THE PRACTICAL

ŧA ṆÙĨ

ON PHONOLOGY, GRAMMAR,

AND THE PREVENTION OF MOUTH INJURIES.

BY CANCRIZANS CANON

0.1 Overview

!Um!oi!

('Hello!')

ǂA Ṇùĩ ([ǂɑ ŋm̰̃ĩ˦], *'First words'*), or also just **ǂA** , is, as much as it pains me to admit it, not a real language, but it does try to be. It is a naturalistic constructed language (conlang) that makes extensive use of complex **click sounds**, which are strange loud consonants you make by abusing your tongue like a cheapo suction cup. It is *a priori*, meaning it is not based on any real-world language of the present or past. As for the purpose of designing this language, let's keep that a surprise.

While an original creation, the sound of **ǂA** takes inspiration mainly by the beautifully intricate phonologies of the **Khoisan languages**, a group of many language families indigenous to southern Africa, which feature large inventories of decorated clicks, and strange phonation distinctions in vowels. In addition to that, there are sprinkles of other soundlooks I like, picked from languages such as Basque, Sanskrit, and one of my favourite families: Aboriginal Australian languages. **ǂA** 's phonation-tone register system is similar to that of Burmese.

For what concerns grammar, **ǂA** is typologically a mostly isolating language, analogous to Mandarin Chinese. It has a strict SVO (or better, AVP, as will be clear later) word order, it is (split-)ergative, and strongly head-final. It possesses almost no true "grammatical particles" in that very often they turn out to also double as regular nouns, like the relational nouns of Mayan languages.

This booklet should hold all information there is on both the phonology and grammar of **ǂA** . However, this document, as all my conlanging stuff, may try to explain things in a bit more pedantic detail than what you'd expect if you're a big linguistics buff. It is definitely aimed more at casual readers that don't remember off the top of their head what a *wh-in-situ* or an *accessibility hierarchy*[1] is; if you find parts of it make your eyes roll please go ahead and skip what's obvious to you.

This conlang is meant primarily to exist as spoken. Phrases in **ǂA** in this book are presented in its specialised orthography, which is designed to prioritise ease of pronunciation, is explained in the following sections, and are displayed in **bold**. Instead, phonemic/phonetic transcriptions using the IPA are in /slashes/ and [square brackets] respectively.

[1] Something to do with power and wheelchair ramps?

Contents

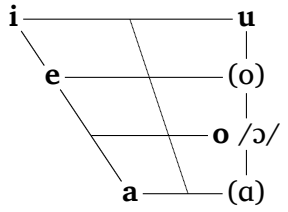
Chapter 1

Phonology

ǂ**A** makes, curiously, no phonemic distinction of voicing. It does, hower, distinguish **nasality** as a binary feature between oral and nasal, and **glottalization** from modal, to glottalic (creaky, glottalised, or ejective), to full glottal closure.

1.1 Vowels

Five vowel qualities are phonemically distinguished:



though, arguably, **u** alternates between [u] and [o] realisations in somewhat free variation. [ɑ] exist as a "backened" version of **a**, see Section 1.3.1 on contextual backening. In addition, the following diphthongs are allowed and behave essentially as additional single vowel qualities for the purpose of registers and phonotactics:

au, **ao** /aɔ/, **ai**, **oi** /ɔi/, **ui**, **oa** /oɔ/

It should be noted that **ui** specifically could be seen as a backened or "pre-backened" version of **i**, so that, say, the sequence **!ui** ought to be interpreted as the realisation of the phonetically impossible sequence **!i**. A similar but weaker relationship should exist between **ɔi** and **e**. This is paralleled in the distribution of open-to-close diphthongs which preferably appear in stressed syllables and frequently following "backening" clicks and consonants which wouldn't allow a front vowel in the same position. This rule isn't universal, however.

1.1.1 Registers

We anticipate that ǂ**A** has a concept of *stress* or *accent* whereby one syllable in a polysyllabic word (and occasionally in a syntactically close word sequence, like a noun phrase) is marked as **stressed**. This stress is expressed mostly through vowel length and in minor part volume, but not pitch.

Unstressed vowels may only be monophthongs. Stressed vowels, instead, may be a mono- or a diphthong, and in addition they carry one of four different phonations, or more precisely **four registers**, that is a phonation + tone combination:

Notation	Phonation	Tone
aa	Oral Modal [a]	˧
aã	Nasal Modal [ã]	˥˩
àa	Oral Creaky [a̰]	˩
àã	Nasal Creaky [ã̰]	˧

All vowel qualities and the four diphthongs can take any one of the four registers, producing four different phonemes, except for **e** whose nasal forms merge with those of **i**. The nasal forms of **u** are special in that the nasalisation and lip closure are strong enough that they are better transcribed as a syllabic /m/:

***uũ** →**um** →/m̩/ [m̩˥˩]
***ùũ** →**ùm** →/m̰̃/ [m̰̃˧]

Degrees of rounding of such syllabic /m/ are usually inconsequential.

In the case of diphthongs, a single register is applied uniformly and a mid-swipe register change is not allowed (phonemically at least). In the orthography, the creaky voice diacritic is written on the first component and the nasal diacritic on the second (with the caveat that ***ũ** is replaced by **m**). The resulting table of vocalic phonemes is as follows:

Unstressed (always short)				
a /a/	**e** /e/	**i** /i/	**o** /ɔ/	**u** /u/

Stressed				
Plain		Nasal	Creaky	Nasal Creaky
Short	Long			
a /a/	**aa** /aː/	**aã** /ãː/	**àa** /a̰ː/	**àã** /ã̰ː/
e /e/	**ee** /eː/	**iĩ** /ĩː/	**èe** /ḛː/	**ìĩ** /ḭ̃ː/
i /i/	**ii** /iː/		**ìi** /ḭː/	
o /ɔ/	**oo** /ɔː/	**oõ** /ɔ̃ː/	**òo** /ɔ̰ː/	**òõ** /ɔ̰̃ː/
u /u/	**uu** /uː/	**um** /mː/	**àa** /ṵː/	**ùm** /m̰ː/
	au /au/	**am** /ãm/	**àu** /a̰ṵ/	**àm** /a̰m̰/
	ui /ui/	**uĩ** /mĩ/	**ùi** /ṵḭ/	**ùĩ** /m̰ḭ̃/
	oi /ɔi/	**oĩ** /ɔ̃ĩ/	**òi** /ɔ̰ḭ/	**òĩ** /ɔ̰̃ḭ̃/
	same for the remaining diphthongs without **u**			

A stressed, plain register monophtong may also be *predictably* long or short. Specifically, it will be short if word-final and / or following a glottal(ised) consonant ', and it will be long otherwise. In the orthography, it will be accordingly written with a single or double letter. Instead, all unstressed vowels are short, while all diphthongs and all stressed non-plain vowels are long.

1.2 Consonants

The consonant phonemes of ǂ**A** are divided mainly by airstream mechanism into **ejectives**, **pulmonics** and **clicks**. They are all presented in the table that follows; the rest of this section will be dedicated to explaining its contents.

Cells in grey are unattested in ǂ**A** or impossible. Cells spanning multiple rows or column denote degrees of allophonic variation.

		Labial	Dental	Apical	Palatal	Lateral	Velar	Uvular
Ejective				**ṭ’** /ʈ’/	**c’**	**tɬ’** /t͡ɬ’/		**q’**
Pulmonic	Stop	**p**	**t/ts** /t͡s̪/	**ṭ** /ʈ/	**j**/ɟ/	**tɬ** /t͡ɬ/	**k**	
	Affricate			**tṣ** /ʈ͡ʂ/	**č** /t͡ʃ/			
	Trill			**r**/**rr** /r/				
	Nasal	**m**	**n** /n̪/	**ṇ** /ɳ/	**ñ** /ɲ/	**l**	**ŋ** /ŋ ~ɴ/	
	Glot. Stop	’/ʔ/						
Click	I	ʘ	ǀ	ǃ	ǂ	ǁ		
	II		ǀ’	ǃ	ǂ’	ǁ’		
	III		ǀx	ǃx	ǂx	ǁx		
	IV		ǀq’	ǃq’	ǂq’	ǁq’		
	V	ɴʘ	ɴǀ	ɴǃ	ɴǂ	ɴǁ		
	VI		ɴǀ’	ɴǃ’	ɴǂ’	ɴǁ’		
	VII		ɴǀx	ɴǃx	ɴǂx	ɴǁx		
	VIII		sǀ	š!	ṣǂ	łǁ		
	IX		sǀ’	š!’	ṣǂ’	łǁ’		
	X		sǀq’	š!q’	ṣǂq’	łǁq’		

1.2.1 Ejectives

Consistently with the language-wide pattern of distinction of degree of glottalisation, ǂ**A** distinguishes a few ejective phonemes, all of which but **q'** are actually uncommon. Frontal (labial or dental) ejectives do not exist. The next three ejectives **ṭ', c', tɬ'** parallel the pulmonic obstruents. [*k'] is notably missing; it is generally understood that this sound has merged into the palatal **c'**.

