THE PRACTICAL

ŧA ṆŲ̃Ĩ

ON PHONOLOGY, GRAMMAR,

AND THE PREVENTION OF MOUTH INJURIES.

BY CANCRIZANS CANON

0.1 Overview

!Um!oi!

('Hello!')

ǂA Ṇu̱ĩ ([ǂa: ŋm̥̃ĩ˧], *'first words'* or *'first language'*), or also just ǂA, is, as much as it pa͂i͂n͂s 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 sound-looks 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 like this . 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

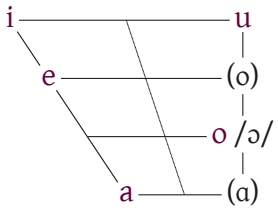
ǂA makes, curiously, no phonemic distinction of voicing. It does, hower, distinguish **nasality** as a binary feature between oral and nasal, and **glottalization** from modal, to "glottalic", to full glottal closure. Glottalic phones involve some form of glottal intervention (as in ejectives or creaky-voiced sonorants), while fully glottal sounds involve some (coarticulated) glottal closure.

This structure can help navigate the oversized phonological inventory, from vowels to click consonants to non-click consonants, by elucidating these overarching symmetries:

Sound Type→ Phonation↓	Vowels	Clicks	Non-Clicks
Modal Oral	Plain vowels /a/	Oral clicks /!/	Oral pulmonics /p/
Modal Nasal	Nasal vowels /ã/	Nasal clicks /ᴺ!/	Nasal pulmonics /m/
Glottalic Oral	Creaky-voiced (laryngealised) vowels – /a̰/	Ejective-contour Clicks /!q’/	Ejectives /q’/
Glottalic Nasal	Creaky-voiced nasal vowels /ã̰/		Creaky-voiced nasals (only allophonic) [m̰]
Full Glottal Oral	“Broken” vowels /a̰ʔa/	Glottalized clicks /!ˀ/	Glottal stop /ʔ/
Full Glottal Nasal	Nasal broken vowels /ã̰ʔã/	Pre-nasal glottalized clicks /ᴺ!ˀ/	

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 for example 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 /ɔa/[1]

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 ǂA 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 six different phonations, or more precisely **six registers**, that is a phonation + tone combination:

[1] Diphthongs are preponderantly closing; the only opening diphthong /ɔa/ is barely so.

Notation	Phonation	Tone
aa	Oral Modal [a]	˧
aã	Nasal Modal [ã]	˩
a̰a	Oral Creaky [a̰]	˧ (on back vowels) ˥ (on front vowels)
a̰ã	Nasal Creaky [ã̰]	˧
a̰ʔa	Oral Broken [a̰ʔa]	˧ (on back vowels) ˥ (on front vowels)
a̰ʔã	Nasal Broken [ã̰ʔã]	˩

Creaky voice is realized as laryngealisation (creaky voice proper) or even pharyngealisation ("strident" or "sphyncteric"), with no phonemic distinction. Front vowels ḛ ḭ are more likely to be sphyncteric than proper creaky, and back vowels o̰ ṵ are more likely creaky than sphincteric. a̰ is either, consistently with the frontness of its realisation. As a variant on the orthography, creaky voice may be marked with a grave accent a̰a →àa if combining diacritics are not allowed or unsupported.

The "Broken" register is classed as a type of phonation rather than a cluster of pre-existing sounds. It consists of a crescendo of glottalisation up to a glottal stop that "breaks" the vowel. An off-glide of the same vowel quality escapes right after. This produces a characteristic stuttered sound, which one could imagine as the phonation equivalent of a contour tone. The off-glide is truly an inseparable part of the pattern; it is impossible to have broken diphthongs like *a̰ʔi and nasality is consistent across the glottal stop.

All of the vowel e's nasal forms merge with those of i, so that there is no *ẽ.

