Q’atheb’o Grammar –

A language created from the constraints of three speedlang prompts.

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1 Introduction

Q’atheb’o is a constructed language (conlang) which I started making in late 2024. All of my prior attempts at creating a conlang had fizzled out in the early stages, or turned into massive projects that never got past the research phase. I resolved to develop a conlang enough to do nontrivial translations and participate in community activities like Lexember. To keep myself from overthinking every choice and dragging the process out, I decided to start this language with several constraints in place.

I ultimately chose these constraints from three Speedlang prompts taken from the conlang subreddit. Speedlangs are designed to foster rapid ideation and experimentation by placing several creative constraints and requiring a quick turnaround for submissions, typically two to three weeks. With Q’atheb’o I was able to follow a similar process and managed to get the core of the language finished in less than three weeks, though I’ve expanded it a lot since then. You can find the details of the three prompts in the Speedlang Prompts section.

Typologically, Q’atheb’o is an agglutinating verb-initial language with an animacy hierarchy, nominal tense, and noun incorporation. There is some minor vowel assimilation, as well as a robust derivation system. All of these charaterstics and more will be explained in the subsequent sections, and by the end of this document you should have a complete grasp of the workings of the Q’atheb’o language.

2 Phonology

2.1 Vowels

There are three phonemic vowel qualities in Q'atheb'o: /a/, /i/, and /o/. There is a fourth vowel [ɛ] which is prevelant in Q'atheb'o but does not appear to be phonemic; rather it appears exclusively as the result of a highly-regular vowel assimilation process.

Vowels in Q'atheb'o

	Front	**Back**
Close	i	
Close-Mid		o
Open-Mid	(ɛ)	
Open		a

Vowels are never differentiated based on length, nasality, or any other characteristics.

2.2 Consonants

There are 18 consonantal phonemes in Q'atheb'o. Stops are distinguished between four articulation modes: voiceless, voiced, ejective, and implosive. There are also two nasal, two fricative, and one approximant consonants.

Consonants in Q'atheb'o

	Labial	**Alveolar**	**Velar**	**Uvular**
Nasals	m	n		
Voiced Plosives	b	d	g	
Voiceless Plosives	p	t	k	q
Ejectives	p'	t'	k'	q'
Implosives	ɓ	ɗ		
Fricatives		θ		
Lateral Fricatives		ɬ		
Approximants		l		

2.3 Phonotactics

Syllables in Q'atheb'o always contain a consonant followed by a vowel in a strict CV structure. Stress occurs on the penultimate syllable of a word, which manifests as a relatively louder and slightly higher-pitched pronunciation of the syllable.

2.3.1 Vowel Assimilation

Vowels undergo a pervasive, regular assimilation process based on the following vowel. The low vowel /a/ becomes [ɛ] when the following syllable contains /i/, and /i/ likewise assimilates to [ɛ] before a syllable with /a/. The rounded vowel /o/ instead undergoes a dissimilation process with following /o/ syllables, also becoming [ɛ]. These patterns can be see in the following examples.

*[ɗoθ**a**-ga]*	"rose"	*[ɗoθ**ɛ**-ki]*	"(several) roses"
*[kob**i**-mi]*	"dogs"	*[kob**ɛ**-ma]*	"dog"
*[p'aq**o**-la]*	"hills"	*[p'aq**ɛ**-qo]*	"hill"

The /o/ dissimilation occurs for any number of /o/ syllables in a row.

*[ɗɛθ**o**-la]*	"homes"
*[ɗɛθ**ɛ**-q**o**]*	"a home"

*[dɛθ**ɛ**-q**ɛ**-to]* “at home (LOC)”

It’s important to note that when /i/ assimilates to [ɛ], it no longer triggers assimilation for a preceding /a/.

*[k**ɛ**ɓ**i**-ki]* “(several) berries” *[k**a**ɓ**ɛ**-ga]* “berry”

2.4 Orthography

Q’atheb’o is primarily written using the Adlam script, originally developed for transcribing the Fula language. The Adlam script is an alphabet with dedicated characters for consonants and vowels, and also includes separate capital and lowercase forms of each character. There are also several diacritics used to indicate long vowels, geminated consonants, or sounds from other languages. It is written from right to left, top to bottom, and the letters are typically combined in a cursive style similar to the Arabic script.

The Adlam script is well suited to the phonology of Q’atheb’o, with only three noteworthy differences:

1. /θ/ is written with the <ֆ> character which normally denotes the [f] sound
2. /ɬ/ is written with the <ↄ> character which normally denotes the [h] sound.
3. Ejectives are written using the corresponding voiceless plosives combined with the <◌ٔ> diacritic, which normally denotes a glottal stop (Arabic hamza) between the consonant and the following vowel. Thus <𞤐> /p/ → <𞤐ٔ> /p’/.

Q’atheb’o can also be transcribed in a Latin orthography. The Latin orthography uses an apostrophe <’> to indicate ejectives and implosives, and uses digraphs with <h> for /θ/ and /ɬ/. Below is a table showing all of the Adlam characters (both upper and lower case) used in Q’atheb’o, along with the phonemes they represent and their Latin orthography equivalents.

The remainder of this document will present all Q’atheb’o text, including examples, in the Latin or Adlam orthography.

Orthographies for Q’atheb’o

Adlam Symbol	Phoneme	Latin Symbol
𞤆/𞤦	/a/	a
𞤂/𞤢	/b/	b
𞤃/𞤣	/ɓ/	b’
𞤇/𞤧	/d/	d
𞤈/𞤨	/ɗ/	d’
𞤄/𞤤	/ɛ/	e
𞤋/𞤫	/g/	g
𞤍/𞤭	/ɬ/	hl
𞤊/𞤪	/i/	i
𞤑/𞤱	/k/	k
𞤒𞤵/𞤲𞤵	/kʼ/	k’
𞤌/𞤬	/l/	l
𞤎/𞤮	/m/	m
𞤏/𞤯	/n/	n
𞤅/𞤥	/o/	o
𞤐/𞤰	/p/	p
𞤐𞤵/𞤰𞤵	/pʼ/	p’
𞤔/𞤴	/q/	q
𞤔𞤵/𞤴𞤵	/qʼ/	q’
𞤕/𞤵	/t/	t
𞤕𞤵/𞤵𞤵	/tʼ/	t’
𞤖/𞤶	/θ/	th

3 Morphology

3.1 Nouns

The prototypical noun structure is a lexical root, a number affix based on animacy group, a possession marker if possessed, a case affix, and if appropriate a tense affix (usually on nominal-case nouns). This is represented by the following template, where <λ> represents the lexical root.

λ-NUM(-POSS)-CASE(-TENSE)

The citation form for nouns is the singular, accusative form with no other affixes.

3.1.1 Animacy Groups (Class/Gender)

There are five classes of nouns that determine the noun's declension pattern. Specifically, a noun's class affects number marking, verb and modifier agreement, and word order.

Group 1 – Humans, including human body parts and groups of humans (e.g. society).

Group 2 – Animate, self-moving things such as animals, waterfalls, fire, and animal body parts.

Group 3 – Manipulatable objects such as cooked food, tools, small stones, and crops.

Group 4 – Larger environmental objects such as trees, buildings, and clouds.

Group 5 – Abstract, formless things such as thoughts, ideas, emotions, and time.

3.1.2 Person & Number

Nouns always mark number. This appears as a suffix on the nominal root, and is specific to the group and number of the noun being

expressed.

Group 1 and *Group 2* differentiate single, dual, paucal, and plural. In *Group 3* and *Group 4* the dual and paucal merge leaving just three number distinctions, and these two groups take identical marking in the plural. *Group 5* only distinguishes single and plural, and uses opposite marking to *Group 1*. This is summarized in the table below.

Nominal Person-Number Marking

	Single	**Dual**	**Paucal**	**Plural**
Group 1	-ta	-thi	-tha	-gi
Group 2	-ma	-tha	-thi	-mi
Group 3	-ga	-ki	-ki	-la
Group 4	-qo	-hlo	-hlo	-la
Group 5	-gi	-ta	-ta	-ta

These number-marking suffixes only appear in nouns. Regardless of the Animacy Group of the relevant noun, verb agreement and modifier agreement only distinguish single and plural.

3.1.3 Possession

When nouns are possessed, they take an additional suffix *-t'o* after number and before the case marker. This form of possession only applies to nouns of a lower animacy group than the possessor; something cannot be possessed by a noun of equal or lower animacy. The possessor noun appears in genetive form after the possessed noun, much like an noun modifier.

(1) *k'oqahlo-la-t'o-Ø* *p'e-t'i-lo*
clothing-G3.PL-POSS-ACC 1SG-GEN-G3.PL

"my clothes"

(2) *qeni-thi-Ø* *p'e-t'i-go*
parent-G1.DU-ACC 1SG-GEN-G1.SG

"my parents"

(3)

k'oqahlo-la-t'o-Ø *qeni-thi-t'i-lo*
clothing-G3.PL-POSS-ACC parent-G1.DU-GEN-G3.PL

p'e-t'i-go
1SG-GEN-G1.PL

"my parents' clothes"

3.1.4 Case

There are nine nominal cases: nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, instrumental, locative, allative, ablative, and essive. Unlike most nominative-accusative langauges, Q'atheb'o is a marked-nominative language, which means the nominative case takes overt marking while the accusative does not.

Below is a table summarizing the cases, their morphological affix form, and their general meaning. Afterward each case is described in more detail.

Nominal Cases

Case	Affix	Meaning
Nominative	-d'a	*agent*
Accusative	-	*patient*
Dative	-ta	*recipient*
Genitive	-t'i	*"of"*
Instrumental	-gi	*"with"*
Locative	-to	*"at"*
Allative	-mo	*"to"*
Ablative	-di	*"from"*
Essive	-q'a	*"as"*

3.1.4.1 Nominative (*-d'a*)

The Nominative case indicates which noun is performing the action described by the verb. This is roughly equivalent to the subject or agent in an English sentence. The nominative case also requires tense marking after it.

(4) *hl-i* *p'a-d'e-b'i*
eat-IPFV 1SG-NOM-PRS

"I am eating."

(5) *det'-a* *ma-qo-d'a-do*
die-PFV tree-G4.SG-NOM-FUT

"The tree will die."

3.1.4.2 Accusative

The Accusative case indicates which noun is being acted upon by the verb. This is roughly equivalent to the object or patient in an English sentence.

(6) *hl-i* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *kab'e-la-Ø*
eat-IPFV-G3.PL 1SG-NOM-PRS berry-G3.PL-ACC

"I am eating berries."

(7) sting-PFV-G2.SG dog-G2.SG-ACC bee-G2.PAU-NOM-PST

"Some bees stung the dog."

3.1.4.3 Dative (*-ta*)

The Dative case indicates which noun is receiving something from the verb. The thing being received could be something physical like a gift as in (8) below, or something abstract like speech as in (9) below, and need not be explicitly stated. In both cases dative noun is the "beneficiary" of the verb.

(8) *t-e-di* *p'a-ta* *gi-d'e-mi*
make_pottery-PFV-G3.SG 1SG-DAT 3SG-NOM-PST

tak'elo-ga-Ø *lothi-go*
pot-G3.SG-ACC this-G3.SG

"She made this pot for me."

(9) *q'ath-o-k'i* *ge-ta* *q'ameq'i-gi-t'o-Ø*
speak-IMP-G5.SG 3SG-DAT story-G5.SG-POSS-ACC

qi-t'i-go
2SG-GEN-G5.SG

"Tell him your story."

3.1.4.4 Genitive (*-t'i*)

The Genitive case indicates that the noun is related to another noun in some way. This could be a form of possession as in (10) below, or simply association like a body part as in (11). Unlike other cases, genetive nouns function like modifiers, appearing after the noun they are related to and taking modifier agreement affixes.

(10) *tho-ma-t'o-Ø* *p'e-t'i-mo*
cat-G2.SG-POSS-ACC 1SG-GEN-G2.SG

"my cat"

(11) *hleb'i-thi-Ø* *p'e-t'i-tho*
hand-G1.DU-ACC 1SG-GEN-G1.PL

"my hands"

3.1.4.5 Instrumental (*-gi*)

The Instrumental case indicates which noun is used to perform the verb. This could be a tool, a method, or even a collaborator.

(12) *thap-e-pi* *gi-d'e-b'i* *qaq'o-me-gi*
hit-PFV-1SG 3SG-NOM-PRS fish-G2.SG-INST

"He hit me with a fish."

When used with a temporal noun, it indicates that the predicate occurs *throughout* the instrumental time period as seen in (13) below.

(13) *moq'-i-k'i* *ge-d'a-q'o*
swallow-IPFV-G5.SG 3SG-NOM-REM.PST

page-gi-Ø *tethe-gi-gi*
happiness-G5.SG-ACC year-G5.SG-INST

"He was happy throughout the year."

When a stative noun like a feeling or emotion is put in the instrumental case, it highlights the state as a *cause or contributor* to the verb occuring, as seen in (14) below.

(14) *thap-e-pi* *gi-d'e-b'i* *p'at'oni-gi-gi*
hit-PFV-1SG 3SG-NOM-PRS anger-G5.SG-INST

"He hit me out of anger."

3.1.4.6 Locative (*-to*)

The Locative case indicates which noun the verb occurs at or near. It is broadly used for any noun around which the predicate happens without conveying a sense of motion toward or away from the noun.

(15) *qaq'o-qith-i* *meb'a-d'e-b'i* *qine-ma-to*
fish-catch-IPFV 1PAU-NOM-PRS river-G2.SG-LOC

"We catch fish at the river."