The uvular **q'** is *always* ejective, with no pulmonic counterpart. It originates from the lenition of clicks with ejective contour (class IV) where the click itself vanished leaving behind the lone uvular ejective.

1.2.2 Pulmonics

It is useful, not only for the purpose of phonotactics, to classify pulmonics in terms of nasality. Specifically, we divide into **oral pulmonics** (obstruents and the trill), the **nasal pulmonics** (actual nasal and **l**), and finally the glottal stop has to be put aside as neither oral nor nasal[1]. It's necessary to imagine that *phonemically* /l/ be a nasal consonant, even though phonetically it often is not, and in particular the nasal counterpart to /t͡ɬ/. This allows, for example, to explain sequences such as **laã** *tongue*, whereas anywhere else an oral pulmonic + nasal vowel sequence is forbidden (see Section 1.3.2).

The dentals are usually "strongly dentalised", often going as far as interdental, similarly to the situation in Australian Aboriginal languages, though this is not usually marked in transcription. In the orthography, **t** and **ts** represent the same phoneme, with **t** appearing before front vowels **e** and **i** and **ts** before **a,o,u**.

ŋ, while rare, is a true phoneme, and may also appear word-initially, see **ŋàã** *woman* vs **nàã** *to laugh*, and it must be seen as the nasal counterpart to **k**. Before front vowels it's always velar; before back vowels it alternates between velar /ŋ/ and the uvular allophone [ɴ].

There is significant allophonic variance associated with the lack of phonemic value to voicing of consonants. Nevertheless, there are significant irregularities to keep in mind.

- Labial or labiodental fricatives and affricates are unattested.
- The voiced stops [b], [d̪], [ɖ] are allophonic for the nasals /m/ /n̪/ /ɳ/. However, in palatal articulation it is [c] and [ɟ] that are realisation of a single phoneme /ɟ/, with the voiced form more common, while the scope of /ɲ/ is narrower than the other nasals.
- In guttural (velar-glottal) position, curiosly [g] can substitute not only for /ŋ/ but also for the glottal stop /ʔ/. As for /k/, it may often affricate to [k͡x] or even [x] directly, especially before front vowels, while a back vowel may uvularise it to [q].

[1] This is true in a more literal sense: since the glottis is behind the velum, a glottal closure is really insensitive to the lowering of the velum.

- /r/ is always a trill, never tapped (a tap is more likely to be perceived as a nasal). It is geminated always in medial position (which we reproduce in the orthography with **rr**), occasionally even word-initially.
- /t͡ʂ/ is only very rarely a simple voiceless stop [ʈ], and it almost always is affricate.

1.2.3 Clicks

ǂA 's unique phonetic identity lies in its inventory of click consonants. While we will ultimately analyse each possible click sound as a separate phoneme, resulting in a disproportionately large inventory but simpler phonotactical rules, it must be understood that clicks are complex consonants best decomposed into many semi-independent features. We recall that a click is produced by enclosing a pocket of air in a surface between the tongue and the palate. It is necessary to fully seal this pocket to produce the click sound, and the mouth-palate sealing occurs along a circle passing trough a **rear point of contact**, laterally, and through a coronal **front point of contact**. In **ǂA** the rear contact is *tendentially* always uvular, while the front contact may be in several positions, similarly to pulmonic consonants. By downward movement of the tongue, the trapped air pocket is rarefied, akin to a suction cup. Finally, one point in the sealing is opened and air violently rushes into the pocket. The corresponding implosion produces the loud sound of the click. We thus may begin to list some parameters that may change in the production of the click and which may affect the sound:

- The location in the mouth where the sealing is opened; this is what is referred to as the **point of articulation** of the click.
- The opening of the velum and simultaneous airflow through the nose, i.e. **nasality** (or better, pre-nasalisation).
- The closure of the glottis simultaneously with the click, i.e. **glottalisation**.
- The mode of release of the rear closure, after the click sound has been produced. These are called **contours** or **effluxes** and can be seen as coarticulation of the click with a uvular pulmonic.

Four points of articulations are distinguished in **ǂA** (plus the rare bilabial):

- /ǀ/, written **ɻ**, is laminal dental. The sound is noisy and highest in pitch.
- ǁ is lateral. The release is lateral (necessarily on one side) and far back in the mouth. The coronal position of the tongue does not affect the sound, which is noisy but lower than the dental.
- **!** is the alveolar or alveolo-palatal click, and the essential feature is that the tongue is pulled down (and back), resulting in an extremely sharp, clear and loud sound.
- ǂ is particular in **ǂA** . The release is coronal, and usually palatal or palato-alveolar [ʃ]; but the important feature is that the tongue is pulled *backwards*, producing something between a duller *pop* than an alveolar click and a slightly noisy sucking

sound. Occasionally, the realisation of ǂ may even be more similar to a retroflex click [!!] with subapical tongue position.

- The much rarer bilabial click ʘ. It usually begins as labial and moves to labiodental, and has a loud, very noisy sound. A very limited set of manners of articulation is attested for ʘ, and it appears only in very few words. It likely originates from strong labialisation of other clicks.

Given a point of articulation, the language then distinguishes a total of ten different **manners of articulations** for each:

I **Plain** The click is oral, glottis open, and the back-release is tenuis.

II **Oral Glottalized** The glottis is closed, and kept open for a short while after the click sounds. This may appear as the onset of the following vowel being delayed. The click is oral.

III **Fricative-contour** The click is oral, glottis open, and the back release is into a uvular fricative [χ]. These clicks have an "affricate" sound.

IV **Ejective-contour** The click is oral, glottis open, and the back release is into a uvular ejective [q'].

V **Nasal** The click is nasal. Because of the velar/uvular closure, a velar/uvular nasal [ŋ ɴ] appears to sound throughout the click. The glottis must be open, back-release is tenuis.

VI **Nasal Glottalized** The glottis is closed, and kept open for a short while after the click sounds. This may appear as the onset of the following vowel being delayed. The click is nasal.

VII **Nasal** + **Fricative-contour** The click is nasal, glottis open, and the back release is a uvular fricative, marked [ʁ] as nasality is almost always accompanied by voicing.

VIII **"Pre-fricative"** A fricative is sounded before the click closure. While this is not a true co-articulation, since the fricatives may not occur in **ǂA** without a following click we class this series of clusters as separate consonant phonemes. The clicks are oral, glottis open, back release tenuis. Only a specific fricative precedes a certain point of articulation for the click; the combinations are /s̪|/, /s̪ǂ/, /ʃ!/, /ɬ‖/.

IX **Pre-fricative** + **Glottalized** These clicks have a fricative onset, oral, glottal closure with delayed release of glottal stop.

X **Pre-fricative** + **Ejective-contour** Fricative onset, oral, back release into [q']

All in all, the following 40 click phonemes, + 2 marginal bilabials exist:

Manner	Point of articulation				
I	/ǀ/	/ǂ/	/ǃ/	/ǁ/	(/ʘ/)
II	/ǀˀ/	/ǂˀ/	/ǃˀ/	/ǁˀ/	
III	/ǀχ/	/ǂχ/	/ǃχ/	/ǁχ/	
IV	/ǀqʼ/	/ǂqʼ/	/ǃqʼ/	/ǁqʼ/	
V	/ᵑǀ/	/ᵑǂ/	/ᵑǃ/	/ᵑǁ/	(/ᵑʘ/)
VI	/ᵑǀˀ/	/ᵑǂˀ/	/ᵑǃˀ/	/ᵑǁˀ/	
VII	/ᵑǀʁ/	/ᵑǂʁ/	/ᵑǃʁ/	/ᵑǁʁ/	
VIII	/ʂǀ/	/ʂǂ/	/ʃǃ/	/ɬǁ/	
IX	/ʂǀˀ/	/ʂǂˀ/	/ʃǃˀ/	/ɬǁˀ/	
X	/ʂǀqʼ/	/ʂǂqʼ/	/ʃǃqʼ/	/ɬǁqʼ/	

If we are willing to segment the click even more, a somewhat clearer picture emerges. Among manners, we can distinguish an "onset" feature, which may be plain, nasal, or pre-fricative, and a "release" feature, which may be tenuis, glottal, fricative, or ejective. The 3×4 table that results makes it clear that all combinations except two are realised:

		Release			
		∅	ˀ	χ/ʁ	qʼ
Onset	∅	I	II	III	IV
	ᵑ	V	VI	VII	
	F	VIII	IX		X

As for the two unattested manners, their absence may be explained by difficulty of production. The missing nasal-ejective clicks in particular would present the difficulty of switching from voiced to voiceless mid-click, or producing a fully voiceless nasal click, something that is certainly quite alien to ǂ**A** speakers.

In the orthography, the clicks are transcribed using the following dictionary:

Phonemic	Orthography
ǀ	**ɨ**
*ᵑ	*ɴ
ʂǀ	**sɨ**
ʂǂ	**ṣǂ**
ʃǃ	**šǃ**
ɬǁ	**łǁ**
*ˀ	*’
*χ / *ʁ	*x
*qʼ	*q’

1.3 Phonotactics

Here and in the following, these abbreviations are employed to describe phonotactical rules:

(…)	Optional segment (may appear zero or one time)
.	Syllable boundary
C	Any consonant phoneme – click, ejective or pulmonic.
ʞ	Any click consonant.
P	Any pulmonic consonant.
M	A sonorant consonant (nasal or trill).
V	Any vowel, mono- or diphthong, stressed or unstressed, in any register
ˈ	The following syllable is stressed
v	An unstressed vowel (monophthong)

1.3.1 Back vowel constraint

A fundamental mechanical constraint applies to vowel qualities directly following specific clicks (backening clicks) and the ejective **q'**. Specifically, uvular articulations cause retraction of the tongue root, which makes it impossible to pronounce a front vowel directly after. In **ǂA** , all clicks **ʘ ɻ ǃ ǂ ǁ** have uvular rear closure, and thus really release uvularly and cause tongue root retraction.

This back vowel constraint applies to

- **q'**
- All non-glottalised clicks. (i.e., all groups except II and VI).

Glottalised clicks bypass the constraint because the glottal closure can be released with sufficient delay for the tongue to prepare in position for a front vowel, as in **sɻ'e** *four*.

A backening consonant may not be followed by a front vowel **e** or **i**. In addition, **a** becomes [ɑ]. For a diphthong, the constraint applies to the starting quality of the glide, therefore **ui** may follow a backening click, as can **au**, though it will sound as [ɑu].

1.3.2 Syllable structure and articulatory constraints

ǂA features a strict alternation of consonant and vowel, and thus a (C)V syllable structure. Generally, phonotactical restrictions appear as constraints related to the nasality and glottalisation features. The direction of consonant-vowel nasality interference is different for clicks and pulmonics, with the nasality of clicks interacting with that of the previous vowel and that of pulmonics with the following one. The precise rules are

- in a Vʞ sequence, either both are oral or both are nasal.[2]
- in a PV sequence, P cannot be oral if V is nasal.

E.g.: the sequences /aǃ-/ and /ãⁿǃ-/ are possible, but /*ãǃ-/, /*aⁿǃ-/ are not possible; while the sequences /pa/, /ma/, /mã/ are allowed but /*pã/ can not occur.

For what concerns glottalisation,

[2]Note that since a vowel preceding a click is always unstressed, this nasality will never be reported in the orthography.

- a C$\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$ sequence with a creaky voiced vowel will erase glottalization distinctions in the consonant C. This means that sequences like /!ˀ$\underset{\sim}{\text{a}}$/ and /!$\underset{\sim}{\text{a}}$/ are not phonemically distinct – by convention we will transcribe the click without glottalisation. On the same line, ejectives and pulmonic obstruents are not distinguished before $\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$, and we transcribe with the pulmonic by convention, except in the case of **q'** since it has no pulmonic equivalent.
- A glottal stop followed by a creaky vowel ?$\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$ is indistinguishable from the lone vowel $\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$. We chose to transcribe both broad IPA and orthography *with* the glottal stop to preserve the simpler CV structure.
- A sonorant will become itself creaky before a creaky vowel: M$\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$ > $\underset{\sim}{\text{M}}\underset{\sim}{\text{V}}$, e.g. **màa** = /m$\underset{\sim}{\text{a}}$/ > [$\underset{\sim}{\text{m}}\underset{\sim}{\text{a}}$]. This is not marked at all in the broad transcription.

1.3.3 Word structure and stress

Due to the extremely minimal morphology, the vast majority of words appear uninflected. This uninflected form follows a very rigid scheme:

$$(\text{v}_0).{}^{\text{l}}\text{CV}_1.(\text{Pv}_2)$$

In other words, we necessarily have a **main syllable** CV_1 which always stressed, and is composed of either a click, an ejective or pulmonic, and a vowel which, being stressed, may have any of the four registers, and be a mono- or diphthong. Optionally, one may have an unstressed **opening vowel** monophthong v_0, and/or an unstressed **secundary syllable** with a pulmonic and a monophthong.

The possible word structures are named as follows:

Monosyllabic	CV
Sesquisyllabic	v.ˈCV
Disyllabic	ˈCV.Pv
Trisyllabic	v.ˈCV.Pv

The opening and secondary vowels, being unstressed, may not carry registers, and no distinction of phonation is made on them. However, phonetically the nasality of an opening vowel necessarily matches that of a main syllable click which follows as per the rules of Section 1.3.2, and this nasality is accordingly transcribed even if not phonemic.

1.3.4 Irregular words and reduplication

Some special words break the patterns described thus far. A select few are lexicalised idioms and onomatopoeias. Most, however, are produced by one of the very few morphological processes of the language, which is **first-syllable reduplication**. This self-explanatory operation is used on adjectives and adverbs to mark comparatives, and on verbs to mark the applicative voice. The first syllable of the word is repeated, usually violating the word structure, exceeding the maximum number of syllable, and producing words with multiple clicks:

ɻala *easily* →**ɻaɻala** *more easily*

Reduplication is quite irregular on complex clicks. Todo: map out all irregular reduplications.

1.3.5 Sandhi Rules

Adjacent words that are syntactically close (generally, they are part of the same noun phrase, they are a noun-classifier pair, a dependant-postposition pair, an auxiliary-main verb pair, or simply part of a very short clause) are usually pronounced with no gap between them and are affected by **syntactical sandhi rules**. These are assimilatory processes involving the vowel V that ends the preceding word, and the first sound of the following word. Depending on the latter, one may have vowel-click (VʞI), vowel-vowel (VV), and vowel-pulmonic (VP) sandhi. Sandhi processes are never written in the orthography.

VʞI sandhi consists simply in V assimilating to the nasality of ʞI, similarly to what would happen mid-word. This nasality will only be triggered if V is unstressed.

In **VV sandhi**, the second vowel is an opening vowel and therefore always unstressed. Quality assimilation occurs according to the following scheme:

- if the first vowel is a diphthong, there is no assimilation and an epenthetic ’ is inserted.
- if the sequence VV describes a valid diphthong, assimilate to that diphthong.
- **a-e** and **o-e** assimilate to **ai** and **oi** respectively.
- **o-u** assimilates to **oo**
- In all remaining cases (e.g. **u-a**) there is no assimilation and ’ is inserted.

If there is assimilation, then the first vowel determines the register.

Todo

1.4 Notes on Orthography

The orthography of ǂA is designed by prioritizing these guidelines:

- Transparency: pronunciation should be easy and immediate to evince and reproduce. In particular, clicks should be well distinguished from pulmonics.
- Phonemic: it should be unambiguous, i.e. broad transcription should be uniquely determined.
- Clarity: written text should be easily readable, avoiding too similar glyphs, or superscript and subscript glyphs.

- Portability: no combining diacritical marks should be used; only existing precomposed letters may be employed. (This is due to combining glyphs rendering improperly in many contexts).

With these restrictions and no others, I believe the orthography as presented in the previous sections is a reasonable solution.

The orthography uses conventional punctuation and most typesetting standards[3]. For what concerns capitalisation, for starting sentences or for proper names, I employ the typical Khoisan convention where the first *capitalisable* character in the word is capitalised. Capitalisable characters include all latin letters including diacritics, the letter ŋ which becomes Ŋ[4] the letter ɬ which capitalises as Ɬ; the remaining letters (ʼ ʘ ǃ ǂ ǁ) don't capitalise. Finally, the alphabetical order employed is as in the following table:

Lowercase	**ɬ**	**ʘ**	**ǃ**	**ǂ**	**ǁ**	**ʼ**	**a**	**ã**	**à**	**b**	**č**	**d̪**	**e**	**ẽ**	**è**	**i**	**ĩ**	**ì**	**j**	**k**	**l**
Uppercase	**Ɬ**						**A**	**Ã**	**À**	**B**	**Č**	**D̪**	**E**	**Ẽ**	**È**	**I**	**Ĩ**	**Ì**	**J**	**K**	**L**
Lowercase	**ł**	**m**	**n**	**ṇ**	**ñ**	**ŋ**	**o**	**õ**	**ò**	**p**	**q**	**r**	**s**	**š**	**ṣ**	**t**	**ṭ**	**u**	**ũ**	**ù**	**x**
Uppercase	**Ł**	**M**	**N**	**Ṇ**	**Ñ**	**Ŋ**	**O**	**Õ**	**Ò**	**P**	**Q**	**R**	**S**	**Š**	**Ṣ**	**Ṭ**	**ṭ**	**U**	**Ũ**	**Ù**	**X**

[3]There is no risk of confusing the alveolar stop glyph ǃ with the identical-looking, but distinct exclamation mark ! because phonotactics prevent clicks in syllable codas anyway.

[4]The shape of capital Eng may be widely different in different fonts. Shouldn't be a cause of concern.

Chapter 2

Grammar

2.1 The Noun Phrase

A noun phrase in ǂ**A** may consist of a single noun:

(1) **uɴɻaã**
wolf
wolves / a wolf

in which case the intended meaning is indeterminate, and of unspecified number (i.e. wolves in general, as one would intend in a phrase like *'wolves are ferocious'*). If instead one would like to talk about one specific wolf, thus introducing determinacy, they would have to say

(2) **uɴɻaã ṭàa**
wolf $\text{CLF}_{\text{predatory animal}}$
the wolf

ṭàa is called a **noun classifier** (CLF), and it is specifically the classifier associated to predatory animals. There are hundreds of classifiers available for various categories of nouns; these categories do not have to be disjoint nor as general as standard noun classes in synthetic languages. When a CLF is used, the CLF is itself the head of the noun phrase, and the noun is a dependent that *specifies* the general meaning of the classifier further (so the example may be translated more literally as *'the predatory animal which is more specifically a wolf'*). This justifies why the CLF always *follows* the classified noun, being that this language is strongly head-final.

Multiple CLFs may apply to the same noun under different circumstances, with subtler or more relevant differences in intended meaning depending on the situation. Rarely, a CLF choice may completely disambiguate a noun:

(3) **ɬuli tła**
mother/breast CLF_{woman}
the mother

(4) **ɬuli ɬùu**
mother/breast $CLF_{body\ part}$
the breast(s)

Proper names are always determined and they **always** take a classifier. However, the choice of specific classifier is again up to the speaker, and may express some nuances of context, politeness, and relevant information:

(5) **ʞ!upaṇa nui**
ʞ!upaṇa CLF_{person}
ʞ!upaṇa (a person of unspecified gender).

(6) **ʞ!upaṇa tła**
ʞ!upaṇa CLF_{woman}
ʞ!upaṇa (the woman).

A classifier is also triggered by numerals and partitives. When a numeral is used, the numeral is considered the head and the classifier its dependant, so the order is Noun-CLF-Numeral:

(7) **ʞ!oo'o uṭu ʞǂoiči**
chicken CLF_{bird} seven
seven chickens.

As it happens in many languages, the numeral **!òo** *one* can be used to mark indeterminacy in situations where the presence of the classifier would be triggered anyway. For example:

(8) **ɬuli tła !òo**
mother/breast CLF_{woman} one
*a mother (but **not** a breast)*

To do all of this

2.1.1 Possession and adjectives

2.1.2 Nominalisation

2.2 Alignment and Coordination

ǂA is always syntactically ergative. For intransitive clauses, with a verb V and a sole subject S, the verb always precedes the subject. For example

(9) **iɴ‖àa ɴǃupaṇa tła**
sleep ɴǃupaṇa CLF_{woman}
'ɴǃupaṇa is sleeping.'

In a transitive clause, involving a verb V, an agent A and an object O, the order is *fixed* as AVO:

(10) **ɴǃupaṇa tła iǃòorri šǃoiñe**
ɴǃupaṇa CLF_{woman} eat meat
'ɴǃupaṇa is eating meat'

This rigid syntactical structure invites us to identify S and O as a single type of argument that always follows V, namely the Patient P, contrasting with agents A as a special role marked by preceding V. This syntactical alignment is therefore **ergative-absolutive** in nature. However, whereas a typical ergative language would provide a morphological way to mark Agents, i.e. an Ergative case, in ǂ**A** this does not usually occurr; the optional ERG marker **'a** *by, from* (which may equivalently also mark an Ablative) can be employed in special emphatic conditions (see Section 2.9):

(11) **ɴǃupaṇa tła ('a) iǃòorri šǃoiñe**
ɴǃupaṇa CLF_{woman} (ERG) eat meat
'ɴǃupaṇa is eating meat'

This overt marking is rare and considerably formal sounding; in the modern language it still doesn't allow for changing the word order except in a few idioms.

A transitive verb may be employed intransitively by omitting the Agent.

(12) **iǃòorri šǃoiñe**
eat meat
'The meat is being eaten.'

It is, however, ungrammatical to instead omit the Patient. Equivalently, a (lone) sentence may never finish on a verb. If we wanted to express a meaning alongside the lines of *'ɴǃupaṇa eats (nothing specific)'*, we would need to perform a valency-changing operation that shifts argument so as to fill the Patient slot. An antipassive, marked by the auxiliary **uji**, does the job:

(13) **uji iǃòorri ɴǃupaṇa tła**
ANTIP eat ɴǃupaṇa CLF_{woman}
'ɴǃupaṇa is eating (nothing specific)'

We shall examine valency-changing operations in greater detail in Section 2.3.

We remark that it is possible to drop a repeated Patient in a coordinated clause, provided it is shared with a previous one. For example:

(14) **!oono ji ɴǂuĩ ’utła noõ ǂaãn̩i ǂu**
boy CLF_{child} kick ball $CLF_{round\ tool}$ fly.away and
‘The boy kicked the ball, and it flew away.

In cases like these, the post-conjunction **ǂu** *and* is preferred to the (here) equivalent pre-conjunction **’ai** *and, and then* because it prevents the clause from ending in a verb, though the second option would not be considered ungrammatical:

(15) **!oono ji ɴǂuĩ ’utła noõ ’ai ǂaãn̩i**
boy CLF_{child} kick ball $CLF_{round\ tool}$ and fly.away
‘The boy kicked the ball, and it flew away.

It is not, however, possible to omit a shared Agent in coordinated clauses, or to omit a Patient to be replaced with another clause’s Agent and viceversa. For example, in *‘The boy kicked the ball and scored a point’* there is a shared Agent, and it is not possible to drop it in the coordinated clause in **ǂA** like it is in English. A resumptive pronoun is necessary. And in *‘The boy kicked the ball and smiled’*, the boy is A in the first clause and P in the second, meaning that the boy’s second appearence may not be dropped. (All of these example may of course be expressed with coordination and drop provided the right valency-changing is performed to make sure the coordinated arguments are always two Patients).

This behaviour, which persists under all conditions, concludes the other side of **ǂA** ’s syntactical ergativity.

2.2.1 Secundativity and ditransitives

ǂA lacks a type of complement that may be described as ‘Dative’. In a phrase involving a verb like *give* (**ditransitive verb**), which involves some *Donor* D giving a *Theme* T to a *Recipient* R, it is the Recipient which is treated as the direct object, while the Theme is placed in the instrumental (with postposition **ra**). For example

(16) **U‖’àa ku ʇoã aɬ‖’i ra !oono ji**
U‖’àa CLF_{man} gift money INSTR boy CLF_{child}
U‖’àa gifted money to the child. (lit. gifted the child with money.)

2.2.2 Causatives

Todo

2.3 Verbal voices

Let us reprise, more in detail, the schema of a ǂ**A** verb phrase:

(Agent) Verb Patient (Oblique(s) + post.)

with no specific focus, now, on the word order. Used as such, a verb is said to be in **active voice**. When necessary, it is possible to redirect the arguments of the verb in different argument slots by employing a different verbal voice, marked by an auxiliary which goes before or after the verb. The simplest case, already seen, is the **antipassive**, only really sensible for a transitive verb, and formed by prepending **uji**; this is a *demotion* in the agency hierachy, working in this manner:

Causer →Agent →Patient →Theme

In an antipassive sentence, the argument in agentive position (optional) has the meaning of causer, the one in patientive position (mandatory) has that of agent, and the instrumental oblique is the object. The purposes of this shift are several: it can be used to fill a patient gap, to express a transitive causative, or to relativize an agent (more on this in Section 2.5).

Some examples needed.

Antipassives may not be applied typically whenever an instrumental, especially in the role of theme, is present. A way to understand it is that instrumentals are part of the chain of agency described above, and the antipassive is attempting to demote the instrument to a position of lower agency that does not exist. I will describe shortly how to antipassivize a ditransitive, such as *'U‖'àa gave money to his mother'* if we want to place *U‖'àa* in the Patient position.

Another widely employed voice is the **applicative**. This is marked by the **first-syllable reduplication** (see Section 1.3.4) of the verb and is used to *promote* an oblique (of various types) to a patient. The chain is

Agent ←Patient ←Oblique

The applicative has thus some reminiscence of a passive, but it is restricted in that the original presence of an oblique argument to promote to patient is essential (it is ungrammatical otherwise). The applicative is a sacrifice of the information on the *type* of oblique, since the postposition is lost, in exchange for transitivity of the verb, which may be necessary for relativisation.

Here's an example involving an oblique with the postposition **iñi** *over*:

(17) **‖aũpe U‖'àa ku utłu'e iñi**
walk U‖'àa CLF_{man} path on
U‖'àa walks on the path

With the applicative, one may produce the **transitive** verb **‖a‖aũpe** *to walk on*:

(18) **U‖’àa ku ‖a~ ‖aũpe utłu’e**
U‖’àa CLF_{man} APPL~ walk path
U‖’àa walks on the path

The ambiguity inherent in an applicative can be displayed by presenting an example of a different oblique, for example

examples

2.4 Pronouns

2.4.1 Personal Pronouns

Exceptional within the language, the 1st and 2nd person pronouns are inflected, simultaneously for role (case), number, and clusivity.

PNC	Refers to	ERG	INTR	ACC
1SG	Just the speaker	**!a**	**ja**	**e!uũ**
1DU	The speaker + one addressee	**!xòo**		**aɴ!xòo**
1PL.INCL	Speaker + addressee + others	**ɻùupa**	**ùuma**	
1PL.EXCL	Speaker + others (no addressee)	**!auṭa**	**jaṭa**	**e!uũṭa**
2SG	Only one addressee	**u!’ui**	**uči**	**!uũñi**
2PL	Addressee(s) (+ others)			**!uũṭa**

When used as the argument of an intransitive clause or a copular clause, a personal pronoun takes the INTR case. If it’s the agent of a transitive clause or the dependant of the proposition **’a** it takes the ERG. In all other situations, meaning when used as the object of a transitive clause or as dependant to any other postposition, it takes ACC. This implies that morphologically the language effectively has **tripartite alignment** in the first and second person (and, more precisely, nominative-accusative for 1DU and ergative-absolutive for the 1PL.INCL). Since the optional causative-ergative marker **’a** can be seen as a kind of (weak) morphological ergative marker that can instead be used on the 3rd person, one could argue that **ǂA** is morphologically split-ergative, with the split occurring between the 2nd and 3rd person, while remaining always syntactically ergative[1].

Noun classifiers double as 3rd person pronouns. These are uninflected by case and number (though they may be optionally specified by an explicit numeral, identically to noun phrases). However, if one wants to reference a previously introduced noun that was determined by a classifier, one ought to use the same identical classifier as a pronoun. For example, if we refer through the noun phrase **ɴ!upaṇa nui** *ɴ!upaṇa* CLF_{woman}, it would be considered ungrammatical then to later employ **tła** CLF_{woman} with the same referent.

example

[1]Minus the unnecessity of explicit case-marking, this is analogous to the alignment system of Dyirbal.

2.4.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

todo

2.5 Relative Clauses

Being a primarily left-branching, ergative language, **ǂA** is severely restricted in which positions are accessible for relativisation, a limitation that is obviated with the use of the aforementioned voices.

Only the patient position may be relativised – meaning that the antecedent (the element that the relative clause describes) can only perform the role of patient in a relative clause. For example, amongst all these English examples

1. I saw the dog that was sleeping (Patient position)
2. I saw the dog that bit the cat (Agent position)
3. I saw the dog that my sister had gifted me (Instrumental position)
4. I saw the dog whose ears I find funny (Possessor position)

only the first can be translated *literally* into **ǂA** , since 'the dog' is Patient for the verb 'sleep' in that case. The other examples have to be reworked with voice changing.

A simple (Patientive) relative clause is not marked with any special grammatical particle. It is simply placed before the antecedent with its own Patient omitted, constituting part of its noun phrase, and thus placing the antecedent itself in Patientive place for the relative clause. This entire noun phrase may then occupy any role in the *main* clause. Here's an example where a main clause Patient is relativized, with the relative clause marked in [square brackets]:

(19) **!a ǂǁa [!a ǂq'ula 'ùa] ŋàã (nui)**
1S.ERG see [1S.ERG before meet] woman (CLF_{person})
I saw the woman I had met.

Generally such a determinative relative clause may trigger drop of the classifier, and in this case **nui** may be omitted, as we will do from now on. Determinacy is implied automatically.

We may also have the antecedent as Agent in the main clause:

(20) **[!a ǂq'ula 'ùa] ŋàã ǂǁa e!uũ**
[1S.ERG before meet] woman see 1S.ACC
The woman I had met saw me.

Proceed on voice changing and other positions.

2.6 Serial Verb Constructions

ǂA allows some kinds of **Serial Verb Constructions** (SVCs), whereby two or more verbs are chained together with no linking element in a single clause. Some of them are lexicalised (for example **ᵾji ...** for the antipassive), in which case they can be understood better as auxiliary verbs, though fundamentally the spirit is that of SVCs, which are more pervasive.

In the simplest kind of SVC, two intransitive verbs are chained together, called **intransitive patientive SVC**. The resulting combined intransitive verb has the meaning of performing the first action so that the second action may *follow*, either just temporally or also causally. While not necessary, the first verb is usually one of motion. A practical example:

(21) **ǂaã iɴǁàa ṇàã ǂ'a**
go sleep eland $CLF_{\text{large herbivores}}$
The eland went to sleep (went so it could sleep / goes and sleeps)

This construction may also help express TAM (Tense, Aspect, Mood) for intransitive verbs, using particular preceeding verbs, for example:

Preceding Verb	Translation of V. + ...
uᵾum *stand up*	be about to ..., will ..., be likely to...
ǁarra *close (their) eyes*	refuse to ..., not intend to...
ǂaã *go*	begin ..., go to do..., go there and ...,
tłoi *exit, leave*	stop ..., finish ...,

We may not, however, serialize such intransitive verbs with a transitive verb, with the same types of meaning. For example, the following (with the presented intended meaning) is ungrammatical:

(22) ***ṣǂxa ku ǂaã !ope ṇàã ǂ'a**
human CLF_{man} go kill eland $CLF_{\text{large herbivores}}$
**The man went to kill the eland.*

because this construction would appear to attempt to share arguments between the patientive and agentive verbs in the SVC, which is not allowed by ergativity. You *could* see the example as grammatical and translate it in the purely ergative sense as *The eland went and got killed by the man*, but this **intransitive-first patientive SVC** construction is extremely uncommon, due to the unpleasant distance between the agent and the transitive verb it modifies.

To communicate the meaning we originally wanted, which is *'the man went to kill the eland'*, an astounding feature only possible thanks to **ǂA** 's lack of ergative morphology is

given by **chain SVCs**[2]. In a chain SVC, an argument is placed, unmarked, *inbetween* an intransitive and a transitive verb, in that order, followed by the object of the latter. The sandwiched argument acts as the patient to the first verb (given that it follows it), and as agent of the second (coming before it)[3]. This quite readily fixes the previous example:

(23) **ǂaã sǂxa ku !ope ṇàã ǂ'a**
go human CLF_{man} kill eland $CLF_{large\ herbivores}$
The man went to kill the eland.

Finally, we may also much more easily have regular SVCs where the first verb is transitive. If the second one is intransitive, then we have a **transitive-first patientive SVC**, where the transitive action causes the intransitive action:

(24) **!Xao'aã ku ǁxape tsui ǃupaṇa tła**
!Xao'aã CLF_{man} insult cry ǃupaṇa CLF_{woman}
!Xao'aã insulted ǃupaṇa and she cried (made her cry).

If both are transitive, we have a **binary SVC**, where both agent and patient are shared. The meaning is more likely of temporal consecution than of causality, though this is not an absolute. Example:

(25) **!Xao'aã ku !ope au!q'o ṇàã ǂ'a**
!Xao'aã CLF_{man} kill skin eland $CLF_{large\ herbivores}$
!Xao'aã killed and then skinned the eland.

In summary, the following kinds of SVCs are possible:

SVC type	Verb 1	Verb 2	Shared argument	Likely translation
Intr. Patientive	intr.	intr.	Patient	Tense/Aspectual
Chain	intr.	tr.	One infixed argument acting as Patient and Agent respectively	Tense/Aspectual
Trans. Patientive	tr.	intr.	Patient	Causal
Binary	tr.	tr.	Both Patient and Agent separately	Consecution

2.7 Imperatives and Polarity

To doo be doo

2.8 Interrogatives

To doo be doo

[2]The name serial verb construction is improper in this case since the verbs are not literally adjacent, but it still constitutes a monoclausal, polyverbal setup.

[3]When a 1st or 2nd person pronoun is infixed as part of a chain SVC, as when translating *'I went to kill the eland'*, the ERG teform is commonly employed.

2.9 Topic-Comment

You guessed it

Chapter 3

Corpus

3.1 The North Wind and the Sun – ᴎ!òõ U!q'a maã Jùu aɻe ǂu

ɻaula N!òõ U!q'a maã Jùu aje ǂu eł‖a iñi nɻum nui 'èe sɬaɻau ‖ùuɲa. Ţurra, loõɲi ɻxoi onɻ'a o!'o q'añi. Maã aje ǂu ᴎ!'oirre nui 'èe ǂa 'a q'añi ku ᴎ‖xòi upa ɻxoi ţèe, unɻu sɬaɻau tɬìi š!u nui. N!òõ U!q'a maã ǂxàu'a tṣe ra tsùu ᴎʘaã, ɲam ča uji tsùu maã, q'añi ku 'a ţèe onɻ'a !q'ati ᴎ!xùu. 'ai U!q'a maã eña ṣǂq'o. 'ai 'ai, loõɲi ra čìiči Jùu aje, 'ai ǂu ku u!q'o ɻxoi ţèe. N!òõ U!q'a maã ł‖a sɬaɻau Jùu aɻe.

Once upon a time, the North Wind and the Sun were discussing over which one of them two was stronger. Suddenly, a vagabond wrapped in a warm cloak arrived to them. The Wind and the Sun decided that the first of them that would make the vagabond take off the cloak, truly that one would have been the strongest. The North Wind blew as strong as he could, but as the wind blew, the vagabond enveloped themselves in the cloak ever more. And so, the Wind gave up. But then, the Sun shone warmly, and so the vagabond took off their cloak. Thus, the North Wind saw that the Sun was stronger.

(26) **ɻaula N!òõ U!q'a maã Jùu aje ǂu eł‖a iñi**
once.upon.a.time North wind $CLF_{weather}$ sun $CLF_{celestial\ object}$ and conflict over
Once upon a time, the North Wind and the Sun were discussing

(27) **nɻum nui 'èe sɬaɻau ‖ùuɲa .**
two CLF_{people} PTV COMP~strong about
over which one of them two was stronger.

(28) **Ţurra , loõɲi ɻxoi onɻ'a o!'o q'añi .**
suddenly warm cloak envelop walk.into vagabond

Suddenly, a vagabond wrapped in a warm cloak arrived to them.

(29) **Maã aje ǂu ᴎǃ'oirre nui 'èe ǂa 'a q'añi ku**
$CLF_{weather}$ $CLF_{celestial\ object}$ and decide CLF_{people} PTV first ABL vagabond CLF_{man}
ᴎǁxòi upa ɻxoi ṭèe ,
remove SUBJ cloak $CLF_{clothing}$
The Wind and the Sun decided that the first of them that would make the vagabond take off the cloak,

(30) **unɻu sɻaɻau tǂìi š!u nui .**
truly COMP~strong COND RES CLF_{people}
truly that one would have been stronger.

(31) **N!òõ U!q'a maã ǂxàu'a tṣe ra tsùu ᴎʘaã ,**
North wind $CLF_{weather}$ strain peak INSTR throw air
The North Wind blew as strong as he could,

(32) **ṇam ča uji tsùu maã , q'añi ku 'a ṭèe onɻ'a**
but while ANTIP throw $CLF_{weather}$ vagabond CLF_{man} ABL $CLF_{clothing}$ envelop
ǃq'ati ᴎǃxùu .
self.ACC more
but as the wind blew, the vagabond enveloped themselves in the cloak ever more.

(33) **'ai U!q'a maã eña ṣǂq'o .**
and wind $CLF_{weather}$ surrender neck
And so, the Wind gave up.

(34) **'ai 'ai , loõṇi ra čìiči Jùu aje , 'ai ǂu ku**
and.then warm INSTR shine sun $CLF_{celestial\ object}$ and and CLF_{man} peel
u!q'o ɻxoi ṭèe .
off cloak $CLF_{clothing}$
But then, the Sun shone warmly, and so the vagabond took off their cloak.

(35) **N!òõ U!q'a maã ɬǁa sɻaɻau Jùu aje .**
North wind $CLF_{weather}$ see COMP~strong sun $CLF_{celestial\ object}$
Thus, the North Wind saw that the Sun was stronger.

Chapter 4

Lexicon

4.1 Basic Classifier Taxonomy

todopdeedoo

4.2 Greetings and idioms

to do as well

4.3 Numerals

ǂA doesn't have a consistent way of expressing cardinal numbers larger than 24, and ordinals are even more severely under-developed, only rarely ever going as far as *third*. The stable numerals are reported as follows, with * marking rare forms. The derivational patterns that can be evinced from many of these numerals are varied and chaotic. The constructions **- 'a !òo** *one from* and **- ǂa** *next after* are used to create cardinals respectively one or more less than one with a simpler name, first-syllable reduplication may produce a number twice or thrice the original, and the almost unattested form of 22 seems to attempt a 'second after' construction from 20, which itself is unstable to being represented either as **pèe** *digit* or *'double ten'*, where 10 itself is **a!ùuma** *hand* (instead of it being assigned, more logically, to 5).

	Cardinal	Ordinal		Cardinal
1	**!òo**	**ǂa**	13	**ŋum ǂa**
2	**ɴǂum**	**!aaru**	14	**ŋum !aaru**
3	**eǂaaka**	***ɴǂumrru**	15	**š!o!q'oi**
4	**sǂ'e**		16	**nonoti**
5	**š!q'oi**		17	**nonoti ǂa**
6	**a‖um**		18	**a‖umñu**
7	**ɴǂoiči**		19	***pèe 'a !òo**
8	**noti**		20	**pèe** (or ***a!u!ùuma**)
9	**ɴǂaati**		21	**pèe ǂa**
10	**a!ùuma**		22	***pèe !aaru**
11	**ŋum 'a !òo**		23	***ŋuŋum 'a !òo**
12	**ŋum**		24	**ŋuŋum**

4.4 Dictionary

In the following dictionary, we report words in the standard orthography and in broad IPA transcription (in particular, no tones nor stress are marked, since they are fully predictable).

- For nouns, we make suggestion of the most commonly used classifiers in [CLF …].
- Some phrasal verbs are circumfixal, usually because they involve a lexicalized combination of a verb and a postposition. These are entered with dots **…** to mark the space in which the Patient *and* the oblique must be inserted.