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 →/m/ [m̩˩]
*ṵũ →ṵm →/m̰/ [m̰̩˧]
*ṵʔũ →mʔm →/m̰ʔm/ [m̰̃ʔm˧]

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	Broken	Nasal Broken
Short	Long					
a /a/	aa /a:/	aã /ã:/	a̰a /a̰:/	a̰ã /ã̰:/	a̰’a /a̰:/	a̰’ã /ã̰:/
e /e/	ee /e:/	iĩ /ĩ:/	ḛe /ḛ:/	ḭĩ /ḭ̃:/	ḛ’e /ḛ:/	ḭ’ĩ /ḭ̃:/
i /i/	ii /i:/		ḭi /ḭ:/		ḭ’i /ḭ:/	
o /ɔ/	oo /ɔ:/	oõ /õ:/	o̰o /o̰:/	o̰õ /õ̰:/	o̰’o /o̰:/	o̰’õ /õ̰:/
u /u/	uu /u:/	um /m:/	ṵu /ṵ:/	ṵm /m̰:/	ṵ’u /ṵ:/	m’m /m̰:/
	au /au/	am /ãm/	a̰u /a̰ṵ/	a̰m /ã̰m̰/		
	ui /ui/	uĩ /mĩ/	ṵi /ṵḭ/	ṵĩ /m̰ḭ̃/		
	oi /ɔi/	oĩ /õĩ/	o̰i /o̰ḭ/	o̰ĩ /õ̰ḭ̃/		
	(etc. for remaining diphthongs)					

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 ǂA 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 ǂA or impossible. Cells spanning multiple rows or column denote degrees of allophonic variation. Phonemese in parentheses are highly marginal.

		Labial	Dental	Apical	Palatal	Lateral	Velar	Uvul.	Glott.
	Ejective			ṭʼ /ʈʼ/	cʼ	tɬʼ /t͡ɬʼ/		qʼ	
Pulmonics	Stop	p	t̪	ṭ /ʈ/	j/ɟ/	tɬ	k		ʼ
	Affricate		/t͡s̪/	tṣ /t͡ʂ/	tš /t͡ʃ/	/t͡ɬ/			/ʔ/
	Trill			r /r/					
	Nasal	m	n̪ /n̪/	ṇ /ɳ/	ñ /ɲ/	l	ŋ /ŋ ~ɴ/		
Clicks	Plain	ʘ	ǂ	!	ǂ	‖			
	Glottalised		ǂʼ	!	ǂʼ	‖ʼ			
	Fric.-release		ǂx	!x	ǂx	‖x			
	Ejec.-release		ǂqʼ	!qʼ	ǂqʼ	‖qʼ			
	Nasal	ɴʘ	ɴǂ	ɴ!	ɴǂ	ɴ‖			
	Nasal Glott.		ɴǂʼ	ɴ!ʼ	ɴǂʼ	ɴ‖ʼ			
	Nasal Fric.-rel.		ɴǂx	ɴ!x	ɴǂx	ɴ‖x			
	Pre-fricative		sǂ	š!	ṣǂ	ɬ‖			
	Pre-fr. Glott.		sǂʼ	š!ʼ	ṣǂʼ	ɬ‖ʼ			
	Pre-fr. Ej.-rel.		sǂqʼ	š!qʼ	ṣǂqʼ	ɬ‖qʼ			
	(Implosive-rel.)			(!ɠ)		(‖ɠ)			

1.2.1 Ejectives

Consistently with the language-wide pattern of distinction of degree of glottalisation, ǂA 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’, which varies across [c’~kʲ’].

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 set aside as neither oral nor nasal[2]. 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. The dental obstruent t̪ is tipically an interdental affricate, usually sibilant. Occasionally it may be a simple fricative (sibilant or or not), especially before front vowels, but this distinction is not phonemic.

The series marked as “apical” oscillate between the apical alveolar (like r) and the true subapical retroflex (as ṭ typically is). Here the stop and affricate are distinguished.

[2] 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.

Similarly the palatal series varies in palatalisation from fully palatal j to the laminal palato-alveolar tš.

