIST *book* *read-finish*-NMZ DP NAME

“Did he end up finishing that book, Karo?”

(5.13) **Xinin mare kommu na?**

xin -i -n mare kon -mu na  
*who*-NDF-GEN *at.home* *pass.by*-FOC DP

“Who did you visit at home?”

## 6 Clause Structure

### 6.1 Basic Clause Structure

Lahpet is fairly head-final. Most modifiers precede their heads. The default clause order is SOV (although there's enough topicalization, focusing, and argument omission that SOV clauses are probably fairly rare).

(6.1) **Kenta adjoi wonle.**

kenta adjo -i wom -le  
*mouse cheese -NDF eat -NDR*

“The mouse ate some cheese.”

Obliques come before the verb, usually somewhere between the subject and the object, unless they're focused or topicalized.

Noun phrases are head-final, and generally have determiner-modifier-noun order. If there are multiple types of modifiers, you'll get prepositional phrases first, then possessors, then adjectives.

### 6.2 Negation

Lahpet has several different methods of negation. When a clause has a verb, you can negate it with the prefix **me-**, which attracts stress and geminates the following consonant. If the verb starts with a vowel, you get the allomorph **medd-**. Verbs negated with **me-** always take the focus ending **-mu**.

- (6.2) a. **Mare ari nure.**  
 mare ari nu-le  
*home right.away go* -NDR  
 “He went straight home.”  
 Or: “He is going straight home.”
- b. **Mare ari nu.**  
 mare ari nu  
*home right.away go*.IRR  
 “He will go straight home.”  
 Or: “He could go straight home.”
- c. **Mare ari mennumu.**  
 mare ari me-nu-mu  
*home right.away NEG-go* -FOC  
 “He didn’t go straight home.”  
 Or: “He isn’t going straight home.”  
 Or: “He won’t go straight home.”  
 Or: “He couldn’t go straight home.”

Negation of specific parts of a sentence can be done by moving them to the focus position or with clefts.

- (6.3) You mentioned you only had one meal today. Your friend assumed you had breakfast and asks you “What was for breakfast?” In reality you only ate lunch.
- a. **Anzi iraiva memmomu.**  
 anzi iraiva me-wom-mu  
*today breakfast NEG-eat* -FOC  
 “I didn’t eat *breakfast* today.”
- b. **Iraiva dimmu, xa anzi wommu.**  
 iraiva dimmu xa anzi wom-mu  
*breakfast NEG.FOC what today eat* -FOC  
 “It’s not *breakfast* that I ate today.”

When a clause doesn’t have a verb, it can be negated with the negative auxiliary verb **dil**, which always takes the focused form **dimmu** in declarative sentences.

(6.4) **Adjo damehon oman le dimmu.**

adjo dame -ha -n om -n le dimmu  
*cheese pear -PL -GEN side -GEN with NEG.FOC*

“The cheese isn’t next to the pears.”

Prohibitives, commands expressing you don’t want someone to do something, are expressed with the nominalized form of a verb plus **dil**.

(6.5) **Damei al, naxoni abba dil ya!**

dame -i al naxon -i al -ba dil ya  
*pear -NDF take.IRR orange -NDF take -NMZ NEG.IRR DP*

“Take a pear, don’t take an orange!”

Nominalized verbs plus **dil** can also be used for high-scoping negation, especially when plain sentential negation is ambiguous.

(6.6) a. **Egi hem nen messowamu.**

egi hem nen me -sowa -mu  
*there every person NEG -dance -FOC*

“Everyone there wasn’t dancing.”

Or: “Not everyone there was dancing.”

b. **Egi hem nen sowaba dimmu.**

egi hem nen sowa -ba dimmu  
*there every person dance -NMZ NEG.FOC*

“Not everyone there was dancing.”

Not: “Everyone there wasn’t dancing.”

### 6.3 Information Structure

Topics can be fronted and marked with the genitive case. This includes contrastive topics, aboutness topics, and frames, non-topic phrases that set a context for interpretation of a sentence. There’s always a prosodic break after the topic. Sentences can have both a topic and a frame, in which case both are marked with genitive and both have prosodic breaks after them.

(6.7) **Mivan xilli kaju.**

miva -n xilli ka -ju  
*dinner* -GEN *chili* *make* -DIR

“For dinner, I cooked chili.”

(6.8) **New York’an, malsaran, tona valxuraju.**

New York -n malsara -n tona val -xura -ju  
 PLACE -GEN *house.price* -GEN *heavy* *cost* -drag -DIR

“In New York, real estate prices are so expensive.”

Topics persist and are usually dropped after their first mention unless the speaker wants to disambiguate them from something else, bring them back to the forefront, or contrast them. Topics that are easily recovered from discourse are usually dropped, but they can be tacked on to the end of the sentence, even after sentence-final particles.

(6.9) **En goi umpaxaba na, Karo?**

en goi um -paxa -ba na Karo  
 DIST *book* *read* -finish -NMZ DP NAME

“Did he end up finishing that book, Karo?”

Focused constituents move to a stressed focus position immediately before the verb. The focus position is before any light verb complements or verb satellite particles. The main verb of a focused clause always takes the **-mu** suffix. If you focus something that’s part of a noun phrase, the whole noun phrase moves with it.

(6.10) **Allen’an goi ari ummu, Paul’an dimmu.**

Allen -n goi ari un -mu Paul -n dimmu  
 NAME -GEN *book* *directly* *read* -FOC NAME -GEN NEG.FOC

“I read *Allen’s* book through, but not *Paul’s*.”

For all of verb focus, verum focus, and predicate focus, the verb takes **-mu**. If there’s a preverb, then it takes focus prosody, otherwise the verb itself takes focus prosody. For verb focus and predicate focus, preverbs can move into the focus position

## 6.4 Questions

Polar questions are made with the nominalized form of the verb plus the question particle **na**.

(6.11) **Ojjurai nenne sowamiba na?**

o-yurai nenne sowa -mi -ba na  
 MED- *brother* *well* *dance-know*-NMZ DP

“Does your brother know how to dance well?” (STEST 53)

Lahpet is wh-in situ, but question words (and answers to wh-questions) are usually in the preverbal focus position. Content questions tend to take the question particle **na** too.

(6.12) **Xinin mare kommu na?**

xin -i -n mare kon -mu na  
*who*-NDF-GEN *at.home* *pass.by*-FOC DP

“Who did you visit at home?”

(6.13) **Ommaz xane vai wommu na?**

o-maz xane va -i wom -mu na  
 MED- *mouth* *what* *food*-NDF *eat* -FOC DP

“What kinds of foods are you eating?”

# A Wordlist

## A

**abazi** *n.* monkey

**abe** *prt.* verb satellite for freely taken, unrestricted actions

**adjo** *n.* cheese

**al, abba** *v.* to take, to pick up; to get, to receive (*commonly used light verb*)

**am** *postp.* during, while, for a time; along, for the length of a path

**ari** *prt.* verb satellite indicating direct motion

## B

**ba** *sfp.* particle emphasizing that a new state currently holds, emphasizing the result of a state change

**baz, bazzi** *n.* seeds, spores

**baz kal** *v.* to plant seeds; to inoculate; to lay groundwork for a project

**binu** *n.* pancakes, crepes, blini, jianbing, tortillas, any kind of unleavened flat-bread

## D

**da** *n.* leg, legs; motion, ambulatory

**-daha** *pron.* personal pronoun used with verbs of motion and position

**daye, daiba** *v.* to grow, to increase; to multiply

**daimi** *n.* bacterial colony

**bazdaimi** *n.* starter culture, inoculation culture



**dame** *n.* pear (fruit)

**dim** *n.* head; mind, thoughts

-**dim** *pron.* personal pronoun for attitude verbs

**do** *postp.* to, for; marks goals; marks intended recipients or benefactors; in order to (with a nominalized clause)

**dul, dulba** *v.* to stay, to persist, to be stable, *in SVCs:* stative or durative, sometimes with a positive connotation

