

A Sketch of Speedlang 11

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Introduction

Welcome to speedlang 11, in which Mia tries to make a language to journal in...again. Spoiler: it didn't work.

A week into the speedlang challenge I caught covid and lost both the interest and the energy to keep working on it. I had made the decision to keep some elements from Lahpet, two speedlangs ago, but all that that left me with was a sense that this speedlang wasn't doing anything interesting that I hadn't done already. I didn't really like the aesthetic and I started to find the root size restraint I gave myself sort of clunky. I had more or less already completed the requirements, so I just wrapped things up to submit.

I have diphthongs /ej ow/ which pattern as vowels in the morphophonology, are never separable, and don't count against cluster limits. I also have geminates which only occur in causatives of certain stems and words derived from those causatives.

For the root-template morphology, I have the behavior of verb words, where causatives are fit to a CVCCVC template and middle voice forms have a VCCVC template. For evidentiality I have a direct/indirect split in the auxiliaries, supplemented with some of the sentence-final particles. For the discourse markers, I have some of the other sentence-final particles.

I used stest sentences 15, 76, 31, 102, and 215 (which were randomly chosen by Zephyrus), and 5MOYD sentences 1370, 1555, 1577, 1594 and 1646 (which I cherrypicked to demonstrate things I wanted to talk about).

I didn't do the dialogue or the script.

I did have a couple things I liked. With the verb words, I was trying to make a system that was teetering on the brink of triconsonantal roots, but which was still mostly understandable via individual processes. I think that turned out. I also liked how the auxiliaries turned out, especially the cases where something pragmatic kept you from eliding the direct auxiliary.

I had an idea for a sort of 'indefinite past tense' which introduced a new point in time the way that indefinite nouns introduce a new referent, and which contrasts with a 'definite past tense,' which refers back to some point in time that's known to the listener. Akam shared a very cool paper analyzing this in two natlangs. I did end up including this contrast in the speedlang, but of course if you're interested you should go read about the natlangs instead. Natlangs are universally more interesting than conlangs anyway.

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Abbreviations

1	First person	NDF	Indefinite
2	Second person	NDR	Indirect
3	Third person	NEG	Negative
AGT	Agentive	OBL	Oblique
CAUS	Causative voice	P	Plural
CIRC	Circumstantial	PL	Plural
COP	Copula	PLACE	Place name
DIR	Direct	PLUR	Pluractional
DP	Discourse particle	PROG	Progressive
FUT	Future	PST	Past
IAM	Imitative	Q	Question particle
IRR	Irrealis	RFL	Reflexive
LNK	Linker	S	Singular
MID	Middle voice	STAT	Stative
NAME	Personal name		

1 Phonology

1.1 Inventory and Allophony

Here are the consonants:

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Dorsal	Glottal
Stop	p p: b	t t: d	tʃ tʃ: dʒ	k k: g	
Fricative	f v	s s: z	ʃ ʃ: ʒ	χ ʁ	h
Nasal	m	n			
Lateral		l l: (ɫ)			
Rhotic		r r:		ʀ	
Glide	w		j		ʍ

Table 1.1: Consonant phonemes

There are relatively many consonants towards the back of the mouth. Voiceless stops and voiceless coronal fricatives can be geminated. /t/ usually gets lengthened when it's a result of geminating /l/ in causatives, but I'm not sure whether it's contrastive with the short version. /r/ patterns with the geminates as if it were /r:/.

I want to condense the last three rows somehow, but I don't think I know enough about how the sonorants work to decide what the right way to do that is. I think only /w/ can occur after an onset consonant and before the nucleus, so maybe it should get its own row and /j ʍ/ should be grouped with the others. On the other hand, /w j ʍ/ can become [w i a] when they'd otherwise form an illegal cluster, so they form a natural semivowel class. Maybe it's motivated reasoning, since I want to save space and I don't like the label 'rhotics.'

/ʁ/ can be realized as [ʁ~χ~G] with the stop more common word-initially and in the onset of stressed syllables and the fricative more common in clusters. Some speakers have the fricative intervocalically while other speakers have a stop [G] intervocalically for /ʁ/ and a fricative [ʁ] intervocalically for /R/.

Fricatives in clusters assimilate in voicing to an adjacent stop or nasal. In clusters with two fricatives, the first assimilates in voicing to the second.

Sounds are mostly written with their IPA equivalents with the following exceptions: /tʃ dʒ ʃ ʒ χ ʁ ʎ ɽ ɾ j/ are written ⟨č j š ž x q c ʎ ř y⟩. Geminates are written doubled.

And here are the vowels:

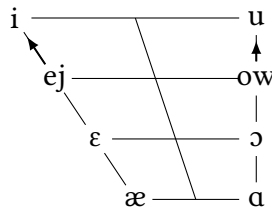


Table 1.2: Vowel Inventory

This is a mostly super symmetrical eight-vowel system consisting of four front-back pairs, each at a different height.