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 specifically 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.
- Because of the phonemic distinction of nasality, the voiced stops [b], [d̪~ð], [ɖ] are allophonic for the voiceless stops /p/ /t͡s̪/ /ʈ/, instead of the nasals /m/ /n̪/ /ɳ/ as would be more typical. The same holds in palatal articulation where [c] and [ɟ] are the same phoneme, but in this case the voiced form is more common realization, and so it is marked as /ɟ/, or j.
- 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].
- /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.

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 be-

tween 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):

- /|/, written ǀ, is laminal dental. The sound is noisy and highest in pitch.
- ǁ is lateral. The release is lateral (typically only 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 in pitch than the dental, and with a characteristic 'liquid' quality.
- ǃ is the alveolar or alveolo-palatal click, for us also conveniently called apical, and the essential feature is that the tongue is pulled down (and back), resulting in a very clean and loud 'pop' sound of lowest pitch.

- ǂ is the palatal or palato-alveolar click. The tongue is flat and adhering to a wide area on the palate and the alveolar ridge; the tongue tip does not make contact. The tongue is pulled backwards (and slightly downwards), resulting in a higher-pitched, still clear 'tick' sound.

- The rarer bilabial click ʘ. It usually begins as labial and moves to labiodental, and has a loud, very noisy sucking-like 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]. The frication is usually quite strong and raspy, granting these clicks 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 strong 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 /s͡|/, /s͡ǂ/, /ʃ!/, /ɬ‖/. The point of articulation of the fricative matches roughly with that of the frontal closure, but specifically in /s͡ǂ/, /ʃ!/ the configuration of the tongue tip is *opposite* that of the click; respectively switching from apical to laminal and laminal to apical. In a sense, the fast articulation of these prefricative clicks is agevolated by the momentum from this motion, which is mantained into the lingual motion to articulate the click. The "crossed" /s͡ǂ/, /ʃ!/ involve a continuous, snake- or whip-like motion of the tongue, while the nonexistent "direct" alternates /*ʃǂ/, /*s͡!/ would be considerably more awkward.

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']

XI (rare/marginal) **Implosive-contour** These very rare clicks involve a released into a voiced implosive. They usually occur as alternates to plain clicks employed for humour or onomatopoeia. Only /*!ɗ/ and /*‖͡ɗ/ are attested.

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	/ᶮǀ/	/ᶮǂ/	/ᶮǃ/	/ᶮǁ/	
IX	/ᶮǀˀ/	/ᶮǂˀ/	/ᶮǃˀ/	/ᶮǁˀ/	
X	/ᶮǀqʼ/	/ᶮǂqʼ/	/ᶮǃqʼ/	/ᶮǁqʼ/	
(XI)			(/ᵑʛ/)	(/ᵑǁʛ/)	

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			
		Ø	ˀ	χ/ʁ	qʼ
Onset	Ø	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 cer-

tainly quite alien to ǂA speakers.

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

Phonemic	Orthography
ǀ	ʇ
ɴ*	N*
s̪ǀ	sʇ
s̪ǂ	s̪ǂ
ʃǃ	šǃ
ɬǁ	ɬǁ
*ʔ	*’
*͡χ / *͡ʁ	*x
*͡qʼ	*qʼ
*͡ɢ	*ɢ

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.
E	Any ejective 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 qʼ. 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 ǀ ǃ ǂ ǁ have uvular rear closure, and thus really release uvularly and cause tongue root retraction.

This back vowel constraint applies to

- qʼ
- 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 sǀʼe *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 VʞI sequence, either both are oral or both are nasal.[3]
- in a PV sequence, P cannot be oral if V is nasal.

E.g.: the sequences /a!-/ and /ãᵑ!-/ are possible, but /*ã!-/, /*aᵑ!-/ are not possible; while the sequences /pa/, /ma/, /mã/ are allowed but /*pã/ can not occur.

For what concerns glottalisation,

- a C$\tilde{\text{V}}$ sequence with a creaky voiced vowel will erase glottalization distinctions in the consonant C. This means that sequences like /!ˀa̰/ and /!a̰/ 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 $\tilde{\text{V}}$, 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 ?$\tilde{\text{V}}$ is indistinguishable from the lone vowel $\tilde{\text{V}}$. 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$\tilde{\text{V}}$ > M̰$\tilde{\text{V}}$, e.g. màa = /ma̰/ > [m̰a̰]. This is not marked at all in the broad transcription.

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

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:

$$(\mathrm{v}_0).{}'\mathrm{CV}_1.(\mathrm{Pv}_2)$$

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.'CV
Disyllabic	'CV.Pv
Trisyllabic	v.'CV.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 **main-syllable reduplication**. This self-explanatory operation is used on adjectives and adverbs to mark comparatives, and on verbs to mark the applicative voice. The main syllable of the word is repeated, usually violating the word structure, exceeding the maximum number of syllable, and producing words with multiple clicks:

ɬaala *easily* →ɬaɬaala *more easily*

More accurately it can be described as a reduplication C →C_1vC_2 of the main consonant only, with the insertion of the epenthetic vowel v. Here is the full list of rules for reduplication:

- v is always short / unstressed; the quality is the same as that of the main vowel if a monophthong and its starting quality if a diphthong. In pronunciation, and especially when C is a click or ejective v may be very short if not fully elided (voiceless or glottalised)
- if C is a pre-fricative click, only C_1 is pre-fricated.
- if C is nasal and/or glottalized, the nasality and/or glottal closure persist throughout the C_1vC_2 sequence. Example: ɴǁui *to jump* →ɴǁuɴǁui *to jump on*, the vowel v (u) is nasal, though this is unmarked. In sɬ'i *slender* →sɬ'ɮ'i *more slender*, the glottal closure is kept throughout and correspondingly the vowel is simply not written. This also applies to ejective C.
- if C has a uvular contour, then only C_2 gets the contour. Example: ǂxoiṭa *strange* →ǂoǂxoiṭa *more strange*

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 (VʞX), vowel-vowel (VV), and vowel-pulmonic (VP) sandhi. Sandhi processes are never written in the orthography.

VʞX sandhi consists simply in V assimilating to the nasality of ʞ, 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 al-

ways unstressed. Quality assimilation occurs according to the following scheme:

- if the first vowel is a diphthong, there is no assimilation and an epenthetic ʾ 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 ʾ is inserted.

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

1.3.6 Click-Pulmonic Harmony

Click-Pulmonic Harmony is a specific kind of consonantal harmony that occurs in words that contain both a click and a secondary pulmonic, (v)ʞVPv. At present, ʞ-P harmony is mostly a phonological constraint on roots rather than a dynamic phenomenon given that there is no real morphology to speak of. Therefore, a speaker or a potential learner of the language need not worry about this restriction.

ʞ-P harmony only concerns the four lingual clicks ǂ ǃ ǁ ǀ, and restricts the possible points of articulation of P, provided that P is coronal (i.e. labial and dorsals are unaffected). This is due to the difficulty of transitioning between certain too different articulations, especially with the added momentum from the click release. The pulmonic consonants that may follow each of the clicks are as follows:

Preceding ᵡ	ǂ	!	ǁ	‖
Bidental	Yes	No	No	No
Apical/Retroflex	No	Yes	No	Yes
Laminal/Palatal	No	Yes	Yes	Rarely
Lateral	Yes	Yes	Rarely	Yes

The occasional word violates the constraint – for example ǂxoiṭa is Palatal → Retroflex, which is strange, coherently with the fact that it means *strange*.

Usually disharmonic tension is less likely to be problematic if a long vowel, especially a diphthong, separates the two offending consonants. Harmony does not usually act across word boundaries (likely because it would create too many ambiguities), but short vowels may lengthen to reduce strain, in particular if the words are syntactically close. For example, in the very name of the language, ǂA Ṇu̱ĩ, the two adjacent words are syntactically related as a determiner-classifier pair, and the nominally short vowel a separates the disharmonic ǂ and ṇ. Therefore the vowel is usually lengthened in pronunciation, to ease the difficult movement. Hence the final pronunciation [ǂɑː n̪m̪ĩˈ].

While weaker, a form of more general consonantal harmony applies when the main consonant is not a click. In particular bidentals are never followed by non-bidentals.

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).

All are satisfied with the exception of the creaky voice low tilde diacritic on a̰ and o̰, which violates portability[4] – the grave accent alternative àèìòù can obviate in these cases.

The orthography uses conventional punctuation and most typesetting standards[5]. 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[6] the letter ɬ which capitalises as Ɬ, the click nasality letter ᴎ which simply becomes N in uppercase; and the remaining letters (ʼ ʘ ! ǂ ǁ) don't capitalise.

[4] Curiously, ḛ, ṵ and ḭ are precomposed.

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

[6] 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 ǂA may consist of a single noun:

(1) uɴɬaã
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) uɴɬaã ṭa̰a
wolf 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) ɻuli tła
mother/breast CLF_{woman}
the mother

(4) ɻuli ɻu̱u
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) N!upaṇa n̲ui
N!upaṇa CLF_{person}
N!upaṇa (a person of unspecified gender).

(6) N!upaṇa tła
N!upaṇa CLF_{woman}
N!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.

The explicit numeral !o͡o *one* can be used to mark indeterminacy in situations where the presence of the classifier would be triggered anyway. For example:

(8) ɻuli tła !o͡o
`mother/breast CLF`$_{\texttt{woman}}$ `one`
*a mother (but **not** a breast)*

2.1.1 Possession and adjectives

Dependants of a noun phrase precede the noun / pronoun they modify. This occurs always, independently of whether the dependant is used as a determiner or not[1]. Adjectives are always uninflected:

(9) ǁqʾa uʁɬaã t̪a͡a
`big wolf` `CLF`$_{\texttt{predatory animal}}$
the big wolf

Because of the effect of zero-copula, and the VS word order in intransitive clauses, there is no true distinction between an adjective and an intransitive/copular verb meaning to be that adjective (see Section 2.3).

If a *determined* noun phrase is placed as a dependant for another noun phrase, it marks an inalienable possessive. For example

(10) ŋa͡ã tła šǃʾa
`woman CLF`$_{\texttt{woman}}$ `teeth`
The woman's teeth

Note that the classifier ensures ŋa͡ã tła is determined. If it was not, we would open ourselves to ambiguity:

[1] In general, there is no specific syntactic nor morphological marking for determiner phrases.

(11) ŋa̰ã š!'a
woman teeth
*Teeth of a woman / *Female teeth*

Clearly, often context will be able to disambiguate.

2.1.2 Nominalisation

todo

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

(12) iɴǁa̰a N!upaṇa tła
sleep N!upaṇa CLF$_{woman}$
'N!upaṇa is sleeping.'

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

(13) N!upaṇa tła i!o̰orri š!oiñe
N!upaṇa CLF$_{woman}$ eat meat
'N!upaṇa 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 ǂA this does not usually occurr; the optional ERG marker ʾa *by, from* (which may equivalently also mark an Ablative) can be employed in special emphatic conditions (see Section 2.10):

(14) N!upaṇa tła (ʼa) i!o͡orri š!oiñe
N!upaṇa CLF$_{woman}$ (ERG) eat meat
'N!upaṇa 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.

(15) i!o͡orri š!oiñe
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 *'ʞ!upaṇa 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:

(16) uji i!o͡orri N!upaṇa tła
ANTIP eat N!upaṇa CLF$_{woman}$
'N!upaṇa is eating (nothing specific)'

We shall examine valency-changing operations in greater detail in Section 2.4.

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:

(17) !oono ji ʞǂuