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aaaaaaaaA, the language of *somewhere*

uruwi

aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

A complete grammar

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0.1 | Introduction

1 | Phonology and orthography

1.1 | Phonemes

aaaaaaaaA has the following consonants:

Table 1.1: The consonants of aaaaaaaaaA.

	Bilabial / Labiodental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	m	n		ɲ		
Plosive	p p̚ b	t t̚ d			k k̚ g	
Fricative	f	s	tʃ tʃ̚			h
Trill		r				
Tap		ɾ				
Approximant				j		

Table 1.2: The vowels of aaaaaaaaaA.

Stressed	Unstressed
i	ɪ
e	ə
ɑ	æ
o	ɔ
u	ʊ

1.2 | Phonotactics

A syllable is allowed to consist of:

- an onset, from one of:
 - nothing at all
 - a single consonant
 - a non-tense plosive plus /r/
- a vowel
- a coda, from one of /m n s r/

1.3 | Allophony

The following changes are made:

$$\begin{aligned}
 h &\rightarrow x & (\diamond\{o, u\}) \\
 m &\rightarrow \text{m} & (\diamond f) \\
 n &\rightarrow \text{n} & (\diamond C[+ve]) \\
 C_1[+v, +pl] &\rightarrow C_1[+fr] & (V_1 \diamond V_2) \\
 \{i, e, a, o, u\}[-s] &\rightarrow \{I, \text{ə}, \text{æ}, \text{ɔ}, \text{ʊ}\}
 \end{aligned}$$

1.4 | Orthography

The language does not have a written form but we shall use the following romanisation:

Table 1.3: The consonants of aaaaaaaaaA.

	Bilabial / Labiodental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	m	n		ɲ		
Plosive	p pp b	t tt d			k kk g	
Fricative	f	s	ch cch			h
Trill		rr				
Tap		r				
Approximant				y		

Table 1.4: The vowels of aaaaaaaaaA.

Rom	Stressed	Unstressed
i	í	ɪ
e	e	ə
a	ɑ	æ
o	o	ɔ
u	u	ʊ

<r> represents /r/ at the start of a word but /ɾ/ elsewhere.

If the stress does not fall on the second-to-last syllable, then an acute accent appears on the stressed vowel.

2 | Syntax

In this chapter, we look at the structure of the whole sentence.

2.1 | Basic word order

aaaaaaaaA uses SVO order, although this is somewhat flexible due to verbal morphology.

2.2 | Modifiers

Modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) follow what they modify.

3 | Honourifics

aaaaaaaaA uses the following speech levels:

- plain: used with unfamiliar or socially distant people, or when communicating to a general audience, or when mentioning a nonsentient entity.
- subservient: used toward superiors (incl. familial relationships ascending one or more generations).
- dominating: used toward inferiors (incl. familial relationships descending one or more generations).
- intimate: used between socially close people of similar status.

Note that there is a distinction between speaker-listener (SL) and speaker-target (ST) speech levels:

- SL uses the speech level corresponding to the relationship between the speaker and the listener, and is used with first- and second-person pronouns, as well as verbs whose subjects are first- or second-person.
- ST uses the speech level corresponding to the relationship between the speaker and another entity (the *topic*), and is used with third-person pronouns, as well as verbs whose subjects are third-person.

4 | Nouns

Nouns fall into one of two genders and are marked for definiteness.

4.1 | Gender

aaaaaaaaA has two genders: *feminine* and *masculine*.

Nouns tend to be feminine if they end in one of the following:

- <-a>
- <-in>
- <-er>
- <-ir>

Nouns tend to be masculine if they end in one of the following:

- <-o>
- <-u>
- <-as>
- <-os>
- <-us>
- <-ur>

These are only tendencies – for instance, <mora> is masculine and <kas> is feminine.

A group of objects of both the feminine and masculine genders is regarded as feminine.

4.2 | Definiteness

There are three degrees of definiteness in aaaaaaaaaA:

- Indefinite: the referent is not identifiable.

P	Plain / Dom		Subservient		Intimate	
	fem	masc	fem	masc	fem	masc
1		ko		pu		be
2		tir		ser	isir	isur
3			ser			cher

Second-person nominative and genitive pronouns are not used in the subservient speech style, but rather the listener's title.

The dative and accusative pronouns fall right before the verb, in that order. If the verb starts with a vowel, then the clitic (in parentheses, if applicable) is used in place of the usual accusative pronoun. The dative pronoun *must be used* if there is an indirect object, even if it is stated explicitly somewhere else in the sentence.

Again, genitive pronouns occur before the entire noun phrase, not the noun itself.

4.4.2 | Indefinite pronouns

Shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Indefinite pronouns.

	what	this	that	some, any	all	none	other	much, many	few, little
determiner	fine	teba/u	treba/u	mipe	hekka	ttyen	kade	sita/u	kike
pronoun (nonhuman)	<i>what, which</i>	<i>this</i>	<i>that</i>	<i>some, any</i>	<i>all</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>another</i>	<i>much, many</i>	<i>few, little</i>
	fin	kun	fon	miba	heya	ttyan	kadin	sitan	
pronoun (human)	<i>what</i>	<i>this one</i>	<i>that one</i>	<i>something, anything</i>	<i>everything</i>	<i>nothing</i>	<i>something else</i>	<i>many things</i>	
	inas	kesti	sesti	mimba	ginda	ttiña	kanda	siten	
pronoun (out of N)	<i>who</i>	<i>this person</i>	<i>that person</i>	<i>someone, anyone</i>	<i>everyone</i>	<i>no one</i>	<i>someone else</i>	<i>many people</i>	
	kres	imta	imtra	mimpa	hemka	ttyem	kambu		
location	<i>which</i>	<i>this one</i>	<i>that one</i>	<i>some, whichever</i>	<i>all, each</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>other, another</i>		
	ribe	egas	artá	chas	resím	ttunu	akada	nesin	kirpo
time	<i>where</i>	<i>here</i>	<i>there</i>	<i>somewhere</i>	<i>everywhere</i>	<i>nowhere</i>	<i>elsewhere</i>	<i>in many places</i>	<i>in few places</i>
	borre	cchen	yan	depe	resim	mettu	akeda	nemis	kikiri
	<i>when</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>then</i>	<i>anytime</i>	<i>always</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>another time</i>	<i>often</i>	<i>seldom</i>

5 | Verbs

Verbs in aaaaaaaaaA are conjugated according to:

- Person of the subject (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
- Tense (past, present, future)
- Aspect (imperfect, perfect)
- Mood (indicative, subjunctive)

Table 5.1: Verb conjugations for verbs whose infinitives end in <-is>.

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Present				
1	-e	-es	-eda	-esta
2	-u	-us	-utta	-usta
3	-a	-an	-asa	-asta
Past				
1	-i	-is	-ita	-ista
2	-uka	-uska	-ukka	-uska
3	-o	-os	-ona	-onsa
Future				
1	-ore	-ose	-orda	-ordas
2	-oru	-oso	-ortta	-ostra
3	-ora	-osa	-orna	-onsa

Table 5.2: Verb conjugations for verbs whose infinitives end in <-ir>.

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Present				
1	-e	-er	-eda	-erta
2	-u	-ur	-utta	-urta
3	-a	-an	-asa	-arsa
Past				
1	-i	-ir	-ita	-itra
2	-uka	-urka	-ukka	-ukra

P	II	IP	SI	SP
3	-o	-or	-ona	-orna
Future				
1	-ose	-ore	-osta	-ostar
2	-osu	-oro	-ostra	-otra
3	-osa	-ora	-onsa	-orna

Table 5.3: Verb conjugations for <fir> *be*¹.

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Present				
1	fie	fyer	kkeda	kkerta
2	fyu	fyur	kkutta	kkurta
3	fia	fian	kkasa	kkarsa
Past				
1	ñi	ñir	ñita	ñitra
2	fuka	furka	fokka	fukra
3	fio	for	fona	forna
Future				
1	fes	ferus	kkosta	kkostar
2	fuas	furus	kkotra	kkotra
3	fas	farus	kkonsa	kkorna

Table 5.4: Verb conjugations for <abis> *be*².

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Present				
1	ppe	abes	ppeda	abesta
2	ppu	abus	pputta	abusta
3	ppa	aban	pasa	pasta
Past				
1	abi	gis	abita	abista
2	abuka	guska	ppukka	abuska
3	abo	abos	pona	ponsa
Future				
1	gore	guse	morda	abordas
2	goru	guso	mortta	abostra
3	gora	gusa	porna	ponsa

Table 5.5: Verb conjugations for <nis> *be able to*.

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Present				
1	nie	ner	neda	nerta
2	niu	nur	nutta	nurta
3	nia	nan	nasa	narsa

P	II	IP	SI	SP
Past				
1	nio	nir	nita	nitra
2	nuka	nurka	nukka	nukra
3	nio	nor	noda	norna
Future				
1	nose	nore	nosta	nostar
2	nosu	nororo	nostra	notra
3	nosa	nora	nonsa	norna

5.1 | Imperatives and volitionals

Table 5.6: Imperative and volitional forms for verbs.

	Plain	Intimate	Dominating	Subservient
Regular form				
Imp-I	fo (2PresSI)	-o	-o	respe fo (2PresSI)
Imp-P	fo (2PresSP)	-os	-os	respe fo (2PresSP)
Vol-I	fo (1FutSI)	-ono	-ano	respore fo (1FutSI)
Vol-P	fo (1FutSP)	-onos	-anos	respore fo (1FutSP)
<fir> be ¹				
Imp-I	fo kkutta	fyo	fio	respe fo kkutta
Imp-P	fo kkurta	fyos	fios	respe fo kkurta
Vol-I	fo kkosta	fyon	fian	respore fo kkosta
Vol-P	fo kkostar	fyonos	fias	respore fo kkostar
<abir> be ²				
Imp-I	fo pputta	ppo	ppo	respe fo pputta
Imp-P	fo abusta	ppos	ppos	respe fo abusta
Vol-I	fo mortta	ppon	ppan	respore fo mortta
Vol-P	fo abordas	ppos	ppas	respore fo abordas
<nir> be able to				
Imp-I	fo nutta	nio	nio	respe fo nutta
Imp-P	fo nurta	nos	nos	respe fo nurta
Vol-I	fo nosta	yono	nano	respore fo nosta
Vol-P	fo nostar	yonos	nanos	respore fo nostar

5.2 | Present and past participles

Table 5.7: Present and past participles.

Verb	Present	Past
Ending with <-is>	-inde	-isti
Ending with <-ir>	-irne	-irri
<fir>	kkade	fi
<abir>	aben	abri

<abir> can be combined with the present participle to form the present progressive, and with the past participle to form the passive form.

5.3 | Honourifics

Some verbs have multiple forms depending on the speech level used.

5.4 | Auxiliary verbs

Auxiliary verbs are conjugated and placed before the main verb, which is put in the infinitive form:

Mida k**kibis**.
 want-3.PRES.IND.IMP eat-INF
 They want to eat.

Some auxiliary verbs require prepositions, or adopt a different meaning when a preposition is used.

5.5 | Negation

Only auxiliary verbs can be negated directly:

Ttya nie k**apir**.
 NEG be_able_to-1.PRES.IND.IMP come-INF
 I can't come.

Other verbs require the dummy auxiliary <k**kir**>:

Ttya k**kor** k**apir**.
 NEG do-3.PAST.IND.PERF come-INF
 He didn't come.

6 | Adjectives

Adjectives usually follow the nouns they modify, but may occasionally precede their antecedents for emphasis or such. They are declined for gender.

6.1 | One-form adjectives

One-form adjectives are not inflected at all, and are more likely to precede their antecedents than two-form adjectives.

6.2 | Two-form adjectives

Two-form adjectives are inflected for gender.

Table 6.1: Declension of two-form adjectives.

Fem	Masc
-a	-u
-is	-as
-ir	-ur
-er	-ur
-in	-o

6.3 | Determiners

Determiners always precede their antecedents, and they are categorised into indefinite and definite quantifiers.

Table 6.2: Quantifiers.

Indefinite	Definite
mipe <i>any, some, either</i>	teba / tebu <i>this</i>
sita / situ <i>many</i>	treba / trebu <i>that</i>
ttyen <i>no, none</i>	hekka <i>all, every</i>

A noun phrase modified by a definite quantifier must receive a definite article as well: <hekka te mepúr> *every fish*.

6.4 | Adverbs

Adverbs are formed from the feminine forms of adjectives by appending <-ta>.

A | Dictionary

An entry looks like this:

magis vt (S) throws (O)

From left to right:

1. The entry – the aaaaaaaaaA term listed.
2. The part of speech of the corresponding entry:
 - *nf* – a feminine noun
 - *nm* – a masculine noun
 - *vt* – a transitive verb
 - *vi* – an intransitive verb
 - *va* – an ambitransitive verb
 - *vh* – an auxiliary verb
 - *a1* – a one-form adjective
 - *a2* – a two-form adjective (feminine form listed)
3. The definition – the gloss for the corresponding entry.
 - (a) (S) – the subject
 - (b) (O) – the direct object
 - (c) (I) – the indirect object
4. If applicable, any special grammatical or semantic notes for this term.
5. Optionally, examples of usage.

| f

| a

fegĩñis vi (subservient) come

abis vt be – location, temporary
condition

fir vt be – general trait, profession,
existence

| k

kapir *vi* (plain, dominating, intimate) come

kas *nf* bark (of a tree)

kkara *nf* flower

kkibis *vt* (dominating, intimate) eat

kkir *vh* dummy auxiliary (mainly used for negation, and sometimes for emphasis)

| m

magis *vt* (S) throws (O)

mepúr *nf* fish

midir *vt, vh* (plain, dominating) want, desire

mora *nm* finger

| n

nis *vh* be able to

| r

respis *vt, vh* (intimate, subservient) want, desire

| s

sumir *vt* (plain) eat

| t

tegu *nm* a stone

terapir *vt* (subservient) eat