When used with a temporal noun it indicates that the predicate occurs *within* the locative time frame as seen in (16) below. Similarly, when used with a stative noun it indicates that the predicate occurs *while* the locative state was in effect as seen in (17) below.

(16) *t-a* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *d'ed'ob'e-gi-to*
make_pottery-PFV 1SG-NOM-PRS evening-G5.SG-LOC

"I make pottery in the evening."

(17) *nip-i* *tho-me-d'e-b'i* *b'ek'e-gi-to*
live-IPFV cat-G2.PL-NOM-PRS leisure-G5.SG-LOC

"Cats live in leisure."

3.1.4.7 Allative (*-mo*)

The Allative case indicates which noun the verb occurs toward. Unlike the Locative case, this case emphasizes motion relative to the inflected noun, and frames the noun as the destination of that motion.

(18) *neq'-a* *p'a-d'a-na* *manena-qe-mo*

walk-PFV 1SG-NOM-FUT school-G4.SG-ALL

"I will walk to school."

When used with a temporal or stative noun, it indicates that the predicate occurs *until* the allative time or state is reached.

3.1.4.8 Ablative (*-di*)

The Ablative case indicates which noun the verb occurs away from. Unlike the Locative case, this case emphasizes motion relative to the inflected noun, and frames the noun as the origin of that motion.

(19) *mog-a* *b'eno-me-di* *gaq'e-ta-d'e-mi*
shine-PFV sun-G2.SG-ABL light-G5.PL-NOM-PRS

"Light shines from the sun."

When used with temporal or stative nouns it indicates that the predicate has occured *since* the ablative time or state.

3.1.4.9 Essive (*-q'a*)

The Essive inidicates which noun the nominative subject is equivalent to or existing as while the verb occurs. On its own an essive noun typically reflects something which only situationally describes the nominative subject but might not be something fundamental to them.

(20) *t'eq-i* *goge-d'e-b'i* *thito-la-Ø*
wear-IPFV 3PL-NOM-PRS vines--G3.PL-ACC

k'oqahlo-la-q'a
clothing--G3.PL-ESS

"They wear vines as clothes."

However, when used with one of the copulae it can convey true or lasting equivalence as in (21) below.

(21) *noteb'-i* *lothe-ma-d'e-b'i*
equivalence.COP-IPFV that-G2.SG-NOM-PRS

kobe-ma-q'a

dog-G2.SG-ESS

"That is a dog."

Ultimately the temporary or permanent nature of the essive-nominative equivalence is dependant on the context, and periphrastic constructions can be used to clarify which sense is intended.

3.1.5 Tense

In Q'atheb'o sentences, clause-level tense is marked on nominative nouns rather than on verbs. All nouns in the nominative case will mark the same clause-level tense.

Below is a table summarizing both simple and relative tense affixes. Each will be described in the following subsections.

Tense Affixes

	Simple	**Relative**
Future	-do	-na
Present	-b'i	-ta
Past	-mi	-p'i
Remote Past	-q'o	

3.1.5.1 Simple Tense

Simple clauses make four tense distinctions: present, future, past, and remote past.

Present tense (*-b'i*) is used for events happening at roughly the same time as the moment of speech.

(22) *lil-i* *hlatha-me-d'e-b'i* *d'ob'ata-qe-to*
fall-IPFV rain-G2.PL-NOM-PRS outside-G4.SG-LOC

"It's raining outside."

Events that have just happened or events that are about to happen are typically also rendered in the present tense (often with perfective

verbal marking respectively), as seen in sentences (23) and (24) below.

(23) *hlebi-k'ebol-a-tha* *ge-d'e-b'i* *tikimoqa-qo-∅*
hand-poke-PFV-G4.SG 3SG-NOM-PRS beehive-G4.SG-ACC

"He just poked the beehive."

(24) *b'ib'od'-a* *p'a-d'e-b'i*
shower-PFV 1SG-NOM-PRS

"I'm going to take a shower now."

Future tense (*-do*) is used for events that are expected to happen sometime after the moment of speech.

(25) *ligin-i* *gi-d'a-do* *tetha-te-gi* *biqe-to*
study-IPFV 3SG-NOM-FUT year-G5.PL-INS three-G5.PL

"She will be studying for three years."

Past tense (*-mi*) is used to mark events not long before the moment of speech.

(26) *p'apep'a-gab'ahl-a* *b'abo-d'e-mi* *ned'ob'ito-gi-to*
groceries-buy-PFV 1DU-NOM-PST yesterday-G5.SG-LOC

"We bought groceries yesterday."

Remote-past tense (*-q'o*) is used to mark events long before to the moment of speech.

(27) *paq'-e-q'i* *p'a-d'a-q'o* *ned'otethe-gi-to*
see-PFV-2SG 1SG-NOM-REM.PST prior.year-G5.SG-LOC

bek'eb'ito-gi-to
holiday-G5.SG-LOC

"I saw you during the holiday last year"

The distinction between *past* and *remote-past* involves both length of time and relevance to the present moment. For example, imagine someone's house burned down and they were left homeless. If the next day they were asked what happened, they would certainly

respond using the *past* tense.

(28) *nadaqatap'-a* *d'ehle-qo-d'e-mi* *p'e-t'i-qo*
burn_down-PFV house-G4.SG-NOM-PST 1SG-GEN-G5.SG

"My house burned down (recently)."

Even up to several months later they would still likely describe the situation in the *past* tense as in sentence (28). However, if they had been able to find a new long-term residence within a week, they would likely start using the *remote-past* tense instead because the destruction of their house was no longer as immediately relevant.

(29) *nadaqatap'-a* *d'ehle-qo-d'a-q'o*
burn_down-PFV house-G4.SG-POSS-NOM-REM.PST

p'e-t'i-qo
1SG-GEN-G5.SG

"My house burned down (a while ago)."

Still, even if they remained homeless for the entire time afterward, they would likely start using the *remote-past* tense after a year or more had passed.

3.1.5.2 Relative Tense

Within dependant clauses the past and remote-past merge into a single tense, leaving three tense distinctions: **present** (*-na*), **future** (*-ta*), and **past** (*-p'i*). The point of reference for these relative tenses is not the moment of speech, but rather the time of the event in the matrix predicate.

3.2 Pronouns

3.2.1 Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns only exist for humans and follow Group 1 morphosyntactic patterns. They mark person in addition to number.

Personal Pronouns

	Single	**Dual**	**Paucal**	**Plural**
1st	p’a	b’abo	mib’a	b’op’i
2nd	qi	qona	q’ob’a	thoqi
3rd	gi	gatho	geb’a	gogi

3.2.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

There are two demonstrative pronouns in Q’atheb’o. One is for referents near the speaker, the proximal demonstrative *lothi*, and the other is for referents far from the speaker, the distal *kedi*. These demonstratives take the same number marking as other nouns, matching the appropriate animacy group of the referent.