**dure** *adj.* stable, persistent

**dulme** *adj.* unstable, fragile

## E

**egan** *adj.* dull, blunt, not sharp; worn down, eroded; aged or aging

**en** *postp.* on, in, at; on a surface; in an image; on something far away, in the sky, projected on something

**em** *n.* friend, acquaintance, someone you know

**emme** *adj.* friendly, sociable

## G

**gav, gabba** *n.* to fill, to fill up

**vemmo gav jal gav** *idiom.* to take care of, to raise, to care for (often but not always of a parent and child)

**gax** *adj.* late; late in the day, after hours

**gagatxa** *adv.* late

**gaz, gazza** *v.* to assemble, to put together; to synthesize

**gazal** *n.* assembly; compound, chemical compound

**goi** *n.* book, text; expertise

**gom** *n.* wood; grain of a material (including meat)

**gos, gozba** *v.* to follow; to take after; to correlate with something, to be proportional with, **testana sontanan la gosle** ‘color correlates with concentration’

**H**

**ha** *num.* 1, number one

**hago** *n.* a minute, sixty seconds

**hi, hiba** *v.* to name someone something, to call someone something (with **le**)

**hiba** *n.* name, designation, tag, label

**hiba wa** *v.* to change names, to rename

**hika** *n.* cake

**ho** *n.* cup, mug

**ho** *prt.* but, conjunction showing contrast

**I**

**illa** *n.* year; age

**irai** *n.* sun; star (astronomical sense, not night-sky)

**iraiva** *n.* breakfast

**iraivo** *n.* solar radiation, sunlight

**iraye** *adj.* sunny, bright, clear (of weather); solar

**isa** *n.* doctor, medical doctor

**ise** *adj.* medical, of or relating to medicine

**ivo** *n.* light, radiation

**ix, ibba** *v.* to want something, *in SVCs:* to want to do something

**J**

**jal** *n.* heart

**-jal** *prn.* personal pronoun for attitude verbs and some feelings

**jo** *adj.* early, towards the beginning

**jodjo** *adv.* early, soon

**K**

**ka, kaba** *v.* to make, to do (*common light verb*)

**kal, kabba** *v.* to give, to provide; to put out, to make known, to publish (*common light verb*)

**kema** *n.* table; platform, stage; counter, countertop, lab bench

**kin, kimba** *v.* to cut, to slice; to section, to divide, to pare down

**kine** *adj.* sharp, honed; good, practiced (of a skill)

**kokko** *n.* laughter, mirth, laughing

**kokko kal** *v.* to laugh

**kon, komba** *v.* to pass by, to go past; to visit

**kon** *postp.* past, passing by

**L**

**laba** *n.* sky, especially clear daytime sky

**lal, lalba** *v.* to be dry, to dry out; to evaporate

**lare** *adj.* dry (of weather or climate), low-humidity

**laz, lazba** *v.* to work, to work on something (with **do**)

**laz ka** *v.* to work, to do work, to get work done

**le** *postp.* with, marking instruments; in (an amount of time) **nen zin le kon** 'I'm coming in two days.'

**lon** *n.* slab; pat (of butter); steak, (pork or lamb) chop; gel sample

**M**

**mal** *n.* house, apartment; home

**man** *n.* care, attention, esp. to detail

**man kal** *v.* to pay attention (to), to heed, to be careful (of)

**mane** *adj.* careful, attentive, cautious (of a person)

**maxka** *n.* bag for daily use, purse, backpack, messenger bag; information in easy recall

**maxkan na mi** *v.* to know by heart, to have memorized, **en orana maxkan na miju** 'I know that song by heart'

**maz** *n.* mouth; voice, opinion, speech; noise, sound, alarm

- maz** *pron.* personal pronoun for speech, attitude verbs
- mena** *n.* trick, maneuver, technique; performance trick
- menani** *n.* performance prop, ‘thing to do tricks with’
- mi** *v.* to know, to know how to do something, *in SVCs*: possibility modal
- mi** *n.* evening, time after school/work
- miva** *n.* dinner, evening meal
- mi** *num.* 3, three
- mira** *n.* triplet, triad, trio, troika, threesome
- mo** *n.* hand, hands (*used in the singular to refer to both of a person’s hands*); control, domain of influence; skill, skillset
- mo** *pron.* personal pronoun with emphasis on agency, skill, creation, manipulation
- mora** *n.* skills, skillset
- more** *adj.* skillful

## N

- na** *sfp.* particle indicating questions
- natxa, natxaba** *v.* to drink tea, to have a cup of tea
- ne** *adj.* good, correct, high-quality
- nenne** *adv.* well, skillfully, correctly
- nille** *adj.* better (suppletive form of **nis ne**)
- ne** *num.* 2, number two
- nera** *n.* pair, doublet, duet, duo; echo
- nego** *n.* second, 1/60 of a minute
- nella** *n.* music, instrumental music
- nella ka** *v.* to make music, to play music; to play an instrument (*with le*)
- nen** *n.* a person, especially when considered as part of a group
- nis** *prt.* more, forms comparatives, **nis** ‘’ (*not used directly with nouns*)
- non** *postp.* in, in a general location; made from a material
- nu, nuba** *v.* to go

## O

- om** *n.* side, edge; shoulder (of a spectrum)  
**oman le** *postp.* next to, to the side of, beside  
**orana** *n.* song, sung music  
**orana kal** *v.* to sing  
**ovo** *n.* form, shape  
**ovo kal** *v.* to give rise to, to give form to, to create

## P

- pal, pabba** *v.* to show, to present; to give (of a talk, presentation, or party); to state, to say (of a law); to produce media  
**pallo** *n.* carbon; coal  
**pallone** *adj.* organic (of chemistry or chemicals)  
**pare kal** *v.* to sell  
**parami** *n.* vendor, seller, salesman  
**sai pare kal** *v.* to get rid of, to dispose of; to sell off  
**pax, paxaba** *v.* to finish, to end, to complete, **xilli kalba pajju** ‘I finished cooking the chili,’ in SVCs: to end up doing, **En goi umpaxaba na?** ‘Did he end up reading that book?’  
**paxal, paxalli** *n.* end, ending, last part  
**paxalle** *adv.* finally, at last, in the end  
**peppa** *n.* kid, child  
**peppe** *adj.* young, childish; undeveloped (of an idea)  
**poraha** *n.* injury, injuries, hurt (*pl. tant.*)  
**poraha kal** *v.* to injure, to hurt, to harm

## S

- sa** *det.* many, a lot  
**nis sa** *prt.* more, more of (*used with nouns*), **nis sa goiha** ‘more books’  
**sai** *prt.* verb satellite indicating imprecise, incomplete, careless, or cursory activities  
**sal-** *aff.* affix deriving nouns for people who share something or do an action

together, **sallaz** ‘coworker,’ **sarun** ‘classmate,’ **salhiba** ‘tocayo, namesake.’; affix deriving verbs for collaborative actions

**sara** *n.* price, cost; rate (quantity per time)

**sax** *n.* loan, borrowing, something given with the expectation of having it returned

**sax kal** *v.* to loan someone something, to lend someone something

**sax al** *v.* to borrow something from someone

**se** *postp.* to, towards; marks direction of motion; marks recipient (of completed actions)

**son** *n.* density, concentration; crowdedness, quality of being packed together

**some** *adj.* dense, concentrated; crowded, packed together; dense and vibrant (of an urban area)

**sowa, sowaba** *v.* to dance; to move (of things in the breeze); to move (of particles under Brownian motion), to vibrate

## T

**tana** *n.* color, hue, shade; concentration (of a chemical)

**testana** *n.* color, visible color

**sontana** *n.* concentration

**tari, tariba** *v.* to see; to seem to be true

**tes, tessi** *n.* eye, eyes; set of eyes; field of vision

**-tes** *pron.* personal pronoun used with attitude verbs

**ti** *num.* 8, eight

**tira** *n.* octet, octuplet; set of valence electrons, **en pallon tira gavle ba** ‘this carbon’s got a full octet now’

**tiya** *postp.* too much for, too *adj.* for; in a direction relative to **maran tiya kossa** ‘north of the house’

**attiya** *adv.* too much, ‘too much for me,’ used when the speaker judges something is too much in general

**toma, tomaba** *v.* to buy, to purchase

**tomami** *n.* buyer, purchaser, customer

**tona** *adj.* heavy; expensive, high (of prices); grave, important; cumbersome, hard to maneuver, hard to understand (of ideas)

**tov** *n.* rule, guiding principle; physical law

## U

- u** *prt.* and, repeated for ‘both,’ **u miva u iraiwa** ‘both dinner and breakfast’  
**un, umba** *v.* to read  
**ari un** *v.* to read all the way through, to read all of in one sitting  
**sai un** *v.* to skim, to look over, to leaf through

## V

- val, valba** *v.* to cost, to be expensive  
**vemmo** *n.* stomach, belly; hunger  
**-vemo** *pron.* personal pronoun for desires and attitude verbs to do with instinct  
**vin, vimba** *v.* to find, to happen on; to meet; to hit against, to collide with; to catch transit

## W

- wa, waba** *v.* to change, to swap, to redo  
**wa** *prt.* verb satellite for redoing, changing  
**wom, womba** *v.* to eat, to consume; to take medicine; to use up (in a process), to accept as input

## X

- xa** *prt.* what, which, question word asking for an object; something (*esp. with indefinite suffix*)  
**xe** *prt.* complementizer, introduces complement clauses  
**xekua** *n.* honoree, person to whom something is dedicated  
**xekue** *adj.* dedicated to, in honor of, **Akam’an xekue goi** ‘the book dedicated to Akam’  
**xen, xemba** *v.* to turn around, to go back, to spin around, to flip, to turn (can be repeated motion, but is most commonly used with the sense of changing

direction or turning something to a new orientation)

**xem** *n.* a trip, a session; a rotation or revolution

**keya** *n.* idea; suggestion, proposal; plan

**keya pal** *v.* to suggest, to propose; to inspire

**xia** *n.* woman, female animal

**-xia** *aff.* suffix which creates nouns for periods of time, such as **danxia** ‘waiting time, cooldown’ from **dan** ‘to wait’

**xiarai** *n.* younger sister

**otxarai** *prn.* first-person pronoun to someone close, but older (female speaker), *lit.* ‘your younger sister’

**xin** *prt.* who, question word asking for a person; someone (*esp.* with indefinite suffix)

**xura, xuraba** *v.* to drag, to pull; to schlep, to go a long distance; *in SVCs:* stative or durative aspect with a negative connotation

## Y

**ya** *sfp.* particle softening commands, particle marking requests

**yappox** *n.* king, monarch, nobility

**yappoxe** *adj.* royal, noble; noble (calqued, of gases)

**yaro** *n.* friend, close friend

**yatxi** *n.* need, requirement for, **alle nis so goihon yatxiju** ‘I need more books.’

**yatxe** *adj.* necessary, required

**yaxeyatxe** *adv.* necessarily, crucially; certainly, precisely

**yu** *n.* man, male animal

**yurai** *n.* younger brother

**ojjurai** *prn.* first-person pronoun to someone close, but older (male speaker), *lit.* ‘your younger brother’

## Z

**zi** *n.* day (period of time) (*plural za*)



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