

# Relaysper

*Recipient Torch*

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Sincy / Bep

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# Torch

.nagwmma erwerwu núnna je hreu kééleswkéma

.moqwgw whreu jetara čučui aahrai

.čwdwrw kw pww nahtie čučui tačuu

,ancaa . . .

.htie naimwancaáa núnna lolo pwwsu

,maidé narepw su wsu ŵi pw nwahri

,naimw hreu repw wpw núnna

,nwpw wsu reutahta

.su ŵi nahré qińa nwhpwritehkaraneući ŵiira

.kirarakira wsu reucywo

,kutelaaw reuhpwo wtahta

.ŵi qińa nuwhpwritehkaraneući raaoopw ŵiira

## Definitions

This is a compilation of definitions and such used in this document. Parts may be repeated elsewhere.

ADP (Syntax) — Adposition: Attaches to ARG to modify it. Does not break phrases.

AFF (Morpho.) — Affix: Adposition from a Function Root.

ARG (Syntax/Morpho.) — Syntactic **argument**: From a Content Root, holds semantic meaning, can stand on its own as a predicate.

CLT (Morpho.) — Clitic: Adposition from a Content Root.

EMP — Emphatic argument: Standalone emphatic morpheme, does not take heads nor subordinates.

FN (Morpho.) — Function Root; Argument which encodes syntactical information and possibly more.

MOD (Syntax) — **Modifying** argument: From a Content Root, holds semantic meaning, subordinate to another argument / directly following another argument.

PTC (Syntax/Morpho.) — Particle: Modifies following ARG. Cannot be a head of a phrase; breaks phrases.

SYN (Syntax) — **Syntax-determining** argument; argument which encodes syntactical information.

# Syntax

At its heart, Bep is comprised of one fairly simple principle, "increasing prominence". This also applies to syntax. It isn't terribly helpful on its own though, so you'll now be treated to some ways it can be applied to the language.

Bep syntax *seeks to restrict its roots' base meanings the minimum needed amount to express stuff*, within reason. Fittingly, it is the way of restricting meaning that changes the least semantically, but that is applied the most often.

*A cat that exists in a yellow way and a yellow cat are the same in a majority of contexts, so no distinction will need to be made, as long as the yellowness is an attribute of the concept of a cat, we're good. Should you want to specify "a cat that exists in a yellow way", you could make yellowness an attribute of a method, and hook that up to a cat that asserts its existence in said way. Completely unnecessary most of the time.*

## 3.1 Syntactic roles

Bep has five syntactic roles that may form phrases flat or increasing prominence, although arguably only the four most prominent interact in syntax. Here is a list in order of decreasing prominence.

1. ARG: Content argument. Takes subordinates and marking. Carries semantic info.
2. MOD: Modifying ARG. Takes ARG heads, has minimal/no marking. Carries semantic info.

3. PTC: Particle: Takes ARG heads, may take subordinates. Carries syntactic info.
4. ADP: Adposition: Takes ARG heads, attaches to ARG. May carry syntactic info.
5. EMP: Emphatic ARG: Standalone. May be placed inside phrase without breaking it.

Note that some PTCs do not take heads either. Some also take two, typically pointing to a specific role, or taking their 'subordinate' as a secondary argument.

## 3.2 Phrases

Subordinates are before, heads are after.

Any unmarked word that precedes a word of equal or higher prominence directly, is its subordinate.

- Any ARG becomes a **modifying argument**;  $\emptyset \text{ARG ARG} \rightarrow \text{MOD ARG ARG}(\text{MOD})$ .
- Any ADP or PTC applies to what is directly after it.  $X \rightarrow \text{ARG}$ .