The only funny business is with the diphthongs. The vowel-glide sequences /ej ɔw/ merge with the diphthongs /ej ow/ when they do occur, but it's possible to tell the diphthongs apart from the underlying vowel-glide sequences because they behave differently morphophonologically. Vowel-glide sequences can get split up and when the nucleus of a vowel-glide sequence gets backed or fronted by a morphophonological process, the glide is unchanged. True diphthongs on the other hand are never split up by morphophonological processes and when /ej/ is backed it becomes /ow/ rather than /oj/ and vice versa.

I write the vowels as /i u ɛ ɔ æ ɑ ej ow/ ⟨i u e o a â ê ô⟩.

1.2 Phonotactics

Maximal syllable structure is roughly (C)(w)V(C)(C), although you can't ever get CCC clusters, even across syllable boundaries. If there's an underlying CCC cluster, usually it gets broken up as CCoC. Exceptions are when the second or third consonant is /w j ʎ/ in which case it becomes [u i ɑ] or when a morphophonological process is available to insert a vowel, like the insertion of /i/ in the plural template.

When two identical consonants are adjacent, they coalesce into a single consonant (even if there is a corresponding geminate). For example, the middle voice form of the stem **lelb** 'to roll' is underlyingly ||ɛllb||. The cluster gets broken up with an epenthetic vowel and then the adjacent l's coalesce to give /ɛlɔb/. Interestingly the causative stem ||lel:b|| contains a geminate

l, which undergoes fortition to give /lɛːɔb/. This behavior suggests that geminates are distinct from double consonants.

Consonants lost through cluster simplification are only removed from the surface, not from the underlying form, so they're recoverable from morphophonology. For example, /ʃæpu/ 'to open' is underlyingly ||ʃæpw||, and the /w/ is able to surface when there is a vowel after it as in ||mæ-ʃæpw-i|| /mæʃæpwi/ 'key.' Similarly /ɛjkis/ 'reaction' is underlyingly ||ɛjkiss||, so when it gets fit to the -CiC plural template, the adjacent s's are broken up giving /ɛjkisis/ 'reactions.'

Geminates can't be part of clusters.

The /w/ glide in the onset isn't possible after glottal or alveolar consonants or after other glides.

Several rules restrict word-final clusters:

- Non-alveolar stops can be followed by an alveolar stop, but otherwise stops may only be followed by sibilants.
- Nasals can only come before sibilants or other nasals.
- Glides, laterals, and rhotics can't be the second element of a cluster.
- A cluster can't contain adjacent sibilants. This also bans /tʃ dʒz/.

1.3 Stress

There is stress (this is a personal language after all, and I am often stressed). Stress is mostly but not always predictable (...). Stress is assigned to a root before it is inflected. One-syllable content words are stressed. If a word has more than one syllable and the last syllable starts with a geminate, then the second-to-last syllable is stressed. Otherwise, if the last syllable is closed, it is stressed. If the last syllable is open then the second-to-last syllable is stressed.

This is part of why I think of the mood morphemes as being the roots of the auxiliaries (see section 2.2). Even though they convey inflectional information and are surrounded on both sides by other bits with grammatical rather than lexical meaning, they are always stressed when present, regardless of other affixes. Stress assignment seems to treat **da-**, **la-** and **še-** as if they are one-syllable content words.

2 Verbs and Predication

The verb complex consists of at least one verb word followed by an auxiliary. The verb gives lexical information and argument structure. The auxiliary houses marking for TAM, evidentiality and negation as well as subject agreement. In this chapter, I will talk about the different forms the verb can take, which straddle the line between derivational and inflectional. Then I'll talk about the different parts of the verbal auxiliary. Last I'll talk about serial verb constructions and nonverbal predication.

2.1 Verb Forms

Verb roots can take many different forms, which mark voice, but often with idiomatic meanings that border on derivation rather than inflection. Most verbs are built on a regular CVCC root where the C's can be any consonant and the V can be any front vowel. Table 2.1 shows the forms for two example stems, **cakm**, which derives verbs having to do with learning and **šelt**, which derives verbs having to do with speaking.

	cakm 'learning'		šelt 'saying'	
	cakom	<i>'to learn'</i>	šelt	<i>'to say, to tell'</i>
CAUS	cakkom	<i>'to teach'</i>	šełlot	<i>'to make someone say'</i>
MID	ackom	<i>'to be learned'</i>	ešlot	<i>'to be said, to be communicated'</i>
MID.CAUS	acakkom	<i>'to be taught to'</i>	ešełlot	<i>'to be made to say, to blurt out'</i>
AGT	cakmi	<i>'to study'</i>	šelti	<i>'to explain'</i>
RFL	ackomi	<i>'to teach o.s./e.o.'</i>	ešloti	<i>'to converse'</i>
STAT	câkmu	<i>'to be understood'</i>	šoltu	<i>'to be said, to be widely known'</i>