(30) *noteb’-i* *lothe-ta-d’e-b’i*
equivalence.COP-IPFV this-G1.SG-NOM-PRS

qane-ta-q’a *p’e-t’i-to*
parent-G1.SG-ESS 1SG-GEN-G1.SG

“This is my mother.”

Like the English demonstratives “this” and “that”, the Q’atheb’o demonstratives can also be used to specify another noun rather than replacing it. In this case they act like modifiers, appearing after the referent and taking modifier agreement rather than number/case marking.

(31) *l-opa* *ba-ma-mo* *kedi-mo*
GO-PROH squirrel-G2.SG-ALL that-G2.SG

“Don’t go near that squirrel.”

3.2.3 Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are formed from personal or demonstrative pronouns by prefixing *pat’o-* to the front. Reflexive pronouns refer to another established noun and are not used by themselves, though they can appear earlier in the same sentence as the referent.

(32)

(32) *danopo-t'aqed'-a* *q'ed'otalo-ta-d'e-mi* *pat'o-ge-ta*
letter-write-PFV priest-G1.SG-NOM-PST self-3SG-DAT

"The priest wrote a letter to herself."

Reflexive nouns are frequently incorporated into verbs when the subject and object match.

3.2.4 Interrogative Pronouns

There is a general interrogative pronoun *bi* used in most wh-questions. It is typically unspecified for animacy group, and directly takes case (and tense) marking. In such situations it isn't constrained by the constraints of the animacy heirarchy, but usually follows the group assumed by the speaker (such as Group 1 for people or Group 4 for locations). This assumed group can also be conveyed if desired, by adding the appropriate number suffix just like other nouns.

(33) *hl-a-lo* *be-ta-d'e-mi* *keb'i-ki-Ø*
eat-PFV-G3.PL Q-G1.SG-NOM-PST BERRY-G3.PAU-ACC

"Who ate the berries?"

(34) *t'eqid'-i* *qe-d'e-b'i* *bi-gi*
write-IPFV 2SG-NOM-PRS Q-INST

"What are you writing with?"

(35) *k'-a* *b'abo-d'e-bi* *bi-to*
sit-PFV 1DU-NOM-PRS Q-LOC

"Where are we?"

3.3 Verbs

The prototypical verb structure without noun incorporation is a lexical root, an aspect/mood affix, optionally a passive affix, and person-number agreement with the direct object (if one exists). This is represented by the following template, where <λ> represents the lexical root.

λ-ASP:MOD(-PASS)-PNUM:OBJ

When a verb involves noun incorporation, the incorporated noun's lexical root (represented by <ƛ̃> in the following template) appears as a prefix immediately in front of the verb's lexical root, and the person-number agreement is dropped if appropriate (see Noun Incorporation for more details).

ƛ̃-λ-ASP:MOD(-PASS)(-PNUM:OBJ)

The citation form for verbs is the lexical root with perfective aspect, and no other affixes.

3.3.1 Aspect/Mood

Verbs in Q'atheb'o do not inflect for tense (see Nominal Tense), but do have different forms based on the aspect and mood.

3.3.1.1 Perfective (-*a*)

The perfective aspect indicates that the verb occurs completely, shifting focus somewhat to the beginning or completion of the action. The perfective aspect also plays a major role in the expression of phasal polarity. The perfective is the citation form for verbs.

3.3.1.2 Imperfective (-*i*)

The imperfective aspect highlights the verb as an action occuring through time, deemphasizing the start and end of the action or framing it as background context. The imperfective aspect also plays a major role in the expression of phasal polarity.

3.3.1.3 Imperative (-*o*)

The imperative aspect is used for commands or urgent statements to the listener. Imperative clauses almost always drop the subject. The implied subject is a second-person pronoun with appropriate number to how many listeners are being addressed, and implied present-tense marking. This implied subject can be recovered if

desired as seen in the expanded sentence (38) below, but such an inclusion of the subject carries a strongly condescending tone (see the section on commands for further discussion).

(36) *didim-o*
be.careful-IMP

"Be careful!"

(37) *k'ak'-o-di* *hlotigi-ga-Ø* *k'ahla* *theni*
close-IMP-G3.SG door-G3.SG-ACC so.that NEG

d'ob'atal-a *tho-ma-d'e-b'i*
outside-go-PFV cat-G2.SG-NOM-PRS

"Close the door before the cat gets out!"

(38) *tek'eq-o-di* *thoqe-d'e-b'i* *p'a-mo*
carry-IMP-G3.SG 2PL-NOM-PRS 1SG-ALL

p'ek'oma-ga-Ø
bush-G3.SG-ACC

"Bring me a shrubbery."

3.3.1.4 Prohibitive (*-opa*)

The prohibitive aspect is used to tell the listener not to undergo an action. In some ways this is like a negative imperative, and similarly has an implied second-person subject. However, both imperative and prohibitive verbs can take standard negation with *theni*; see the section on Requests and Commands for a description of the nuance between these different uses.

3.3.1.5 Optative (*-ob'i*)

The optative aspect is used to indicate that the speaker hopes for the situation being described to happen. Although it conveys the speaker's desire, it does not involve an implicit subject or even necessarily a first-person subject. Instead it can occur with any predicate that might otherwise take perfective or imperfective marking, and simply conveys additional information about the speaker's mood about that predicate.

3.3.1.6 Subordinate (*-ili*)

The subordinate aspect is used in relative clauses. It indicates that the verb is not the main predicate of the phrase, but is adding additional information to the main predicate.

3.3.2 Direct Object Agreement

Transitive verbs are marked for the animacy group, person, and number of the direct object. Only single and plural number is distinguished. If multiple direct objects occur then the agreement will be the plural form of the highest animacy group, as seen in sentence (39) below.

(39) *thap-a-mo* *p'a-d'e-mi* *kilo-ma-Ø*
hit-PFV-G2.PL 1SG-NOM-PST bird-G2.SG-ACC

d'ameq'e-qe-t'o-Ø *kade-me-t'i-qo*
nest-G4.SG-POSS-ACC that-G2.SG-GEN-G4.SG

"I hit the bird and its nest with the stone."

The various agreement markers are listed in the table below.

Verbal Direct-Object Agreement

	Single	**Plural**
1st	-pi	-po
2nd	-q'i	-qa
3rd	-gi	-ga
G1	-ti	-ta
G2	-ni	-mo
G3	-di	-lo
G4	-tha	-lo
G5	-k'i	-ko

3.3.3 Noun Incorporation

3.3.3.1 Lexical Compounding

Lexical Compounding turns a transitive verb into an intransitive verb with a narrower scope, by incorporating a noun which generalizes and loses its individual semantic and syntactic characteristic. This is generally used in contexts without specific individuated patients.

3.3.3.2 Manipulation of Case

Another type of noun incorporation affects the structure of a clause by moving an instrument, location, or possessed noun to direct object (or even subject) role. This turns a transitive verb into another transitive verb, but with different relationships to the nouns in the phrase. Unlike Lexical Compounding, this could involve individuated objects and doesn't necessarily mean that the incorporated object is non-specific.