ǂala - /|ala/ • *adv.* easily

ǂaõ - /|ãɔ̃/ • *clf.* orifices, bodily holes, openings, wounds

ǂaula - /|aula/ • *adv.* once.upon.a.time

ǂoã - /|ɔ̃ã/ • *Ditransitive verb* (A) gift (T) to (P)

ǂq'a - /|͡q'a/ • *n.* night

ǂuli - /|uli/ • *n.* breast [CLF **ǂùu**] • *n.* mother [CLF **tła**]

ǂùu - /|u̯ː/ • *clf.* body parts

ǂùupa - /|u̯ːpa/ • *pers.pr.* 1.PL.INCL.ERG

ǂxoi - /|͡χɔi/ • *n.* cloak

⊙ui - /⊙ui/ • *v.tr.* want

!'ina - /!ˀiɲa/ • *n.* boat

!'oã - /!ˀɔ̃ã/ • *n.* fingernail • *n.* (of a location or a stretch in time) end, endpoint, boundary, finish, completion, last portion

!'uulu - /!ˀuːlu/ • *v.tr.* bite • *v.intr.* feel pain, especially itching of the skin

!a - /!a/ • *pers.pr.* I (ERG), me, to me

!aala - /!aːla/ • *post.* under, below • *post.* moving by means of, travelling by • *n.* palm (of hand), sole (foot)

!auṭa - /!auʈa/ • *pers.pr.* Us, excluding you (ERG)

!oi - /!ɔi/ • *post.* for the benefit of, for the purpose of giving to • *post.* for the purpose/with the intent of going to, travelling to, or moving towards

!ooja - /!ɔːɟa/ • *preverb* IMP.NEG

!oono - /!ɔːn̪ɔ/ • *n.* boy [CLF **ji**,**nui**]

!oorro - /!ɔːrrɔ/ • *n.* urine [CLF **ɬùm**] • *v.intr.* urinate

!òo - /!o̞ː/ • *card.num.* one, non-plural • *adj.* lone, alone, unaccompained, unpaired

!òotło - /!o̞ːt͡ɬɔ/ • *n.* vulva

!q'ao - /!͡qʼaɔ/ • *n.* clock

!q'ati - /!͡qʼat͡s̪i/ • *refl.pr.* self.ACC, placed in P position, marks that (C) is also acting as (P).

!umña - /!mːɲa/ • *n.* rain

!umñi - /!mːɲi/ • *pers.pr.* 2.S.ACC

!umṭa - /!mːʈa/ • *pers.pr.* 2.PL.ACC

!uuli - /!uːli/ • *n.* celebration, party

!uũ!oi - /!mːǃɔi/ • *N/A* hello, hi

!xaje - /!͡χaɟe/ • *v.tr.* open

!xape - /!͡χape/ • *adj.* happy

!xatłe - /!͡χat͡ɬe/ • *clf.* blades, things with a sharp edge, teeth

!xòo - /!͡χo̞ː/ • *pers.pr.* you and I

ǂ'a - /ǂˀa/ • *clf.* larger herbivores, elands, elephants, giraffes, etc

ǂa - /ǂa/ • *ord.num.* first

ǂaǂxàa - /ǂa͡ǂχa̰ː/ • *v.tr.* snap, break (especially crack) in half

ǂaã - /ǂãː/ • *v.intr.* go

ǂaãn̪i - /ǂãːn̪i/ • *v.* flee

ǂoipe - /ǂɔipe/ • *adv.* maybe.not

ǂoĩ - /ǂɔ̃ĩ/ • *v.intr.* fly

ǂootsi̪ - /ǂɔːt͡s̪i/ • *n.* mountain

ǂòõ - /ǂõ̞ː/ • *clf.* lid

ǂq'aĩ - /͡ǂq'ãĩ/ • *v.* know

ǂq'ula - /͡ǂq'ula/ • *adv.* before • *n.* (anatomy) back, spine, buttocks

ǂu - /ǂu/ • *conj.* and

ǂùm - /ǂm̪ː/ • *clf.* liquids, drops, rain, beverages

ǂxàa - /͡ǂχa̰ː/ • *v.tr.* hit, strike with a loud sound • *v.tr.* damage, hurt, offend

ǂxàu'a - /͡ǂχa̰u̯ʔa/ • *n.* effort, strain, force

ǂxoiṭa - /͡ǂχɔiʈa/ • *adj.* strange

ǂxoĩ - /͡ǂχɔ̃ĩ/ • *post.* through • *post.* across

ǁ'u - /ǁˀu/ • *Ditransitive verb* give, provide, (A) give (T) to (P)

ǁaa - /ǁaː/ • *card.num.* few

ǁaũpe - /ǁãmpe/ • *n.* foot [CLF **ʇùu**] • *v.intr.* walk

ǁàa - /ǁa̰ː/ • *v.tr.* hold

ǁòi - /ǁo̞̰i̯/ • *N/A* NEG

ǁq'ooña - /͡ǁq'ɔːɲa/ • *n.* crab • *n.* lobster

ǁùuṇa - /ǁṵːŋa/ • *post.* about

'a - /ʔa/ • *post.* ERG • *post.* ABL, coming from, originating from, created by, moving away from

'ai - /ʔai/ • *adv.* and (for clauses) • *adv.* Back then, in that time, once upon a time

'ai 'ai - /ʔai ʔai/ • *conj.* and thus, and as a consequence, and immediately after

'ào - /ʔa̰o̞̰/ • *n.* water [CLF **ɬùm**]

'èe - /ʔe̞̰ː/ • *post.* PTV

'ìi - /ʔḭː/ • *clf.* slithering.animals

'u - /ʔu/ • *post.* of

’urri - /ʔurri/ • *clf.* timespans, events in time, occurrences, dates, appointments

’utła - /ʔut͡ɬa/ • *n.* playing ball [CLF **noõ**]

’ùa - /ʔu̯ą̃/ • *v.tr.* (someone) meet, make acquaintance of, get to know, greet, receive

a!ùuma - /a!u̯ːma/ • *n.* hand • *card.num.* ten

a‡’ui - /a‡ʔui/ • *clf.* wooden

a‖um - /a‖mː/ • *card.num.* six

aje - /aȷe/ • *clf.* objects and phenomena in the sky, stars, the sun, the moon, comets, clouds, rainbows, sunrises and sunsets, eclipses, etc.

aɬ‖’i - /aɬ‖ʔi/ • *n.* money

aɴ!xòo - /ãⁿ!ʁɔ̯ː/ • *pers.pr.* me and you

aɴ‡ài - /ãⁿ‡ą̯i̯/ • *adj.* every

ča - /t͡ʃa/ • *conj.* while

čèe - /t͡ʃe̯ː/ • *n.* column

čìiči - /t͡ʃi̯ːt͡ʃi/ • *v.* shine

e!’ani - /e!ʔan̪i/ • *v.* sing

e!um - /e!mː/ • *pers.pr.* me (ACC), to me

e!umṭa - /e!mːʈa/ • *pers.pr.* 1.PL.EXCL.ACC

e‡aaka - /e‡aːka/ • *card.num.* three

eɬ‖a - /eɬ‖a/ • *n.* conflict, discussion, disagreement, verbal fight

eña - /eɲa/ • *v.tr.* surrender (smth.), let go of, unwillingly offer

ete - /et͡s̪e/ • *N/A* when

iɻ’ali - /i|ʔali/ • *n.* barrier

iɻ’i - /i|ʔi/ • *clf.* small animal

iɻaã - /i|ãː/ • *v.intr.* do nothing, be slacking, loiter **N‡xa iɻaã !Xao’aã ku.** *!Xao’aã is always slacking.* • *v.intr.* lie down, be on the ground

i!òorri - /i!ɔ̯ːrri/ • *v.* eat

iɬ‖ui - /iɬ‖ui/ • *n.* milk [CLF **‡ùm**]

iñi - /iɲi/ • *post.* over, on top of, above • *Subordinating connective* provided that, resting on the fact that, the fact that ... guarantees that ... • *n.* head

iš!uka - /iš!uka/ • *N/A* the very same

iɴ‖àa - /ĩⁿ‖a̯ː/ • *v.intr.* sleep

iɴ‖oi - /ĩⁿ‖ɔi/ • *v.* say

ja - /ɟa/ • *pron.* 1S.INTR

jaṭa - /ɟaʈa/ • *pers.pr.* 1.PL.EXCL.INTR

jèeñi - /ɟe̯ːɲi/ • *N/A* this

ji - /ɟi/ • *clf.* child

jipa - /ɟipa/ • *n.* hare

jùm - /ɟm̯ː/ • *v.tr.* surround, circle, flank, in either threatening or protective manner • *n.* circular formation of people or objects, ring of items, a group encircling a centre [CLF **ɬ‖oi**] • *n.* group of people by a campfire

jùu - /ɟu̯ː/ • *n.* sun [CLF **aje**]

ku - /ku/ • *clf.* male adults, men

kuñe - /kuɲe/ • *adv.* simply

laã - /lãː/ • *n.* tongue [CLF **ɟùu**]

loõṇi - /lɔ̃ːn̪i/ • *adj.* warm, warming • *n.* warmth • *adj.* sensual, seductive, comforting

ɬ‖a - /ɬ‖a/ • *v.tr.* see

ɬ‖au’i - /ɬ‖auʔi/ • *adj.* graceful, delicately beautiful

ɬ‖oi - /ɬ‖ɔi/ • *clf.* static formations, groups and sequences of inanimate objects, layouts, patterns and textures

maã - /mãː/ • *clf.* weather phenomena, winds, rains, sandstorms

mau - /mau/ • *v.intr.* talk • *v.intr.* (O) act like (A), makes decision or behaves according to what is expected of (A)

nàã - /n̪ã̲ː/ • *v.* laugh

noõ - /n̪õ̲ː/ • *clf.* round tools, round instruments, artificial balls, spheres, globes, round toys

noti - /n̪ɔt͡s̪i/ • *card.num.* eight

nui - /n̪ui/ • *clf.* persons, people, humans, personified entities, individuals, animate

ṇam - /ŋ̃am/ • *conj.* but

ṇàã - /ŋ̃ã̲ː/ • *n.* eland [CLF **ɬ'a**]

ṇùĩ - /ŋ̃m̃ĩ̲/ • *clf.* spoken word, utterances, phrases, languages, words, voices, thoughts, reasonings

ñàã - /ɲã̲ː/ • *N/A* liver

ŋàã - /ŋã̲ː/ • *n.* woman

ŋèe - /ŋe̲ː/ • *n.* evening, time of sunset [CLF **'urri**] • *n.* sunset (the process of sun setting)

ŋum - /ŋmː/ • *card.num.* twelve

o!'o - /ɔ!ˀɔ/ • *v.intr.* arrive (among others), join (Dat), meet up with others (Dat)

o!ao - /ɔ!aɔ/ • *adj.* old

o!xòoji - /ɔ!t͡χɔ̲ːɟi/ • *v.* get stuck, become unable to move or act

o!xu - /ɔ!t͡χu/ • *n.* walking cane

onɬ'a - /ɔ̃ᵑ|ˀa/ • *v.* envelop

pau - /pau/ • *adj.* abundant

po - /pɔ/ • *n.* lips (of the mouth) [CLF **ɬùu**] • *n.* mouth, oral cavity [CLF **ɬaõ**]

q'añi - /qʔaɲi/ • *n.* vagabond

ra - /ra/ • *post.* INSTR

sɬ'e - /s̪|ˀe/ • *card.num.* four

sɬ'i - /s̪|ˀi/ • *clf.* slender

sɬau - /s̪|au/ • *adj.* strong

sɬui - /s̪|ui/ • *n.* snake

š!o - /š!ɔ/ • *Copulative verb* be temporarily, be contingentially

š!oiñe - /š!ɔiɲe/ • *n.* meat

š!o ... iñi - /š!ɔ ... iɲi/ • *v.* (smth) be over, be on top of • *v.* (actions & events) be involved in, act in, perform, be busy with • *v.* lie on, lay down on, cover **š!o ku n‡òõ iñi** *he is lying on the bed*

š!q'oi - /š!t͡qˀɔi/ • *card.num.* five

š!u - /š!u/ • *Resumptive marker* RES

ṣ‡q'o - /ʂ‡t͡qˀɔ/ • *n.* neck

ṣ‡um - /ʂ‡mː/ • *n.* knife [CLF **!xatɬe**]

ṣ‡xa - /ʂ‡t͡χa/ • *n.* human being, person

tɬa - /t͡ɬa/ • *clf.* adult women

tɬìi - /t͡ɬi̲ː/ • *preverb* COND

tsùu - /t͡s̪ṵː/ • *v.tr.* throw, launch • *v.tr.* produce, spit out, blow, excrete

tṣe - /t͡ʂe/ • *n.* peak

tṣui - /t͡ʂui/ • *n.* nose

ṭàa - /ʈa̲ː/ • *clf.* predatory animals, carnivores

ṭèe - /ʈe̲ː/ • *clf.* articles of clothing, cloth, shoes

ṭuma - /ʈuma/ • *adj.* great, awesome

ṭurra - /ʈurra/ • *adv.* suddenly

uɻ'ule - /u|ˀule/ • *v.* create, make, build, manufacture

u!'ui - /u!ˀui/ • *pers.pr.* 2.ERG

u!oõ - /u!õː/ • *n.* year

u!òi - /u!o̰i̯/ • *adj.* jittery, irritable, violent, uneasy, startled **U!'ui 'a u!òi ṇàã ǂ'a!** *You startled the eland!*

u!q'a - /u!q̀'a/ • *n.* wind [CLF **maã**]

u!q'o - /u!q̀'ɔ/ • *v.tr.* peel, scrape or remove a covering, protective layer, film, piece of clothing

u!xàm - /u!χ̀ã̰m̰/ • *v.* concern

uǂuṇa - /uǂuɳa/ • *n.* song

učі - /utʃ̀i/ • *pers.pr.* 2.INTR

uji - /uɟi/ • *preverb* ANTIP

uma - /uma/ • *pers.pr.* 1.PL.INCL.ABS

upa - /upa/ • *preverb* SUBJ

uš!uupa - /uš!uːpa/ • *v.* re-organize

utɬu'e - /utɬ̀uʔe/ • *n.* walking path, paved path, dirt road • *n.* groove, incision, indented strip

uṭu - /uʈu/ • *clf.* bird

uɴɻaã - /mᵑ|ãː/ • *n.* wolf [CLF **ṭàa**] • *adj.* (of a person) unpredictably aggressive, pugnacious, cruel, dangerous

uɴɻu - /mᵑ|u/ • *adv.* truly

uɴǂàaki - /mᵑǂa̰ːki/ • *v.intr.* (S) climb

uɴǂoi - /mᵑǂɔi/ • *n.* language, way of speaking

uɴǂùu - /mᵑǂṵː/ • *rel.pr.* which.ERG

nɻaati - /ᵑ|aːt͡sʲ̰i/ • *card.num.* nine

nɻai - /ᵑ|ai/ • *post.* face

nɻum - /ᵑ|mː/ • *card.num.* two

nʘaã - /ᵑʘãː/ • *n.* air

n!'oirre - /ᵑ!ˀɔirre/ • *v.* decide

n!ai - /ᵑ!ai/ • *adj.* similar to, akin to

n!àa - /ᵑ!a̰ː/ • *n.* fire

n!oo'o - /ᵑ!ɔːʔɔ/ • *n.* chicken

n!òõ - /ᵑ!õ̰ː/ • *n.* North

n!xàa - /ᵑ!ʁ̰a̰ː/ • *post.* inside

n!xùu - /ᵑ!ʁ̰ṵː/ • *adv.* more

nǂaã - /ᵑǂãː/ • *v.* complain

nǂoa - /ᵑǂɔa/ • *v.intr.* discover

nǂoičі - /ᵑǂɔit͡ʃi/ • *card.num.* seven

nǂòõ - /ᵑǂõ̰ː/ • *n.* bed

nǂuĩ - /ᵑǂmĩ/ • *v.* kick

nǂùu - /ᵑǂṵː/ • *v.intr.* die

nǂxa - /ᵑǂʁ̀a/ • *adv.* always, often, it is a regular occurrence that

n‖a'a - /ᵑ‖aʔa/ • *n.* gold

n‖oi - /ᵑ‖ɔi/ • *v.* can

n‖otṣo - /ᵑ‖ɔt͡sʲ̀ɔ/ • *n.* door

n‖òõ - /ᵑ‖õ̰ː/ • *v.* descend

n‖ui - /ᵑ‖ui/ • *v.intr.* jump

n‖xòi - /ᵑ‖ʁ̀o̰i̯/ • *v.* remove