

Landa Grammar
with Texts and Vocabulary

*Cita gui Muha Landa
hua Quehangone je Muhayune*

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*Eno cuhamen hua muha gui cono ticaluca
mpalaquence, tano nxeja mpalaquence.*

—Teli Paxe

0 Introduction

0.1 Abbreviations

1: first person	OPT: optative	state
2: second person	PL: Plural	UNWILL: unwillingly
3: 3 rd person	SG: Singular	WILL: willingly
ACC: Accusative	STAT: state	
ACT: action	TRANS: transitive changing-of-	

1 Phonology

Table I: Consonants

	Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	^(m) p	⁽ⁿ⁾ t ⁽ⁿ⁾ d			^(ŋ) k ^(ŋ) g	ʔ
Nasal	^(m) m	⁽ⁿ⁾ n		^(j) ɲ	^(ŋ) ŋ	
Fricative	^(m) f	⁽ⁿ⁾ s	⁽ⁿ⁾ ʃ			h
Approximant	w	l	j		(w)	

Table II: Romanization of consonants

	Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	^(m) p	⁽ⁿ⁾ t ⁽ⁿ⁾ d			⁽ⁿ⁾ c/qu ^(m) g/gu	h
Nasal	hm m	hn n	hñ ñ		hng/hngu ng/ngu	
Fricative	^(m) f	⁽ⁿ⁾ z/c	⁽ⁿ⁾ x			j
Approximant	hu	l	y			

Figure I: Vowels

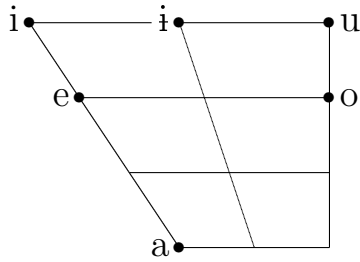
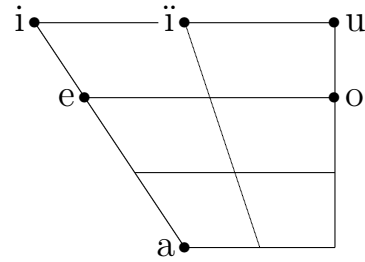


Figure II: Romanization of vowels



Spanish rules are followed when multiple romanizations given. For example, /si/ is written as ⟨ci⟩, but /sa/ is written as ⟨za⟩, /gi/ is written as ⟨gui⟩ but /ga/ is written as ⟨ga⟩. All syllables in Landa are (C)V, except word-finally, where they are (C)V(N), where (N) refers to any nasal. Adjacent vowels are treated as nuclei of separate syllables. Primary stress always falls on the penultimate syllable of a multisyllabic word and the only syllable of a monosyllabic word. This system does at times create ambiguous spellings, context is necessary to discern these cases.

2 Grammar

2.0 Verbs in Landa

Predicates form a unique part of Landa syntax. The way it handles verbs was inspired by the way that functional programming handles its predicates. In functional programming, common functions such as **filter**, **map**, and **reduce** describe a manner of performing an action, but not the semantics of the action itself. This is instead described by a predicate, passed in as an argument to a function just as typical arguments are passed into functions and methods in other programming paradigms. For example, one programmer may write a program utilizing the **filter** function that passes a condition predicate checking whether elements in an array of integers are above a certain threshold. In this case, the condition function would be defined separately and passed in, along with the array itself, to the **filter** function. Another programmer may only keep elements in this array that are even, defining their own predicate to check for even numbers and calling the same **filter** function. In both cases, the function call could be written in pseudocode as **filter(predicate, array)**, where **predicate** in the first case would refer to a previously defined function that returns a Boolean value of **True** when an integer is above a designated threshold and **False** otherwise, and in the second case would refer to another previously defined function that returns a Boolean value of **True** when an integer is divisible by two and **False** otherwise.

This design was the inspiration for the way verbs are handled in Landa. “Manner verbs” are considered the center of verb phrases, but include very little specific semantic information. They instead mark things such as whether an action was intentional and whether it is a state or action. Verbs describing specific semantic information are relegated to the status of suffixes on noun phrases, and are generally adjunct to whatever clause they appear in. Take the following sentence:

- (1) jĩ-ye ndego-ca
 UNWILL.sense.STAT-1.SG dog-exist
 I see the dog.

The base verb stem here is *jĩ*, meaning “to unwillingly sense an object’s state.” The object itself is described in the noun phrase *ndegoca*, where *ndego* means “dog” and the suffix *ca* means “to exist.” Thus, the overall sentence *jĩye ndegoca* literally means “I unwillingly sensed the state of the dog, existing,” but can be more leniently translated to “I saw¹ the dog.” In future clauses, if *ca* is used again, it can be dropped, or replaced with the general proverb *zu*, which can be used to refer back to any previously used semantic verb. Semantic verbs can also be dropped entirely if previously mentioned, which will typically imply that whatever most recently previously used semantic verb still stands if one has previously been mentioned, and otherwise implies the semantic verb *ca*, “to exist.” Thus, the sentence could be rewritten as *jĩye ndego*, with no change in meaning.

