

A Grammar of ENŁALEN

By BETHANY E. TOMA

3. December 2019

Background & Motivation

Contents

Background & Motivation	i
Contents	ii
List of Glossing Abbreviations	iii
1 World & Culture	1
2 Phonology	2
2.1 Modern Enlalen phonology	2
2.2 Old Elvish & the Enlalen orthography	3
3 Morphosyntax	4
3.1 ‘Parts of Speech’	4
3.2 Nominalization	4
3.3 Word order & sentence structure	4
4 Semantics	5
4.1 Definiteness & specificity in nominalizers	5

List of Glossing Abbreviations

Chapter 1

World & Culture

The term ‘Enlalen’ reportedly comes from the Old Elvish word **hinolama:la?ina*, a word which roughly means ‘a long time ago (we) talked like this’. This perception of the language, as some ancient thing that has endured through countless generations unchanged, is common among speakers of Enlalen. However, the language itself and the culture of its speakers has varied dramatically throughout the years, more than its speakers tend to be willing to openly acknowledge.

Chapter 2

Phonology

2.1 Modern Enlalen phonology

2.1.1 Phoneme inventory

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Back
Lenis Stop	p	t		k
Aspirated Stop	p ^h	t ^h		k ^h
Ejective Stop	p'	t'		k'
Fricative	f	s		χ
Nasal	m	n		
Lateral		l		ɭ
Glide	w		j	ɰ
Vowel	o		i	a

Table 2.1: Enlalen Phoneme Inventory

2.1.2 Allophony & phonotactics

- Vowels /i, o, a/ become nasal [ẽ, õ, ã] when they precede a nasal
- Front vowels and semivowels [i, ẽ, j] become central [ɨ, ʊ, ɯ] before dorsal sonorants [ɭ, w, ɰ, a] and after dorsal obstruents [k, k^h, k', χ]
- Back vowel [o] becomes central [ə] before [j, i]
- Mid, non-front vowels [ə, ẽ, o, õ] become high [i, ɨ, u, ʊ] after a high semivowel [j, w, ɯ]
- Mid vowels [o, õ, ẽ, ə, ʊ] become low lax [ɒ, ɔ, æ, a, ʌ]
- Aspirated stops /p^h, t^h, k^h/ become unaspirated [p, t, k] before a nasal vowel.
- Nasal and lateral consonants /m, n, l, ɭ/ assimilate in place-of-articulation to a following obstruent – before labials, /l/ becomes [ɭ] and /ɭ/ remains [ɭ].
- /lw, ɭw/ become [ɬ^w, ɰ^w].
- Fricatives /f, s, χ/ are voiced [v, z, ʁ] intervocalically and when following a voiced consonant.
- Unaspirated stops /p, t, k/ are voiced [b, d, g] intervocalically.
- Aspirated stops /p^h, t^h, k^h/ become voiceless fricatives [f, θ, χ] intervocalically
- Ejectives /p', t', k'/ become unaspirated voiceless stops [p, t, k] intervocalically

2.1.3 Romanization

The ‘romanization’ of Enlalen is a near-phonemic representation, with the exception of using ⟨e⟩ to represent /i/ when it occurs before a nasal (where it is allophonically lowered).

p	t	k	p ^h	t ^h	k ^h	p'	t'	k'	f	s	χ	m	n	l	ɫ	w	j	ɟ	o	i	a	[ẽ]
p	t	k	φ	θ	χ	π	τ	κ	f	s	h	m	n	l	ɫ	w	y	q	o	i	a	e

2.2 Old Elvish & the Enlalen orthography

2.2.1 Phonology of Old Elvish

	Labial	Alveolar	Dorsal	Glottal		Front	Back
Stops	p	t	k	ʔ	High	i i:	o o:
Non-Stops	m	n l		h	Low	a a:	
	(a) Consonants					(b) Vowels	

Table 2.2: Old Elvish Phoneme Inventory

2.2.2 Sound changes and their effects on the orthography

2.2.3 Orthographic reform

Chapter 3

Morphosyntax

3.1 'Parts of Speech'

3.2 Nominalization

3.3 Word order & sentence structure

Chapter 4

Semantics

4.1 Definiteness & specificity in nominalizers