3.3.4 Copulae

There are several verbs in Q'atheb'o that perform the functions of English "be". Aside from marking tense ("was, is, will be"; see nominal tense), the English verb "be" links a subject to another noun phrase reflecting a property, states, location, equivalence, exists, or some other aspect of the subject. These various types of noun phrases are differentiated in Q'atheb'o by different verbs, though they all take the form of a body part incorporated into the verb *b'a* roughly meaning "idly move" (see dictionary for related terms). When using these copula verbs, the compliment noun phrase typically appears in a specific case other than accusative.

3.3.4.1 Properties - *q'oqeb'a* (head-be)

(40) *q'oqeb'-a* *qona-d'e-b'i* *kikip'o-q'a*
property.COP-PFV 2DU-NOM-PRS tall-ESS

"You two are tall."

(41) *q'oqib'-i* *kome-ga-d'a-b'i* *moni-q'a*
property.COP-IPFV window-G3.SG-NOM-PRS open-ESS

"The window is open."

3.3.4.2 Emotions - *moq'ab'a* (throat-be)

(42) *moq'ab'-a* *p'a-d'e-mi* *p'at'oni-ge-q'a*
emotion.COP-PFV 1SG-NOM-PST anger-G5.SG-ESS

"I was angry."

3.3.4.3 Locations - *t'ethab'a* (foot-be)

(43) *t'ethab'-a* *meb'a-d'a-do* *manena-qe-to*
location.COP-PFV 1PAU-NOM-FUT school-G4.SG-LOC

"We will be at school."

3.3.4.4 Equivalence - *notab'a* (heart-be)

(44) *noteb'-i* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *b'aneno-ta-q'o*
equivalence.COP-IPFV 1SG-NOM-PRS potter-G1.SG-ESS

"I am a potter."

3.3.4.5 Existance - *qip'ab'a* (body-be)

(45) *qip'ab'-a* *kobe-ma-d'a-q'o*
exist.COP-PFV dog-G2.SG-NOM-REM.PST

"There was a dog."

3.4 Adverbs

Adverbs are a special class of words in Q'atheb'o that change how a verb relates to the rest of the discourse. They occur before a verb, and differ from verb modifiers which add meaning or nuance to a verb.

The citation form for adverbs is the root with no additional affixes, which is the only form they ever appear in.

3.4.1 Negation

The adverb *theni* negates the following verb. This is often a simple negation, but can sometimes create special interpretations when combined with other adverbs (especially temporal adverbs or phasal

polarity). It always occurs right before the verb, and other adverbs must precede it.

3.4.2 Time

Some adverbs place verbs in context of the broader discourse. Some simple examples include *lapo* (“earlier”) and *deba* (“later”) which place the affected verb as background context and places it either before or after another verb, respectively.

(46) breakfast-eat-PFV 1SG-NOM-PST *deba* go-PFV
later

school-G4.SG-ALL

“I ate breakfast, then went to school.” or “I went to school after I ate breakfast.”

Another temporal adverb is *b’aqa* (“yet”), which emphasizes that the affected verb continues to reflect the current situation and hasn’t changed. This is described in more detail in the section on Phasal Polarity.

3.4.3 Purpose

The adverb *k’ahla* (“because; so that”) indicates that the affected verb describes the reason or intention for another verb to happen. It usually links two independent clauses that might otherwise require one of them to become a relative clause.

3.4.4 Result

The adverb *tak’o* (“thus”) indicates that the affected verb is the result of some other predicate.

3.4.5 Linking Clauses

There are several adverbs that specify the relationship between one predicate to another. These include *dala* (“rather”), *deqo* (“moreover”), *kid’i* (“however”), and *hlek’o* (“also”). They place the affected verb in context of another predicate, usually the predicate that preceded it.

3.5 Modifiers

Most modifiers in Q'atheb'o can modify either nouns or verbs. The root of the modifier is used in both situations, though with nouns they take additional inflection.

The citation form for modifiers is the root with no additional affixes, as it would appear when modifying a verb.

3.5.1 Modifying Verbs

When modifiers are used with verbs, they occur after the verb and before any noun phrases.

(47) *k'-a* *thohla* *tho-ma-d'e-mi* *kome-ga-to*
sit-PFV quiet cat-G2.SG-NOM-PST window-G3.SG-LOC

"The cat sat quietly by the window."

(48) *hl-e-di* *b'itedo* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *tetho-ga-Ø*
eat-PFV-G3.SG daily 1SG-NOM-PRS egg-G3.SG-ACC

pat'e-ga-q'a
breakfast-G3.SG-ESS

"I eat an egg for breakfast every day."

3.5.2 Modifying Nouns

When modifiers are used with nouns, they occur after the noun and inflect to agree with the number and class of the noun.

Noun Modifier Agreement

CLASS	Single	Plural
G1	-to	-go
G2	-mo	-mo
G3	-go	-lo
G4	-qo	-lo
G5	-go	-to

(49) *k'-a* *tho-ma-d'e-mi* *thohla-mo*
sit-PFV cat-G2.SG-NOM-PST quiet-G2.SG

kome-ga-to
window-G3.SG-LOC

"The quiet cat sat by the window."

(50) *hl-e-di* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *tetho-ga-Ø*
eat-PFV-G3.SG 1SG-NOM-PRS egg-G3.SG-ACC

pat'e-ga-q'a *b'itede-go*
breakfast-G3.SG-ESS daily-G3.SG

"I eat an egg for daily breakfast."

3.5.3 Numbers

Numbers in Q'atheb'o are modifiers that specify either the number of instances (cardinal, e.g. "three") or position in a sequence (ordinal, e.g. "third"). They can modify both verbs and nouns. When modifying verbs, a number indicates multiple occurances of the action. When modifying a noun, the number indicates multiple entities and takes the same noun agreement as regular modifiers.

(51) *p'et-a-mo* *ge-d'e-mi* *qaq'o-thi-Ø*
cook-PFV-G2.PL 3SG-NOM-PST fish-G2.PAU-ACC

biqe-mo
three-G2.PL

"He cooked three fish."

(52) *l-o* *d'ehle-qe-mo* *qo-biqe-qo*
go-IMP house-G4.SG-ALL ORD-three-G4.SG

"Go to the third house."

(53) *neq'-a* *batha* *p'a-d'e-b'i* *ma-to*
walk-PFV ten 1SG-NOM-PST tree-G4.SG-LOC

"I've walked past this tree ten times!"

Below is a table of numbers 1 to 10. Aside from 1, all ordinal numbers

follow a regular derivation pattern by prefixing *qo-* to the cardinal number.

Numbers 1 through 10

	Cardinal	**Ordinal**
one	theqa	thit’i
two	kiti	qo-kiti
three	biqo	qo-biqo
four	pet’a	qo-pet’a
five	goqi	qe-goqi
six	bok’a	qe-bok’a
seven	lep’i	qo-lep’i
eight	b’od’i	qe-b’od’i
nine	q’eb’a	qo-q’eb’a
ten	batha	qo-batha

4 Derivation

Nouns, verbs, and modifiers all have words derived from each other using various affixes. Adverbs, however, do not appear to be involved in any derivational processes. Below are some of the most common derivational paradigms. Note that nouns are listed with singular number agreement of the appropriate animacy group as is typical for citation form; in this section it will be separated form the lexical root by a hyphen.

4.1 Nouns

4.1.1 From Nouns

4.1.1.1 *-q'i*

This suffix derives personal nouns from individuated abstract nouns. The result is a Group 1 noun.

k'epeliki-gi	"a lie"	*k'epelikiq'e-ta*	"liar"
kibik'o-gi	"idea"	*kibik'oq'i-ta*	"thinker"

4.1.1.2 *-talo*

This suffix denotes someone with an institutional relationship to the base noun. The result is a Group 1 noun.

b'ipe-qo	"land"	*b'ipotalo-ta*	"land-owner"
q'ed'o-gi	"god"	*q'ed'otalo-ta*	"priest"

4.1.1.3 *-no*

This suffix denotes someone who uses or is associated with the base noun. The result is a Group 1 noun.

b'ano-ga	"clay"	*b'aneno-ta*	"potter"
q'ohlimo-ga	"bow"	*q'ohlimeno-ta*	"archer"

4.1.1.4 *-li*

This suffix denotes someone who possess the abstract base noun. The result is a Group 1 noun.

papomi-gi	“beauty”	*papomile-ta*	“beautiful person”
tigoq’i-gi	“wisdom”	*tigoq’ile-ta*	“sage”

4.1.1.5 *-dato*

This suffix derives a general abstracted sense from a personal or abstract noun. The result is a Group 5 noun.

b’at’a-ta	“fool”	*b’at’adato-gi*	“foolishness”
nehleqi-gi	“a change”	*nehlaqedato-gi*	“evolution”

4.1.1.6 *-hlepi*

This suffix denotes a general process increasing or expanding the base noun. The result is a Group 5 noun.

b’ed’obi-qo	“city”	*b’ed’obihlepi-gi*	“urbanization”
gaq’e-gi	“light”	*gaq’ahlepi-gi*	“illumination”

4.1.1.7 *k’i-*

This prefix derives a negative opposite from the base noun. The result is a noun of the same Group as the base noun.

dobip’i-gi	“trust”	*k’idobipi’i-gi*	“mistrust”
q’ed’o-gi	“god”	*k’iq’ed’o-gi*	“demon”

4.1.1.8 *gotha-*

This prefix denotes an excessive degree of the base noun. The result is a Group 5 noun.

k’apop’iki-gi	“desire”	*k’apop’ikigotha-gi*	“greed”
hlap’o-ga	“water”	*gothahlap’o-gi*	“flood”

4.1.1.9 *mado-*

This prefix denotes a great, important version of the base noun. The result is a noun of the same Group as the base noun.

t'igit'e-ga	"creative work"	*madot'igit'e-ga*	"a classic"
thit'ola-ta	"leader"	*madothit'ola-ta*	"great leader"

4.1.2 From Verbs

4.1.2.1 *-eda*

This suffix denotes someone who performs the base verb. The result is a Group 1 noun.

t'aqed'a	"write"	*t'eqid'ed'a-ta*	"writer"
qaq'oqetha	"catch fish"	*qaq'oqithed'a-ta*	"fisherman"

4.1.2.2 *-ohleli*

This suffix derives the abstract sense of the base verb. The result is a Group 5 noun.

gomina	"appear"	*gominohleli-gi*	"appearance"
nepa	"live"	*nepohleli-gi*	"longevity"

4.1.2.3 *-ek'a*

This suffix derives a casual/nonserious abstract noun related to the base verb. The result is a Group 5 noun.

neq'a	"walk"	*naq'ek'e-gi*	"wandering"
b'a	"to idle"	*b'ek'e-gi*	"leisure"

4.1.2.4 *-eb'o*

This suffix denotes the process or result of the base verb. The result is a Group 3 or Group 5 noun depending on the method of performing the action.

temola	“attach”	*temeleb’o-ga*	“attachment”
q’atha	“to speak”	*q’atheb’o-gi*	“language”

4.1.2.5 *-iki*

This suffix denotes one instance of the base verb. The result is a Group 3 or Group 5 noun depending on the method of performing the action.

thapa	“hit”	*thepike-ga*	“a blow”
k’epala	“lie”	*k’epeliki-gi*	“a lie”

4.1.3 From Modifiers

4.1.3.1 *-pi*

This suffix denotes the abstract sense of the base modifier. The result is a Group 5 noun.

dek’o	“large”	*dek’opi-gi*	“largeness”
patab’a	“poor”	*patab’epi-gi*	“poverty”

4.1.3.2 *-paga*

This suffix derives a personal noun with the characteristics of the base modifier. The result is a Group 1 noun.

lip’imi	“small”	*lip’imepaga-ta*	“small person”
patab’a	“poor”	*patab’apaga-ta*	“beggar”

4.2 Verbs

4.2.1 From Nouns

There are no verbs derived from nouns. There is widespread noun incorporation which can create new lexical items, but this is considered a different process from the derivation described in this chapter.

4.2.2 From Verbs

4.2.2.1 *-enab*

This affix can turn an intransitive verb into a transitive verb, or turn a transitive verb into a causative verb.

det'a	"die"	*dit'enaba*	"kill"
moq'a	"feel"	*moq'enaba*	"cause to feel"

4.2.3 From Modifiers

4.2.3.1 *-hlal*

This affix is used to turn onomatopoeic modifiers into verbs.

p'ip'iti	"sputtering"	*p'ip'itehlala*	"sputter"
nat'alo	"crunchy"	*nat'alohlala*	"crunch"

4.3 Adverbs

There are only a limited number of adverbs in Q'atheb'o, and no noteworthy derivational patterns exist among this closed class.

4.4 Modifiers

4.4.1 From Nouns

4.4.1.1 *-do*

This suffix conveys a sense of repeated occurances of the base noun it derives from. It can also be used with numeral modifiers to encode a sense of "every N".

b'ito-gi	"a day"	*b'itedo*	"daily"
pet'a	"four"	*pet'ado*	"every four"

4.4.1.2 *-p'o*

This suffix conveys the possession of the quality denoted by the base noun.

qip'o-gi	"strength"	*qip'ep'o*	"strong"
p'at'oni-gi	"anger"	*p'at'onip'o*	"angry"

4.4.1.3 *-t'oki*

This suffix denotes the possibility to give rise to the base noun.

hlithepe-gi	"doubt"	*hlithepat'oki*	"suspicious"
k'eb'i-gi	"fear"	*k'eb'itok'i*	"frightening"

4.4.1.4 *-b'op'a*

This suffix conveys the occurence before the base noun.

ped'et'i-gi	"war"	*ped'et'ib'op'a*	"pre-war"
p'itib'o-ga	"food"	*p'itib'eb'op'a*	"pre-meal"

4.4.1.5 *-p'ap'o*

This suffix conveys the occurence after the base noun.

ped'et'i-gi	"war"	*ped'at'ep'ap'o*	"post-war"
p'itib'o-ga	"food"	*p'itib'op'ap'o*	"post-meal"

4.4.2 From Verbs

4.4.2.1 *-eq'o*

This suffix conveys that something has undergone or experienced the base verb.

p'olena	"grow up"	*p'olineq'o*	"grown"
p'eta	"cook"	*p'iteq'o*	"cooked"

4.4.3 From Modifiers

4.4.3.1 *-hlena*

This suffix conveys a lesser degree of the original modifier.

detheki	“spicy”	*dethekihlena*	“somewhat spicy”
d’iqep’a	“dark”	*d’iqep’ahlena*	“dim”

5 Syntax

5.1 Basic Word Order

Independant clauses follow a somewhat strict word order. The predicate verb occurs at the beginning of the sentence, preceded by adverbs and succeeded by verb-modifiers. After that, the noun phrases occur in the order of the animacy groups from Group 1 to Group 5. Noun modifiers, including relative clauses modifying nouns, directly follow the noun they modify.

(54) *tek'oq-a-mo* *meb'a-d'a-na* *qaq'o-la-∅*
carry-PFV-G2.PL 1PAU-NOM-FUT fish-G2.PL-ACC

goqi-lo *qine-me-di* *d'ehle-qe-t'e-mo*
five-G2.PL river-G2.SG-ABL house-G4.SG-POSS-ALL

qob'e-t'i-qo
2PAU-GEN-G4.SG

"We will bring five large fish from the river to your house."

Personal pronouns usually occur before other Group 1 nouns. First-person and second-person pronouns can occur in any order relative to each other, as sentences (55) and (56) demonstrate. However, third-person pronouns always occur after the other two; sentence (57) would be considered ungrammatical.

(55) *neq'-a* *p'e-di* *qi-mo* *ge-d'e-mi*
walk-PFV 1SG-ABL 2SG-ALL 3SG-NOM-PST

"He walked from me to you."

(56) *neq'-a* *qi-mo* *p'e-di* *ge-d'e-mi*
walk-PFV 2SG-ALL 1SG-ABL 3SG-NOM-PST

"He walked from me to you."

(57) * *neq'-a* *ge-d'e-mi* *qi-mo* *p'e-di*
walk-PFV 3SG-NOM-PST 2SG-ALL 1SG-ABL

* “He walked from me to you.”

5.2 Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are predicates that are being used to modify part of another clause (known as the matrix clause). These predicates contain everything a regular clause would contain, but typically take different tense or aspect marking and appear verb-finally rather than verb-initially. When affecting the other clause as a whole, they appear before the matrix verb as seen in sentence (58) below. When affecting a noun, they appear after the matrix noun and begin with the relativizer *da* as seen in sentence (59) below.

(58) *p’a-d’a-na* *lapo* *t’ek’ob’-ili* *q’oqi-mitod-a*
G1.SG-NOM-REL:FUT before sleep-REL face-wash-PFV

p’a-d’e-b’i
G1.SG-NOM-PRS

“Before I would sleep, I wash my face.”

(59) *theni* *tokig-e-di* *p’a-d’e-b’i* *b’oq’id’o-ga-∅*
NEG find-PFV-G3.SG 1SG-NOM-PRS scarf-G3.SG-ACC

da *p’a-ta* *q’akeba-ta-t’o-d’e-p’i*
REL 1SG-DAT grandmother-G1.SG-NOM-REL:PST

p’e-t’i *(kade-ga-∅)* *d’-a-di*
1SG-GEN (THAT-G3.SG-ACC) make-PFV-G3.SG

“I can’t find the scarf my grandmother made for me.”

5.3 Expressing Time

5.3.1 Temporal Subordinate Clauses

To express an event that occurs at some time relative to another primary event, the verb of the subordinate event moves to the end of the subordinate clause, and the subordinate verb and noun take special aspect and tense marking.

5.3.2 Phasal Polarity

Phasal polarity is the expression of a change in situation between two points in time. This is typically grouped into four arrangements, two of which compare the current situation to a prior state and two of which compare the current state to a later state. When comparing to a prior situation, the term *ALREADY* is used when the current situation has something the prior situation does not (as in "He is *already* asleep") while the term *NO LONGER* is used when the current situation doesn't have some quality that the prior situation had (as in "He is *no longer* asleep"). When comparing to a subsequent situation, the term *STILL* is used when the current situation has some quality that the subsequent situation will not (as in "He is *still* asleep (but won't be later)") and the term *NOT YET* is used when the current situation lacks a quality that the subsequent situation will have (as in "He is *not yet* asleep (but will be later)"). These common distinctions are summarized in the table below, where a '+' indicates the presence of some quality at that point in time and a '-' indicates a lack of the quality at that point in time.

Types of Phasal Polarity

Term	Prior Time	Current Time	Subsequent Time
ALREADY	-	+	
NO LONGER	+	-	
STILL		+	-
NOT YET		-	+

In Q'atheb'o, each of these phasal polarity distinctions are expressed in multiple ways depending on the lexical and aspectual qualities of the predicate.

5.3.2.1 Perfective Verb

Perfective verbs inherently convey a neutral sense of *ALREADY* by focusing on the start or end of an action.

5.3.2.2 Imperfective Verb

Imperfective verbs with stative or locational arguments inherently convey a neutral sense of *STILL* by focusing on the duration of the

predicate.

When such verbs are negated with *theni*, the inherent timing changes to *NO LONGER*.

5.3.2.3 Adverb *b'aqa*

The adverb *b'aqa* ("yet") is used to convey counterfactual *STILL*, emphasizing that the present situation has not changed despite some expectation or desire that it be otherwise. This is much stronger than a lone perfective verb, which carries only a weak implication of *STILL*.

When *b'aqa* is used with a negated verb, it gains the meaning of *NOT YET*, emphasizing that the present situation lacks some expected or desired quality.

6 Discourse

6.1 Commands and Requests

6.1.1 Commands

Commands create an expectation that the listener perform some action. These are strong statements that imply some importance, urgency, or authority between the speaker and the listener.

6.1.1.1 Imperative Verb

The most obvious way to create a command is to use a verb in the Imperative mood. This tells the listener that the speaker expects them to do something immediately.

6.1.2 Negative Commands

Negative commands are commands to NOT do something. They involve a negation of a command as described above.

6.1.2.1 Prohibitive Verb

A verb with prohibitive mood inherently conveys that the listener should not undergo some action. It carries a neutral tone and could be described as more of a suggestion than an authoritative command. It lacks the urgency or expectations of a negated imperative.

(60) *theni* *t'ethab'-opi* *ɗoɓata-qe-to*
NEG location.COP-PROH outside-G4.SG-LOC

d'ed'obe-gi-mo *moli-go*
late-G5.SG-ALL much-G5.SG

"Don't stay out too late."

6.1.2.2 Negated Imperative Verb

An imperative command can be negated to form a negative command. This has the same strictness, urgency, and potential rudeness as a regular imperative verb. It is only used to emphasize

the time-sensative or authoritative nature of the command compared to the basic prohibitive form.

(61) *theni* *hl-o-di* *kade-ga*
NEG eat-IMP-G3.SG that-G3.SG

"Don't eat that!"

(62) *theni* *q'ath-o* *p'a-ta* *qe-d'e-b'i*
NEG speak-IMP 1SG-DAT 2SG-NOM-PRS

"Don't speak to me."

6.1.3 Requests

Requests convey something the speaker wishes to happen that the listener could help them with. There is no expectation or obligation that the listener help, merely the suggestion that they could.

6.1.3.1 Optative Verb

One way to make a request is to state the desired situation using an optative verb. This kind of statement leaves room for the listener to assist in making the statement a reality, based on the context. The indirect nature of the statement conveys a degree of formality and politeness.

A common use of the optative request is ordering something in a store or restaurant.

(63) *hlape-ten-ob'i* *p'a-d'e-b'i*
water-drink-OPT 1SG-NOM-PRS

"Can I have some water?" (lit. "I hope to drink water")

(64) *gab'ahl-ob'i-lo* *b'ab'o-d'e-b'i* *d'otha-la-Ø* *batha-lo*
buy-OPT-G3.PL 1DU-NOM-PRS rose-G3.PL-ACC ten-G3.PL

"Can we get ten roses?"

6.1.3.2 Negated Prohibitive Verb

Another way of forming a request is to negate a verb in the

prohibitive mood. This method is humerous, casual, and even a bit silly as it involves an unnecessary double-negation along the lines of “Don’t not do X”. It comes across as somewhat teasing and is often used among friends or family, but would be inappropriate in formal situations or among strangers.

(65) *theni* *tek’eq-opi-di* *p’a-mo* *tahlaqe-ga-Ø*
NEG carry-PROH-G3.SG 1SG-ALL book-G3.SG-ACC

kedi-go
that-G3.SG

“Pass me that book.”

It is cumbersome to use the negated prohibitive in consecutive clauses, so several related requests might start with a negated prohibitive to set the tone then switch to optative requests for subsequent statements, as demonstrated in (66) below. Note that the implied subject of the prohibitive remains implicit into the second clause.

(66) *theni* *łod’edi-k’-opa,* *q’oqib’-ob’i* *b’ek’ap’o-q’a*
NEG chair-sit-PROH property.COP-OPT relaxed-ESS

“Have a seat, make yourself comfortable.”

6.2 Expressing Emotions

6.2.1 Bodily Emotions

There are two cultural metaphors that guide how emotions are discussed. Strong, specific emotions are believed to exist in the throat. These kinds of emotions are temporary and strong enough to affect someone’s actions. In contrast, weaker emotions reside in the sinuses. These weak emotions are subtle and imprecise, more of a background feeling that is hard to describe.

Because the strong emotions are located in the throat, the verbs used to describe them are *moq’a* (“swallow”) and *tothapa* (“spit”). When the emotions are simply felt but not being expressed or acted upon, the person is said to swallow them as demonstrated in (67). However,

if the emotions are being expressed through words or actions, it is said that the person is “spitting” the emotions, as seen in (68). Note that *moq’a* and *tothapa* do not carry positive or negative connotations themselves, and are used with all emotions.

(67) *moq’-e-k’i* *qane-ta-d’a-do*
swallow-PFV-G5.SG parent-G1.SG-NOM-FUT

d’eq’i-gi-Ø
sadness-G5.SG-ACC

“My mother will be sad.”

(68) *tothap-e-k’i* *b’op’e-d’e-b’i* *qi-mo*
spit-PFV-G5.SG 1PL-NOM-PRS 2SG-ALL

page-gi-Ø
happiness-G5.SG-ACC

“We’re happy for you!”

7 Appendices

7.1 Speedlang Prompts

7.1.1 Speedlang 20 Requirements

Prompt link

- Phonemic /θ/ and /ɬ/
- No phonemic /u/
- CV syllables
- Paucal number on nouns
- Instrumental case on nouns
- Morphological mood, but no morphological tense on verbs
- Object argument marking on verbs
- Marked nominative-accusative morphosyntax
- VO word order
- Write a restaurant review

7.1.2 Speedlang 21 Requirements

Prompt link

- No more than two phonemes whose mosts common realization is a fricative (/h/ and /ɦ/ count as fricatives)
- Have at least one non-pulmonic consonant
- Have a place of articulation contrast within one of the categories of labial, coronal, and dorsal
- Have propositional nominal TAM (tense, aspect, and/or mood marked on the noun phrase)
- Have grammatical gender / noun class
  - *(bonus)* have exactly 4-6 classes
  - *(bonus)* have some classes merge depending on plurality
  - *(bonus)* have some of the agreement markers show polarity (e.g. singular A is marked the same as plural B)
- Have at least three ways of forming requests/commands, and describe how they differ in use (i.e. which contexts)
  - *(bonus)* include at least two ways negative commands can be formed

- Create at least two words for emotions that don't have a clear one-to-one label in English
    - *(bonus)* write a longer section on cognitively-based feelings, including descriptions of at least five feelings, one or more "bodily images" (e.g. boiling with rage), and different ways of framing emotions grammatically (e.g. "they worried" vs "they were worried")
- Translate and gloss at least five sentence from appropriate sources

7.1.3 Speedlang 22 Requirements

Prompt link

- Use the character <λ> somewhere in the documentation
    - *(bonus)* use the character <ƛ> somewhere in the documentation
- Have a voicing pattern distinction only in plosive XOR in everything but plosives
    - *(bonus)* have both, depending on analysis
- Have a phonological restriction at domain edges
- Have word order be governed by something other than *scramble(S,O,V)*, for example:
    - direct/inverse animacy/empathy hierarchy
    - topic/focus/whatever prominence
    - something else
- Detail how the language expresses phasal polarity
- Have fewer than two XOR greater than three tense/aspect morphemes
    - *(bonus)* same restriction on mood/evidentiality morphemes
- Make a 'lexicon showcase' of a minimum of five lexemes, in which you detail specific lexical items; for example:
    - explore colexification and collocation
    - provide an overview of a certain semantic space such as smell, emotions, or events of putting and taking
    - make a semantic division tree/web/cloud and detail some members and how they differ
    - for verbs, you could detail some subset like in ValPaL, such as this one for Japanese