2.1 Basic word order

Word order in Landa is fairly free, but a common basic word order is semantic accusative, manner verb, object NP. All of the following are appropriate orderings:

- (2) cale-’n jĩ-cu hempo-nce
 money-ACC UNWILL.sense.STAT-2.SG person-have
 You notice that the person has money (neutral, slight emphasis on money).
- (3) jĩ-cu cale-’n hempo-nce
 UNWILL.sense.STAT-2.SG money-ACC person-have
 You notice that the person has money (emphasis on you noticing).
- (4) hempo-nce jĩ-cu cale-’n
 person-have UNWILL.sense.STAT-2.SG money-ACC
 You notice that the person has money (emphasis on the person having).

When a noun is included in the subject position, it is typically the first thing to be mentioned, with other words taking a free order after it, as follows:

- (5) ndego cale-’n jĩ-Ø hempo-nce
 dog money-ACC UNWILL.sense.STAT-3.SG person-have
 The dog notices that the person has money (neutral, slight emphasis on money).

¹This could also refer to hearing or touching a dog unwillingly, to specify utilize instrumental statements with the body part used to sense in question.

- (6) ndego ji-Ø cale-'n hempo-nce
dog UNWILL.sense.STAT-3.SG money-ACC person-have
The dog notices that the person has money (emphasis on the dog noticing).
- (7) ndego hempo-nce ji-Ø cale-'n
dog person-have UNWILL.sense.STAT-3.SG money-ACC
The dog notices that the person has money (emphasis on the person having).

2.2 Person verb conjugations

Personal verb conjugations for Landa, marked on manner verbs, are given as follows:

Table III: Verb inflection suffixes

Number	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
Singular	<i>-ye</i>	<i>-cu</i>	-
Plural	<i>-ce</i>	<i>-no</i>	<i>-mpi</i>

2.3 Pronouns

Personal pronouns can be omitted in statements with conjugated verbs, but may be included for emphasis as necessary. The basic personal pronouns of Landa are:

Table IV: Personal pronouns

Number	1 st person	2 nd person	3 rd person
Singular	qui	he	zo
Plural	qui	pa	nzo

2.4 Possession

In Landa, possession of one noun to another is marked simply by placing the possessing noun after the possessed noun, with *gui*, “of,” in between, as follows:

- (8) ndego gui hempo
dog of man
The man's dog.

There is no special marking for pronouns, they are treated exactly as nouns, as follows:

- (9) ndego gui zo
dog of 3.SG
His dog.

2.5 Accusatives

In Landa, accusatives of semantic verbs are marked with the enclitic *-n*. In the case where the word already ends in a nasal, it goes phonologically unchanged, and an apostrophe is added to the end in written language. For example, *aceng*, “east,” would in the accusative be written *aceng'*, as follows:

- (10) jalozo-ju-'n li-ye he-ga
music-type-ACC WILL.change.ACT.TRANS-1.SG 2.SG-hate
I made you hate that type of music.
- (11) aceng-' que-Ø hempo-ca
east-ACC WILL.change.STAT-3.SG person-be.located
The person moved eastward.

2.6 The self

For certain sentences, *ne*, “the self,” can be used as the anchor of the semantic verb, as follows:

- (12) ncī-ye ne-ti
UNWILL.temporarily.STAT-1.SG self-be.happy
I am feeling happy.
- (13) li-ye ne-mpa
WILL.change.ACT-1.SG self-smile
I smile.

2.7 Numbers Landa uses base 10. Cry about it. A number is read out by saying the value of a digit followed by the name of that digit (e.g. hundred, thousand, ten). The following tables contain digits and place names, respectively.

Table III: Digits 0-9²

Name	Value
ñazo	0
mfeli	1
hmico	2
ntaju	3
huale	4
heho	5
eling	6
yeli	7
quenga	8
ncine	9

Table IV: Digit places

Name	Value
ndezo	10^{-5}
mfado	10^{-4}
xamfi	10^{-3}
pongui	10^{-2}
juhua	10^{-1}
mfeli	10^0 ³
hñeye	10^1
luha	10^2
yaju	10^3
uhuilo	10^4
xehmi	10^5

²Note that in gloss in this grammar the digit values 1, 2, and 3 are glossed as “one”, “two”, and “three” in order to avoid confusion with the first, second, and third person markers that are glossed as “1”, “2”, and “3”, respectively, but all other digits are glossed in Arabic numerals.

³This need not be used if the ones digit comes at the end of a number, but it must be used otherwise.