Any marked argument that precedes another argument directly, undergoes the following check:

*If the two are differently marked, or the last is unmarked, they are **unrelated** phrases.*

*If the marking of the two is equivalent, they are in **unity**, separate phrases but share a role. "and".*

*If the first argument has a **union marker**, the two are in **union**, sharing a role as one entity. "together".*

## 3.3 Clauses

Clauses function similarly to phrases; they may stand on their own as a complete sentence, or they may stack. When stacking, they adhere to relative

### 3.4 Focus

Any phrase sentence-final phrase focus of that sentence. The most neutral constructions relegate this to the **predicate**, often the "subject" of that sentence or the ARG most modified by **temporal markings**. It is used for emphasis, often being put on the **topic** to emphasize it or away from the **topic** to add a **comment**. It is often marked with the pronoun/classifier **-su**.



# Morphology

Bep morphology is based on **syntactically influenced, near-universally productive synthesis**. It stops being productive only for morphemes that can no longer be derived away from encoding syntactic information, i.e. **Function Roots**.

A way to frame this is that Bep morphemes 'originally' do not have any inherent properties beyond the vague semantic field they cover. This doesn't let us construct a grammar or say anything useful, so we narrow down the morpheme's meaning with derivational morphology and syntax. Few or no restrictions are inherently bound to any given morpheme, so most morphemes retain a large degree of freedom in terms of what roles and precise meanings they can take on. For more detailed information on how this came to be, look [here](#).

## 4.1 Basics

It is convenient to analyze Bep morphemes as having **constraints** in a non-**OT** sense. That is to say, they are categorized by the roles they can **not** take. Change is the most common through syntax, but the most extensive through morphological derivation.

As mentioned above, some constraints that are so fossilized they may well be inherent properties to a morpheme. From this observation, two groups arise, **Content Roots** and **Function Roots**:

- **Content Roots** are defined by a lack of constraints, and may encode anything. They mostly take

argument and modifier roles; if they encode syntactic information they are content particles or clitics.

- **Function Roots** are constrained to encoding syntactic information. They need not have lost all their semantic meaning, but they cannot encode semantic meaning alone. They are mostly function particles and affixes. These primarily come from fossilization of content particles and clitics respectively.

In short, morphemes may be derived from **Content Roots** using syntax and/or derivational morphology.

A morpheme that can no longer *not* encode syntactic information or be derived into a morpheme that does not, is a **Function Root**. Syntactic expletives are the 'pinnacle' of these, but don't behave distinctly and are thus not treated as a separate group.

## 4.2 Content Roots

Temporal mobility/specificity axes: This is way too convoluted to put in a torch lol

"**gwmma**" ( $\rightarrow$  "**-mma**"), name naming nomenclature, is fancy because it can take names as a subordinate argument to make them refer to the name and not what the name stands for. and it is a fossilized classifier, so a sort of suffix.

## 4.3 Affixes

Affixes are typically only used to mark syntactic relationships. Examples might include **na-** which indicates nesting by demoting its head to the subordinate of what follows it. This is used to indicate that na-MOD applies to another MOD and not the phrase head ARG, in situations where the sub-phrase is not common enough an expression to warrant a compound (a horse carriage would be compounded,

a salt carriage would not because what is that). It is also used to indicate that na-phrase\_head belongs to the next phrase head as an attribute but this is not relevant for the torch.

## 4.4 Functional Particles

These are typically things like pronouns and grammatical particles.

- **pw**, an extremely generic pronoun, approx. "what I'm talking about", "some stuff/people". often used with modifiers to indicate something previously mentioned, "the red one, what was done fast", or in isolation to make general statements, "clever people, travelling ones, what illuminates streets"...
- **jetara**, a particle which states its head and subordinate are in a possessive relationship, and switches their roles to have the head be possessed. special case of "je", which is a particle that takes a phrase as its head and states that the MOD of that phrase is the ARG's possession.

## 4.5 Clitics

Mood and some aspects are typically encoded in clitics; Morphosyntactical alignment is typically handled with Agent and Patient roles encoded in clitics.

The two main moods are **realis** and **irrealis**.

## 4.6 Content Particles

These are typically pronouns, points in time, scaling... That sort of stuff. Especially classifiers, i.e. postpositions that effectively take over as a dummy head of the phrase.

# Derivational Morphology

Bep derivational patterns are a thing.

## 5.1 Compounds

Compounds are a form of fossilized MOD+ØARG phrase, written as one word instead of as an ordinary phrase. They are infrequent.

## 5.2 Steve

”Steve” is the nightmare of a process that makes everything bigger and more imposing.

TLDR: Vowel elongation

Comparable labels include:

- Plural
- Augmentative
- Durative
- More/Greater

- Metonym of X

### 5.3 Li'l Steve

Li'l Steve is, as its name implies, the small variant of Steve. It is a process centered around segmentation and reduplication, generally making things "smaller".

TLDR: Reduplication

Comparable labels include:

- Paucal (/Nonzero)
- Diminutive
- Distributive
- Iterative
- Telic (if situationally applicable)
- Less/Lesser

## Strategies

### 6.1 Time indication

#### Tense

Tense, or temporal indication relative to speaker, is only minimally extant in Bep. It uses the usual tenseless system, alongside an expression to set the topic timeframe as "now", typically with some form of proverb.

This does not happen in this torch.

### 6.2 Assumptions

One way to mark assumptions is to use a perfective hypothetical (irrealis) construction. "could've been done", approximately, used to mean "seems like it was". That's what this torch does.

## Lexicon

To not make this torch too easy, morphemes are indexed by their morphological, not syntactic classification.

### 7.1 Personal Names

ancaaáca → [ɒ.ŋɒ.ɒ.ʃɕæ]

kééleswké → [ke.e.lə.su.ke]

### 7.2 Numbers

Bep numbers are base-12 and behave like Content Roots.

1. li
2. na
3. cye
4. áa
5. cú

6. ncw

7. qw

8. hré

9. me

10. fi

11. peu

12. wé

### 7.3 Assorted Affixes

**na-**

→ nesting marker.

### 7.4 Assorted Clitics

**kw**

→ irrealis mood, agent if contrasting candidates

**naimw**

→ realis mood, patient marker, *following an effort, X was Y'd enduringly*



**nuw**

→ irrealis mood, patient marker

**nw**

→ realis mood, patient marker

**w**

→ realis mood, agent if contrasting candidates

## 7.5 Assorted Function Roots

**je**

→ particle that takes a phrase as its head and states that the MOD of that phrase is the ARG's possession

**jetara**

→ phrase possession inverter, subordinate→possessor & head→possessee

**ku(te)**

→ mimicry marker; same marking as next argument of same type (→ union, arguments treated as one split phrase)

## **maidé**

→ particle that takes a phrase as its head and states that the MOD of that phrase is similar, equivalent to ARG

## **pw**

→ generic pronoun

## **raopw**

→ dummy postposition for long words

## **-su**

→ topic classifier/pronoun

## **wi**

→ particle that takes a phrase as its head and states that the MODs of that phrase are the material origin, ingredients, etc of the ARG

## **-wiira**

→ postposition/classifier, final state/perfectivity

## 7.6 Content Roots in this Torch

**ahri**

→ space a person takes up, role, absence of someone, someone's stead...

**aahrai**

→ [unpredictable "ahri" + AUG] great one, deity, divinity, overwhelming might...

**ćwdwrw**

→ lit. age endurance; wisdom, of experience...

**ćućiui**

→ whispers, confiding, what is entrusted...

**erwu**

→ giving, gifting, hand over, as presented...

**kira**

→ over and over, at length, until late...

**laaw**

→ total, all together, united, gathered...

**lo**

→ aloft, holding high, brought on display...

**ñunna**

→ 1 day-night cycle, for 1 that, as throughout that; around, about...

**moqwgw**

→ listen, be silent to hear, seeking sound...

**qiña**

→ silver, silvery...

**repw**

→ other than, beyond, differently...

**reucywo**

→ lit. absence of pain; bliss, merriment, being entertained...

## **reuhpwo**

→ not only, beyond, a greater number...

## **reutahta**

→ unfriending, fight, conflict, sparring...

## **tahta**

→ familiarity, buddies, recently made bond...

## **thie**

→ beauty, being graceful, pretty, elegantly...

## **taċuu**

→ trusting, leaning on, reliable, sturdy...

## **7.7 Other stuff**

### **ancaa**

→ emphatic particle, expecting backchannelling, reasserting truth; "really! that's how it was!". stylistic of old people and storyteller who are probably bullshitting half of what they just said but smirk and refuse to tell you which half that was.

proverb: "pull from an empty spot"

→ find, stumble upon...

# Phonology

The phonology of Bep, is diälectal like there's no tomorrow. For examples and literally everything in this document, we will use Standard Broadcast Bep (SBB).

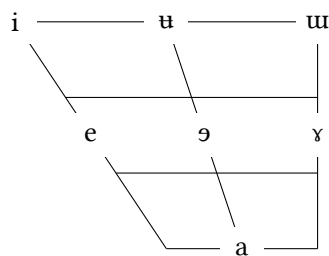


Figure 8.1: Rough table of moraïc vowels' ranges

## 8.1 What a Mora Is

Morae in Bep do not entirely correspond to normal, proper morae in that they frequently occur in halves. This would usually mean it's time to reanalyze the phonology as one of syllabic timing, but this doesn't exactly help either. So, for now at least, you're stuck with shoddy morae. On the bright side, you don't need to deal with the intricacies of phono to solve the torch.

## 8.2 Moraïc Vowel Phonemes

Bep has seven basic vowel phonemes. These are **moraïc** and can stand alone or be preceded by a nonmoraïc phoneme; typically a consonant, but also potentially a nonmoraïc vowel. Bep phonemic

vowels are also necessarily unrounded; while rounded vowels exist, they only occur in semivocalic (tending to consonantal, usually nonmoraic) roles or as dialectal allophones/realizations that we don't care about right now. Processes that make vowels behave nonmoraically yield "Reduced vowels"; these may become separate phonemes or simply remain allophones, see "Reduced Vowel Phonemes" and "Vowel Reduction" respectively.

### 8.3 Vowel Diphthongization & Elongation

When vowels are elongated, they become around 1.5 mora long. The same applies with diphthongization, where the first vowel (glide) takes up about half a mora and the second (nucleus) takes up the better part of 1. When the glide becomes too short you get stuff vowel reduction.

### 8.4 Reduced Vowel Phonemes (RV)

Bep has four phonemic reduced vowels, i.e. phonemes derived from ordinary vowels that have diverged to become separate phonemes with primarily nonmoraic roles. They're like consonants, but not quite. Phonemic reduced vowels are in semivocalic continua; that is to say, they can act both as moraic vowels and as non/moraic consonants. These four vowels are romanized as ⟨w̥⟩, ⟨ç̥⟩, ⟨ê̥⟩, and ⟨ḁ̃⟩. They differ from consonants in that they have a lower threshold for being supplanted with their inherent vowels (here pre-reduction vowel forms) in contexts where consonants would not, and that they in some contexts merge with said inherent vowels. Phonemic reduced vowels are necessarily devoiced.

#### List

The phonemic reduced vowels' approximate values, listed from oldest to most recent emergence;



- /ǣ/ [h̥~ǣ̥], inherent a
- /w̥/ [ʌ~w̥], inherent w
- /ĕ/ [i̥~ĕ̥], inherent i
- /ê/ [ø̥], inherent e

*The circle above means we're looking at a vowel's separatist faction that tends to liking consonantal behaviour better.*

## RV Consonantal behaviour and history

/ǣ/, being the oldest of the phonemic reduced vowels, is on the verge of becoming fully consonantal (~50-80yrs). /w̥/ and /ĕ/, both having emerged around the same time, remain closer to a continuum between their consonant and vowel realizations, making them lube phonemes. The youngest phonemic reduced vowel, /ê/, still retains its many vocalic features. Notably, it emerged to fill some of the central vowel space that /ǣ/ occupied before it became more restricted to a low back vowel [ɔ̥], when not in its consonantal role as [h̥].

In the future, the then-former vowel space of /ǣ/ might be taken up by /ê/ or by a new reduced vowel from /o/ (currently [ɤ]). /w̥/ is a viable but unlikely candidate, as other ongoing reductions of /w/ [u] (e.g.  $\_ \rightarrow [+LAB] / \_C[+PLOS]$ ) are likely to promote its consonantal roles sooner, not only maintaining, but also restricting the vowel space of /w̥/.

## 8.5 Vowel Reduction

This is a collection of processes making phonemic vowels temporarily behave nonmorally, without turning them into separate nonmoralic phonemes; i.e. triggers for secondary allophony where the

vowels take on consonantal behaviour. These processes typically occur where vowel glides would occur diachronically; in most dialects of Bep, no vowel glides remain, with all moraïc vowel sequences simply being double if the first vowel has not been reduced. This may be somewhat related to Bep's general move over the last ~600 years from syllable timing towards mora timing.

### Labialization of /u/

/u/ is labialized when preceding another vowel and following a non-coronal plosive (/k/, /<sup>h</sup>k/, /p/, /<sup>h</sup>p/, /g/[+FRT]). Effectively, this process lets u escape diachronic vowel glide behaviours, since the labialization derived from the /u/ no longer behaves like a vowel and is thus nonmoraïc.

$u \rightarrow ^w / \{k, ^h k, p, ^h p, g[+FRT]\} \_ V$

**Example:** *ahkwa* /a.<sup>h</sup>k<sup>w</sup>u.a/ → [a.<sup>h</sup>k<sup>w</sup>a], *hello latin*

## 8.6 Nonmoraïc Consonantal Phonemes

**Fairly standard consonants.** They all take up less than one mora and don't get to stand on their own.

Table

	Labial	Alv.dental Alveolar	Palatal	Velar Glottal
Nasals	/m/ [m] <m>	/n/ [n] <n>	/ɲ/ [ɲ] <ɲ>	/ŋ/ [ŋ] <nc>
Plain Stops	/p/ [p] <p> ~[pɸ]	/t/ [t] <t> /d/ [d] <d>	/t͡ɕ/ [t͡ɕ] <ç> /d͡ʒ/ [d͡ʒ~d͡ʒ] <dy>	/k/ [k] <k> /g/ [gɣ~ɰ] <g>
Affricates		/t͡s/ [t͡s] <cy>		
Preasp. Stops	/ <sup>h</sup> p/ [ʰp] <hp>	/ht/ [ʰt] <ht>	/j/ [ç̥~j] <j>	/ <sup>h</sup> k/ [ʰk] <hk>
Fricatives	/f/ [ɸ~β] <ɸ>	/s/ [s] <s> /z/ [z] <z>		
Misc		/ <sup>h</sup> r/ [ʰr̥~r̥] <hr> /r/ [r] <r> /l/ [l~ɭ~ɮ] <l>	/ɕ/ [ɕ~ɕ̥] <x> /ɭ/ [ɭ~ɭ~ɮ] <q>	

Table 8.1: Ugly table for your dissatisfaction

## Laterals

The two lateral phonemes /l<sup>1</sup>/ and /l<sup>2</sup>/, coexist indistinguishably as [l] by default, but undergo different processes and are found in different environments. /l<sup>1</sup>/ comes from /l/, from /w~ɰ/ in glides preceded by coronals, from Proto-Bep \*Q [q~χ]. It is romanized as ⟨q⟩. /l<sup>2</sup>/ comes from /ʎ/, from /j/ in Imperial loans (as opposed to unstressed /j/, which becomes /č/), and is romanized as ⟨ɰ⟩.

