Speedlang Challenge 8

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Started: March 1, 2021
Due: 11:59 EST, March 14, 2021

Phonology

Your language's phonology must:

- Make use of some sort of **quantity distinction**, such as long vs short vowels or geminate consonants. It's okay if the quantity distinction isn't 100% phonemic as long as there's places where it's contrastive.

- **Glides/semivowels may not contrast** by rounding or point of articulation. You can have at most one of /j w ɥ ɰ/. Or other semivowels. Unless it's your only glide, don't pop in with /ɰᵝ/ and tell me it wasn't on my list. They can exist *phonetically*, they just can't contrast. If you've got multiple glides in the surface form, include a justification of why they're not contrastive (or belong to different phonemes which aren't both glides).

- Have some sort of **suprasegmental feature that isn't tone or stress**. A suprasegmental feature exists on a scale in a language that's larger than segments, for example tone or stress are often assigned on a syllable or word scale. You've got to include some feature like nasalization, glottalization, or roundedness, that's assigned *above* the level of segments.

Grammar

Your language's grammar must:

- Include an **open pronoun class**. An open class is a word class that readily accepts new members. A language with an open pronoun class easily allows new words to be used as pronouns. (Another way to look at this is to say there isn't really a distinct pronoun class and your language freely allows nouns to have pronominal reference.)

- Feature **insubordination**, a phenomenon where in certain contexts, morphology that usually marks subordinate clauses appears in independent clauses. click here to download a paper that introduces insubordination and talks about some typology of it if you're interested in some ideas.

- Have **asymmetrical negation**. In asymmetrical negation, the structure of a negated sentence is somehow different from the structure of an affirmative sentence (outside of the negation itself). Chapter 113 of WALS describes what asymmetrical negation is and chapter 114 gives some examples of what different types can look like.

- **Mark indefinite noun phrases** but not definite ones. The marking can be with an affix, particle, determiner, invisible syntactic head that you've gotta move things around to satisfy, whatever you want, as long as it's just on indefinites.

Tasks

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

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.

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).

4. (Optional) Submit your phono to the Segments Phono Challenge! The requirements here were made to be compatible with the inventory in the Segments Phono Challenge and the deadline is the same day.

Coda

Mareck suggested I outsource writing the speedlang prompts to AI. So…I trained an AI on my speedlang prompts. Here's what it gave. Spooky. If you want, you can use these as a prompt too/instead. I'm not entirely sure what they mean though…must be linguistics from a parallel universe.

- Have an "A-like" clause.

- Use infiniteness in declarative sentences. (And this should be self-explanatory).

- Make sentences with the same declarative constructions on different parts of a sentence. It's a way to introduce a new inflection point into your sentence as an added level of "interaction." To be able to do this, you need to have the same constructions that have the same function as the inflection points in your original constructions. That can also be done with a different construction on different parts of a sentence in which case you can introduce more inflection points of different function into your sentence. So you need to create a different construction on the same part of your sentence with the same construction on it without having to change the declarative construction in the sentences.

- Use an inflection to make a declarative sentence