Table 2.1: Sample verb forms

Not all forms are common for all verbs. Many verbs of motion have a relatively unmarked middle voice form and an agentive form highlighting the autonomy or initiative of the subject,

but don't have a common form. An example is the root **lelb** 'rolling,' which has the middle voice form **elob** 'to roll,' the causative form **leľlob** 'to roll s.t.' and the agentive form **lelbi** 'to move by rolling, to somersault,' but isn't used in its plain form **lelb**.

The verb stem can be used alone as a verb, taking an epenthetic vowel if the last two consonants form an illegal cluster. The plain stem is usually either a transitive verb or an intransitive verb with a more agent-like subject. Here are descriptions of all of the derived forms.

Causatives are formed by fitting the root to a CVCCVC template. When possible this is done by geminating the second consonant of the stem and following it with an epenthetic vowel. For roots whose second consonants don't have a corresponding geminate, there are three ways to fit to the stem: first, a stop can be added after the second consonant, like with **kenž** 'to cook' and **kendož** 'to make s.o. cook.' Second, the last consonant of the stem can be reduplicated, like with **taft** 'to gather' and **taftot** 'to make s.o. gather.' Third, the second consonant can remain undoubled, but with an epenthetic vowel on either side as if it were a geminate, like with **semn** 'to grow' and **semon** 'to make s.t. grow.'

The object of a causative can be the subject or object of the original verb. When it's the object, the former subject can be added with the postposition **kâ** 'from.' When it's the subject, the former object can be added with the postposition **se** 'with.'

(2.1) **Sayekson se cakkom daram câkim.**

sayekso -n se cakkom da -r -m câkim
chemistry-OBL with learn:CAUS DIR-PST-1S student:PL

"I taught the students chemistry."

(2.2) **Bolonez kimin kâ kendož bišel na?**

bolonez kimin kâ kendož bi-še -l na
bolognaise who.OBL from cook:CAUS FUT-IRR-2S Q

"Who are you going to have cook the bolognaise?"

Middle voice verbs can be formed by metathesis of the initial consonant and vowel of the verb. Middle voice verbs are intransitive and can have patient-like subjects like **eknož** 'to cook (of food)' or subjects that act on themselves like **atsom** 'to sit down.'

Agentive verbs are made with the suffix **-i** on the plain stem. These verbs can either be transitive or intransitive with an agent-like subject. They're used when the subject of the verb has particularly high initiative or agency. They often have idiomatic meanings, for example **cakom** 'to learn' becomes **cakmi** 'to study' and **benz** 'to find, to discover' becomes **benzi** 'to look for.'

Reflexive verbs are made with the suffix **-i** on the middle voice form. Reflexives can describe actions where the subject is acting on itself or where different members of a plural subject are acting on each other. They differ from middle voice verbs in that they usually denote actions that

could be performed on someone else but are performed on oneself. Subjects of reflexive verbs are also more agent-like than those of middle voice verbs.

(2.3) **Eqrodi tâž řawam.**

eqrodi -n tâž řaw -m
reset:RFL - OBL need have - 1s

“I need to reset myself.”

(2.4) **Pêjin se Selo ešloti lasâ.**

Pêji -n se Selo ešloti la -s -â
NAME - OBL with NAME talk:RFL NDR - PROG - 3P

“Pêji and Selo are talking to each other.”

Stative verbs can be formed by backing the first vowel of the stem and adding the suffix **-u**. The meaning of a stative verb derived from a particular stem is not entirely predictable, but often refers to the state of having undergone or tending to undergo that verb. Stative verbs can be used as predicates or as adjectives without any additional morphology.

(2.5) **Mâtnu amriw řaw muše ba.**

mâtnu amriw řaw mu-še ba
eat:STAT pickle:PL have NEG - IRR.3S IAM

“She’s out of edible pickles.”

(2.6) **Ôtlok tolok hârzû ida.**

ôtlok tolok hârzû i-da
other.day sun bright NDF - DIR.3S

“The other day, the sun was bright.”

Pluractionality

Non-stative verbs can mark pluractionality by backing their first vowel. Pluractional verbs are used when a verb describes multiple similar actions or an action performed multiple times.

When a verb with a plural object is marked as pluractional, it can mean that the subject performed some action on each of the individual members of the group described by the object or that it performed the action on the group multiple times. When a verb with a plural object isn’t marked as pluractional, it means that the subject performed the action once, collectively, on the

entirety of the object. For example in sentence 2.7a the speaker taught the group of students all in one action, likely in a classroom setting, whereas in sentence 2.7b the speaker describes many instances of teaching, possibly referring to individual tutoring of each of the many students.

(2.7) a. **Sayekson se cakkom daram câkim.**

sayekso -n se cakkom da -r -m câkim
chemistry-OBL with learn:CAUS DIR-PST-1S student:PL

“I taught the students chemistry.”

b. **Sayekson se câkkom daram câkim.**

sayekso -n se câkkom da -r -m câkim
chemistry-OBL with learn:PLUR:CAUS DIR-PST-1S student:PL

“I taught the students chemistry.”

Some verbs such as **čokt** ‘to tap on’ and **šuri** ‘to flicker,’ which always describe repeated events, only occur with a back vowel, even in derivations, as if they are inherently pluractional.

2.2 The Auxiliary

The majority of the inflectional information in the verb complex is expressed in an auxiliary that follows the verb word. The core of the auxiliary is a morpheme that marks mood/evidentiality. The least marked choice is the direct form **da**, which is used when the speaker asserts something that they have firsthand knowledge of, that they believe to be common knowledge, or that they believe is already known to the listener.

(2.8) **Paftan sore hay gerzu košiti somn darâ.**

paft -n sore hay gerzu košit -i somn da -r -â
grain-OBL between tall red flower:PL-NDF grow DIR-PST-3P

“Among the grain grew tall red flowers.”

(stest #76)

When there is no marking other than person agreement, the auxiliary **da** can be dropped and the person marking can be affixed directly onto the verb. However, when there is any other marking, the auxiliary can’t be dropped.

(2.9) **Absot šin eysot ebnoz eš tâsmue.**

absot šin eysot ebnoz -n eš tâsmu -e
house three road find:MID-OBL in sitting -3s

“The house sits at the meeting of the three roads.”

(stest #215)

(2.10) a. ***Exroksal na?**

exrok -s -l na
get.sick -PROG -2s Q

b. **Exrok dasal na?**

exrok da -s -l na
get.sick DIR -PROG -2s Q
 “Are you getting sick?”

There’s a preverbal focus spot right before the verb. In content questions, the question word usually goes there. If the verb word is focused, then the auxiliary can’t be elided, even if it comes immediately after the verb. In sentence a below, **čen daznu** is focused so the full auxiliary must be used, but in sentence b, the auxiliary can be elided.

(2.11) a. **Huroš čen daznu da na?**

huroš če -n daznu da na
river how.much -OBL *wide* DIR.3S Q

“How wide is the river?”

(stest #102)

b. **Hešin metiran daznue ši.**

heši -n metir -n daznu -e ši
eight -OBL *meter.PL* -OBL *wide* -3S DP

“It’s only eight meters wide.”

There are a small number of verbs that can take the tense and aspect suffixes directly, without the auxiliary. They can’t take prefixes, so the auxiliaries are still required for the indefinite past, future, and negative forms. Right now these verbs are the copula, **ali** ‘to go’ and **řaw** ‘to have,’ but I’ll probably find more.

(2.12) a. **Absotam řawram.**

absot -m řaw -r -m
house -1s *have* -PST -1s

b. **Absotam řaw daram.**

absot -m řaw da -r -m
house -1s *have* DIR -PST -1s

“I used to have my own house.”

(2.13) a. ***Sebâsit muiřawam.**

sebâsit mu- i- řaw -m
roommates NEG- NDF- *have* -1S

b. **Sebâsit řaw muišem.**

sebâsit řaw mu- i- še -m
roommates *have* NEG- NDF- IRR -1S

“I have never had roommates before.”

The indirect auxiliary **la** is used to express things that the speaker has indirect knowledge of, such as through inference, assumptions, or hearsay.

(2.14) **Sebâstam hez liknož maton la.**

sebâst -m hez liknož maton la -a
roommate -1S *last* *cookie* *eat* NDR -3S

“My roommate must have eaten the last cookie.”

With hearsay especially, it’s often coupled with the sentence-final particle **mo**.

(2.15) **Asaššot ilâ mo.**

asaššot i- la -â mo
separate:MID NDF- NDR -3P DP

“They broke up (I heard).”

The last auxiliary is the irrealis auxiliary **še**. It’s used with hypothetical and counterfactual statements like you’d expect from a prototypical irrealis.

(2.16) **Sominam âšku išo, lu kištam šo.**

somin -am âšku i- še -o lu kišt -am še -o
parents -1S *alive* NDF- IRR -3P *then* *help* -1S IRR -3S

“If my parents were still alive, they would help me.”

(5MOYD #1594)

Clauses with negation or in the future tense always take the **še**, even when they refer to things the speaker is certain of.

(2.17) **Fawn kê acroz ašpu vê mu-še -e.**

faw -n kê acroz ašpu vê mu-še -e
wind -OBL *from door* *open:MID* CIRC NEG-IRR-3S

“The wind can’t open the door.”

(5MOYD #1577)

(2.18) **Câkimoz lin macakmin se šendod bišoz.**

câkim -oz lin macakmi -n se šendod bi-še -oz
students -1P *two practice* -OBL *with* *carry.out:CAUS* FUT-IRR-1P

“We will have our students do two exercises.”

(5MOYD #1520)

The auxiliary agree with the subject in person and number. Subject agreement comes after the auxiliary and any suffixes. When the verb word is separate from the auxiliary, pronominal direct objects can be suffixed to the verb word. When the direct auxiliary is elided, subject agreement affixes attach directly onto the verb and object marking follows. Subject agreement is really agreement (it’s obligatory and can cross-reference an overt subject) but object marking is not (it competes with having another direct object and is probably just clitic pronouns).

(2.19) a. **Češmel dam.**

češm -l da -m
see -2S DIR-1S

“I see you.”

b. **Češmamal.**

češm -m -l
see -1S-2S

“I see you.”

Past Tense

There are two past tense markers: a suffix **-r** and a prefix **i-**, which both go on the auxiliary. They have slightly different uses.

The suffix **-r**, which I gloss as PST for past tense, is used to refer to events that happened at a specific, known time in the past. That can be a time that’s clear from discourse or it can be a time that’s mentioned in some sort of time expression. The past tense with **-r** isn’t usually used to start a story or in out-of-the-blue contexts (and when it is, listeners will sometimes pause and ask the speaker to repeat when something happened).

(2.20) **Ôtlok lin ixiššoyi darâ.**

ôtlok lin ixiššoyi da -r -â
other.day two like:RFL DIR -PST -3P

“The two of them liked each other on that day.”

(5MOYD #1370)

(2.21) **Šikotan eš kakaše kasp lara.**

ši -kot -n eš kakaše kasp la -r -a
three -o'clock -OBL at finally sleep NDR -PST -3S

“At 3:00, she finally fell asleep.”

The prefix *i-* is used for a past tense for events that occurred at some point in the past that is unspecified. It can be used to start a story or within a story to jump back to an earlier point in time. It’s often used to introduce a point in time, which can be referred back to with the *-r*-past, like in sentence 2.22. It can’t be used with expressions referring to points in time. Because of its similarities with indefinite noun marking, I gloss it as *NDF*.

(2.22) **Ao ez oblob ida, gawji vandot dara makenžin eš.**

ao ez oblob i-da -a gawji vandot da -r -a
water just boil:MID NDF -DIR -3S dumpling enter:CAUS DIR -PST -3S

makenži -n eš
pot -OBL in

“As soon as the water boiled, he put the dumplings in the pot.”

(5MOYD #1555)

(2.23) **#Likotan eš matne idam.**

li-kot -n eš maton -e i-da -m
two -o'clock -OBL in eat -3S NDF -DIR -1S

Intended: “I ate it at 2:00.”

One common use for the indefinite past is to express that someone has done something at some point before the present, similar to the use of the experiential perfect in English.

(2.24) **Londonan eš ali idam.**

London -n eš ali i-da -m
PLACE -OBL in go NDF -DIR -1S

“I’ve been to London before.”

Both markers are optional—it's possible to talk about the past without using explicit past marking. As is common with optional past markers, using them with stative verbs gives the implication that the state described is no longer true.

(2.25) a. **Xišiu dara.**

xišiu da -r -a
happy DIR - PST - 3S

“He was happy (at that time, but not now).”

b. **Xišiu ida.**

xišiu i - da
happy NDF - DIR.3S

“He has been happy (at some point, but not now).”

This is just an implication though, so it's possible to contradict it.

(2.26) **Lulu hâru ida. Êkoše Lulu hâru malole.**

Lulu hâru i - da - a
 NAME *fat* NDF - DIR - 3S

êkoše Lulu hâru malol - e
now NAME *fat* *stay* - 3S

“Lulu was once fat. Now, Lulu is still fat.”

(5MOYD #1646)

2.3 Serialization

Verb complexes can be made with multiple verb words before the auxiliary. One common use for this is with motion predicates, where one verb word will denote the manner of the motion and the other the direction.

(2.27) **Jiwa šaw šendi dara.**

jiwa šaw šendi da -r -a
kitten *go.up* *jump* DIR - PST - 3S

“The kitten jumped up.”

(stest #15)

2.4 Non-Verbal Predicates

Nouns and adpositional phrases can serve as predicates. When there's no TAM marking, mood marking, or negation, they can stand alone.

(2.28) **Jiwa absotan e gerzu eš.**

jiwa absot -n e gerzu eš
cat house -OBL LNK red in

“The cat is in the red house.”

However, when there is marking, the copula is used. The positive direct form of the copula is **e** and the negative form is **mi**. Other forms are the same as the auxiliary.

(2.29) **Maharzeyin se erel na?**

maharzi -i -n se e -r -el na
flashlight -NDF -OBL with COP -PST -2S Q

“Did you have a flashlight?”

(2.30) **Ên tasmam êwow mi yo!**

ên tasmam êwow mi yo
this chair trash COP.NEG DP

“This chair really isn't trash!”

When a noun predicate identifies one noun as having the same referent as another, both nouns are definite. On the other hand, when a noun predicate is used to say that the subject is a member of a category, the predicate noun is marked as indefinite. (This more or less mirrors the distinction between saying someone ‘is the teacher’ and saying someone ‘is a teacher.’)

(2.31) **Dani câkkom ere.**

Dani câkkom e -r -e
NAME teacher COP -PST -3S

“Dani was the teacher.”

(2.32) **Dani câkkomi ere.**

Dani câkkom -i e -r -e
NAME teacher -NDF COP -PST -3S

“Dani was a teacher.”

3 Minor Word Classes

3.1 Postpositions

Non-core roles can be marked with postpositions. There's a relatively small number of postpositions. As far as I know, they all require their complements to be marked with the oblique case. Postpositional phrases can occur as adjuncts in clauses and as modifiers on nouns. They usually come before nouns they modify.

(3.1) **Absot šin eysot ebnoz eš tâsmue.**

absot šin eysot ebnoz -n eš tâsmu -e
house three road find:MID-OBL in sitting-3S

“The house sits at the meeting of the three roads.”

(stest #215)

(3.2) **Makenžin eš amton češm dam.**

makenži -n eš amton češm da -m
pan -OBL in food see DIR-1S

“I see the food in the plate.”

When postpositions occur on noun phrases with postnominal modifiers, they can come after the entire noun phrase or right after the head of the noun phrase.

(3.3) **Jiwa absotan e gerzu eš.**

jiwa absot -n e gerzu eš
cat house-OBL LNK red in

“The cat is in the red house.”

(3.4) **Kasp ilâ ôn kaspaman eš e ažu.**

kasp i-la -â ôn kaspam -n eš e ažu
sleep NDF-NDR-3P that bed -OBL in LNK old

“They must have slept in that old bed.”

3.2 Relationals

Relationals can be used to mark location or position. They share properties of postpositions and nouns. Like postpositions, they can come after noun complements in the oblique case to mark non-core roles. Unlike postpositions but like nouns, relationals can themselves take postpositions. They can also come before their complement and be linked with the linking particle. Unlike nouns, relationals can stand alone as adjuncts in a clause.

I think relationals are going to be a much larger class than postpositions.

(3.5) **Paftan sore hay gerzu košiti somn darâ.**

paft -n sore hay gerzu košit -i somn da -r -â
grain-OBL between tall red flower:PL-NDF grow DIR-PST-3P

“Among the grain grew tall red flowers.”

(stest #76)

(3.6) **Soren kê ye absit somini jašto.**

sore -n kê ye absit somin -i jašt -o
between-OBL from LNK houses children-NDF run-3P

“There are children running out from between the houses.”

3.3 Sentence-final Particles

There are a number of particles which come at the end of the sentence and give grammatical or discourse information. Here are descriptions of those of them that I’ve made so far.

ba

The particle **ba** marks a statement as emphasizing the result of a change of state. I gloss it as IAM for iamitive. In the sentence below, for example, the main contribution is to observe that the ball, which used to be there, is now away from there. It’s usually used without tense marking, and definitely can’t be used with the future tense. It’s sometimes used to express surprise at a state change. With its surprise meaning, it can be used with past tense in narratives.

(3.7) **Somnan lolba lelelb ôn to ba.**

somn -n lolba lelelb ô -n to ba
child -OBL ball rolling there-OBL away IAM

“The baby’s ball has rolled away.”

(stest # 31)

It always scopes above negation, so the sentence below can only refer to a situation where there's been a state change such that Selo is not here, and not to a situation where there has not been a state change such that Selo is here.

(3.8) **Selo ên eš mi ba.**

Selo ên eš mi ba
 NAME *here*.OBL *in* NEG.COP IAM

“Selo isn’t here anymore.”

Not: “Selo is not yet here.”

na

Questions are marked with the particle **na**. Polar questions are always marked with **na** and content questions can optionally be marked with **na**.

(3.9) **Bolonez kimin kâ kendož bišel na?**

bolonez kimin kâ kendož bi- še -l na
bolognaise *who*.OBL *from* *cook*:CAUS FUT-IRR-2S Q

“Who are you going to have cook the bolognaise?”

(3.10) **Maharzeyin se erel na?**

maharzi -i -n se e -r -el na
flashlight -NDF -OBL *with* COP -PST -2S Q

“Did you have a flashlight?”

yo

The particle **yo** is used with statements that the speaker believes go against the listener’s beliefs. It can mark contrast with previous statements and it can be used to insist on something.

(3.11) **Ên tasmam êwow mi yo!**

ên tasmam êwow mi yo
this *chair* *trash* COP.NEG DP

“This chair really isn’t trash!”

It's sometimes used with the imperative, especially when the speaker thinks the listener doesn't want to comply.

(3.12) **Ên eš ali šel yo!**

ên eš ali šel yo
here.OBL in go IRR.2S DP

“Get over here!”

lo

The particle **lo** marks assertions and declarations. It's also used with performative speech acts like promises, apologies, and greetings.

(3.13) **Atassom šol lo!**

atassom šol lo
sit:MID IRR.2P DP

“Welcome!”

(3.14) **Era sašte mišam tošol dasam lo.**

era sašt -e mi-ša -m tošol da -s -m lo
again break -3S NEG-IRR -1S promise DIR-PROG -1S DP

“I promise I won't break it again.”

mo

The particle **mo** marks reported speech. It can be used with the indirect form to report information from someone else's speech or it can be used as a tag on speech given from the perspective of another person. Notice the first-person marker in sentence 3.16 which refers to Pêji rather than the speaker.

(3.15) **Asaššot ilâ mo.**

asaššot i-la -â mo
separate:MID NDF-NDR -3P DP

“They broke up (I heard).”

(3.16) **Pêji ye šeril xiššim mušo mo.**

Pêji ye šeril xišši -m mu-šo mo
 NAME LNK *mushroom.PL* *happy:CAUS - 1S* NEG-IRR.3P DP

“Pêji is like ‘I don’t like mushrooms’.”

ši

The particle **ši** expresses that the speaker thinks something in the sentence is small or unimportant. It is sometimes used when making excuses or glossing over unpleasant things.

(3.17) **Hešin metiran dazane ši.**

heši -n metir -n dazan -e ši
eight -OBL meter.PL -OBL wide -3S DP

“It’s only eight meters wide.”

Root List

'êww

êwow *v.* to throw out, to get rid of

êwow *n.* trash, garbage

ôwu *adj.* disposable

bast

bast *v.* to stay in, to live in, to inhabit, to populate

abassot *v.* to make yourself at home in, to get used to

bâst *n.* inhabitant, dweller

sebâst *n.* roommate, someone who you share a house with

absot *n.* house, dwelling

bastam *n.* home, house

bâstu *adj.* inhabited, lived-in, populated

bâstiu *adj.* livable, pleasant to live in

benz

benz *v.* to find, to locate, to encounter, to discover

ebnoz *v.* to be found, to meet, to encounter each other

ebnozi *v.* to meet up with each other

bolb

oblob *v.* to boil (of a liquid)

boĥob *v.* to boil s.t.

mabolbi *n.* kettle, electric kettle

cakm**carz**

carz *v.* to pass through, to go through

carroz *v.* to put something through, to push something through, to send a message

acroz *n.* door, opening, entryway; mouth

češm

češm *v.* to see, to notice

češšom *v.* to show, to make someone see; to present, to make public

ečošom *v.* to be seen; to be public, to be known

češmi *v.* to look at, to pay attention to

mačešmi *n.* glasses, lenses, visual aids

dičeššom *n.* screen

dičošom *n.* camera

čokt

čokt *v.* to tap on, to knock on

harz

harz *v.* to illuminate, to light up (a thing or space); to reveal, to make clear

ahroz *v.* to be lit up, to be illuminated

harroz *v.* to make something light up; to turn on (a machine)

hârz *n.* light, lightbulb, lamp

maharzi *n.* flashlight, torch

hârzu *adj.* bright, shining, lit up; on (of a machine)

hârzuz *n.* brightness

jašt

jašt *v.* to run; to move, to travel to circulate (of a vehicle)

jâšt *n.* runner

ajšits *n.* a run, a jog

kasp

kasp *v.* to go to sleep, to fall asleep

kassop *v.* to put to bed, to put to sleep

kaspi *v.* to try to go to sleep

kâspu *adj.* asleep

ukaspu *adj.* tired, sleepy

kaspam *n.* bed, sleeping spot

kasp *n.* sleep

aksips *n.* a night of sleep, a nap, a period of sleep

kenž

kenž *v.* to cook, to make food

eknož *v.* to cook (of food), to be cooking

konžu *adj.* cooked

kenžam *n.* kitchen

makenži *n.* pot, pan, cooking dish or tray

sakenžo *n.* cooking, cuisine, foodways

lelb

alob *v.* to roll; to rotate

lelbi *v.* to somersault, to move by rolling; to spin around

lolba *n.* a ball

mall

malol *v.* to stay, to remain, to wait; to still be in a state

malhol *v.* to make someone wait, to put something on hold

amloli *v.* to procrastinate

matn

matõn *v.* to eat, to consume

matton *v.* to feed, to make eat

amton *n.* food

matnam *n.* eatery, restaurant, cafeteria, kitchen

mâtnă *n.* eater, diner

amtins *n.* meal

mâtnu *adj.* edible, eaten

mâtniu *adj.* edible, pleasant to eat

qerd

qerd *v.* to tare, to zero a balance, to take a blank measurement; to reset, to start over, to ground

eqrod *n.* a standard, a blank

sašt

sašt *v.* to separate s.t., to break s.t. apart, to sort

asšot *v.* to come apart, to break apart

asaššot *v.* to break up
sâštu *adj.* separate, apart, wide
sâštuz *n.* separation, apartness, distance
masašti *n.* separator
disšot *n.* centrifuge

semn

esmon *v.* to grow, to increase, to get bigger; to rise (of bread)
semon *v.* to make something grow, to increase something
somn *n.* child, someone who is not yet fully grown
esmins *n.* rise, proof (of bread)

šapw

šapu *v.* to open, to unlock, to access
ašpu *v.* to open, to be opened
šappu *v.* to log in
mašapwi *n.* key, password

šay'

šay *v.* to enchant, to work magic
šây *n.* wizard, witch, magician, sorcerer
ašyo *n.* a spell, an enchantment, a bit of magic
sašayo *n.* magic as a practice or discipline
dišyo *n.* a black box, something that works without being understood

šend

šend *v.* to jump, to hop; to take a step through a list
ešnod *n.* a jump; a step in a protocol

šondu *adj.* practiced, done, executed

šondi *adj.* doable, possible or easy to execute

šury

šuri *v.* to flicker, to twinkle

taft

taft *v.* to gather s.t., to get things together

taftot *v.* to make people get together, to make something get together

afot *v.* to get together, to gather together, to hang out

taftam *n.* gathering place, hangout spot

tasm

tassom *v.* to sit something up

atassom *v.* to sit down, to sit oneself down

tâsmu *v.* to sit, to be sitting

tasmam *n.* chair; sitting spot, seat, space (for a person)

atsims *n.* session, sitting, event

telk

tolok *n.* the sun

êtlok *adv.* today

ôtlok *adv.* the other day, any past day, often used to begin a story set at a past time

tilk

tilk *v.* to pass time, to spend time; to go down a path

itlok *v.* to pass (of time), to go by (of space)

matilki *n.* a hobby, a pastime

satilko *n.* the passage of time

vant

avont *v.* to enter, to go in

vandot *v.* to put something in

vantam *n.* doorway, entryway

xerk

exrok *v.* to get sick, to fall ill

xerruk *v.* to sicken, to make someone sick

xorkuz *n.* sickness, the state of being sick

xorrok *n.* sickness, illness, disease, something that makes you sick

xorku *adj.* sick, unwell, ill

xišy

xiši *v.* to be happy

xišši *v.* to make s.o. happy, to be liked by s.o.

xišiu *adj.* happy

yeks

yeks *v.* to do chemistry on

aykos *v.* to react chemically, to undergo a chemical reaction

aykos *n.* sample, something being studied

yeksam *n.* chemistry lab

sayekso *n.* chemistry

aykis, aykisis *n.* reaction, chemical process

yest

yest *v.* to travel, to take a road, to take a path

yost *n.* traveler, rider, commuter

eysot *n.* road, way

mayesti *n.* vehicle, means of transport, public transport

eysits *n.* trip, vacation, voyage

Wordlist

This is for words in the open classes that either aren't derived from CVCC roots or that I haven't made corresponding roots for.

ao *n.* water, esp. for drinking or cooking

ažu *adj.* old, decaying, dilapidated

dam, damim *n.* man

ez *adv.* just, right then, as soon as

gerzu *adj.* red

faw *n.* wind, breeze

hay *adj.* tall, high

jiwa *n.* cat, kitten

kekeše *adv.* finally

sê *v.* to want

šaw *v.* to go up

Closed Classes

I'm trying something a bit different with my wordlist organization for this, so I figured I'd go all the way in. Here are the members of each of the closed classes.

Postpositions

eš *pstp.* in, at; marks recipients

kâ *pstp.* from, of, out of, by, introduces the agent in a causative

řa *pstp.* to; to a state or result

se *pstp.* with, using; introduces the patient in a causative

to *pstp.* away from, outside of

Relationals

sore *rel.* between

Sentence-final Particles

ba *sfp.* imitative

lo *sfp.* confirming prior knowledge

na *sfp.* question marker

yo *sfp.* insisting

Other Particles

vê prt. circumstantial modal particle