3 Lexicon

3.1 Nouns and Adjectives

<i>aceng</i> : “east, the east.”	<i>jalozo</i> : “music.”	<i>ne</i> : “the self.”
<i>caho</i> : “home, house, dwelling.”	<i>jalozoju</i> : “type of music.”	<i>neho</i> : “stone.”
<i>cale</i> : “money, gold.”	<i>landa</i> : “functional programming.”	<i>nxeja</i> : “universe, world.”
<i>caliza</i> : “tar.”	<i>mfotañe</i> : “mortar.”	<i>nxomo</i> : “time.”
<i>cingue</i> : “thing.”	<i>mpalague</i> : “understanding.”	<i>pozu</i> : “happiness, happy.”
<i>cinguene</i> : “the universe, the world.”	<i>muha</i> : “language.”	<i>queha</i> : “written word.”
<i>cita</i> : “rule, convention.”	<i>muha Landa</i> : “language name, Landa.”	<i>quehango</i> : “piece of writing.”
<i>cuha</i> : “action.”	<i>muhango</i> : “speech, conversation.”	<i>tahuala</i> : “brick, building block.”
<i>hempo</i> : “person.”	<i>muhayu</i> : “word.”	<i>ticalu</i> : “fruit.”
<i>heni</i> : “tower, building.”	<i>ndego</i> : “dog, canine, wolf.”	<i>zaca</i> : “flat, level.”
<i>jale</i> : “large in amount, plentiful.”		<i>zacani</i> : “plains, flatlands.”

3.2 Manner verbs

<i>a</i> : “to fail at changing an object’s state.”	ject’s state.”	<i>to</i> : “to be unwillingly and persistently in a state.”
<i>co</i> : “to willingly change an object’s state.”	<i>li</i> : “to willingly change an object’s action.”	<i>za</i> : “to willingly sense an object’s state.”
<i>e</i> : “to willingly partake in an action.”	<i>nci</i> : “to be unwillingly in a temporary state.”	<i>zuca</i> : “to be unwillingly cognizant of an object’s state.”
<i>’e</i> : “to unwillingly partake in an action.”	<i>que</i> : “to willingly change state.”	
<i>ji</i> : “to unwillingly sense an ob-	<i>ta</i> : “to be willingly and persistently in a state.”	

3.3 Semantic verb suffixes

<i>ca</i> : “to exist (for something), to be located (somewhere).”	<i>meñ</i> : “to discover something (about something).”	<i>nza</i> : “to feel (something).”
<i>fe</i> : “to listen (to something).”	<i>mpa</i> : “to smile (towards something).”	<i>ti</i> : “to be happy (about something).”
<i>ga</i> : “to hate (something).”	<i>mi</i> : “to be an instance of something.”	<i>zu</i> : “proverb.”
<i>gui</i> : “to be equivalent (to something).”	<i>nce</i> : “to have something.”	
<i>men</i> : “to try something.”		

3.4 Derivational affixes

<i>-ju</i> : “a type of something.”	thing.”	larger.”
<i>-ne</i> : “a collection of something.”	<i>-ngo</i> : “an instance of something.”	
<i>-ni</i> : “a place or land of some-	<i>-yu</i> : “a piece of something	

3.5 Assorted

<i>gui</i> : “of.”	<i>huevo</i> : “on, in, inside.”	<i>ndigon</i> : “here, now.”
<i>guiñ</i> : “optative marker.”	<i>je</i> : “and.”	
<i>hua</i> : “with.”	<i>jagui</i> : “while.”	

4 Short texts

The Tower of Babel

Papela heni

Nxomo jale, Cingue-ne to muhance mfeli. Jagui aceng' quempï hempoca, 'empï zacanïmeñ huezo Xina, compï caho gui nzo. Ne'n limpï nzofo: "Guiñ coce tahuala ndigon." Tahuala je caliza — neho je mfotañe gui nzo.

- (14) nxomo jale cingue-ne to-Ø muha-nce mfeli
time plentiful thing-collection UNWILL.persistently.STAT-3.SG language-have one
Long ago, he world had one language.
- (15) jagui aceng-' que-mpï hempo-ca
while east-ABS WILL.change.STAT-3.PL person-be.located
While they moved eastward,
- (16) 'e-mpï zaca-nĩ-meñ huezo xina,
UNWILL.partake.ACT-3.PL flat-place-discover in Shinar
they found plains in Shinar,
- (17) co-mpï caho gui nzo
WILL.change.STAT.TRANS-3.PL home of 3.PL
and made it their home.
- (18) ne-'n li-mpï nzo-fe
self-ACC WILL.change.ACT.TRANS-3.PL 3.PL-listen
They said to each other:
- (19) guiñ co-ce tahuala ndigon
OPT WILL.change.STAT.TRANS-1.PL brick here
"Come here, and let us make bricks."
- (20) tahuala je caliza — neho je mfotañe gui nzo
brick and tar COP stone and mortar of 3.PL
Brick and tar was their stone and mortar.