/l<sup>1</sup>/ tends towards becoming moraïc, and easily merges into a /s/, which then renders as w/ə/ʁ depending on (historical) environment. In some nonsyllabic contexts it tends to [ɾ].

**Default:** (!s)\_3, ʃ\_ → [l], tends to [ɾ] → [œ] when slurred

(!š)\_8 & ʃ\_ → [ɾ], tends to [ɾ̥~ɾ̥̥] → [ɾ] → [œ] when slurred

3\_(!s) → [ʎ], tends to [j̥] when slurred

/l<sup>2</sup>/ is strictly consonantal. It neutralizes with a nonsyllabic /i/ (and /i/, diälectally) word-initially. When followed by a non-back vowel as or more fronted than the preceding vowel, it falls back to its historical counterpart [ʎ].

**Default:** [l], tends to [ɾ] → [œ] when slurred

#\_ → [ʎ], tends to [j] → [j̥] when slurred

*There are some more rules here but you won't get them thrown at you, this is already more than enough.*

## 8.7 Moraïc Consonants

Moraïc consonants contrast with moraïc vowels in that they, unlike vowels, must be preceded by another moraïc phoneme. If word-initial and/or longer than one mora, any sequence of moraïc consonants

must be followed by a vowel.

The phonemes normally allowed to appear as moraïc consonants are [m] /m/, [n] /n/, and [ɲ] /ɲ/. Others may also appear in moraïc consonantal roles as well, with common examples like [ŋc] /ŋ/ and [g] /ŋ/.

## 8.8 Consonant gemination

Geminated consonants become moraïc, but cannot start, nor end words. The same applies to geminated moraïc consonants, except they go from one mora to around two.

## 8.9 Semivocalic Clusters and Diphthongization

I'm not entirely sure what this was supposed to be, but I think it's about diälectal things that happen when you drop vowels. For now, we'll just say that this does not happen in the standard and thus does not need addressing.

## 8.10 Conditions for Spacing Epenthesis

Spacing epenthesis is the subsection of epenthesis which literally serves no purpose whatsoever. It is divided into anaptyxis and excrescence – when a vowel is added in as padding and when a consonant is added in as padding. This system relies heavily on the notion of *inherent* sounds; of vowels, their consonants, and of consonants, their vowels.

## **Spacing Anaptyxis**

Despite sounding like a fancy word for suffocation this is when vowels pop up out of nowhere.

Anaptyxis happens all over the place in Bep to ensure that stuff meets the syllable structure's demands.

Some dialects appreciate their vowels more than others; Standard Broadcast Bep is somewhere in the middle.

Anaptyxis in Bep primarily occurs when loaning words.

## **Spacing Excrescence**

Despite sounding like literal shit this is when consonants show up in places there previously was no consonant.

Excrescence in Bep primarily occurs when loaning words.

## Addendum: Where Words Come From

So I said «*Bep morphemes 'originally' do not have any inherent properties beyond the vague semantic field they cover*». This is not entirely true; they don't 'originally' work like that, they **really do**. The way Bep's current state came to be, goes roughly as follows:

1. In the beginning, there were onomatopoeia and exclamations. Grunts and such.
2. Then came the Rule, "increasing prominence". Two grunts stringed together became a phrase; arguments of one flesh and blood ranked by position. One modifying argument first, and then its head.
3. As this continued, we started getting synthesis of more specific ideas. The rise of Steve processes.
4. Once there was a proper derivational apparatus in place, certain words began to be grammaticalized fairly quickly. We got content particles and clitics.
5. And finally, once all this had swung into motion, we began getting the final possible form of a derivation, the word that could no longer shed its syntactic meaning. A function root.
6. (A sixth phase was rise of syntactic expletives, which not only can't be derived away from encoding syntax but also have lost semantic meaning. They don't act weird so they don't count.)

To this day all morphemes bar the few locked in service of the rest have the freedom to move around all the different levels of constraints to their semantic and syntactic roles.

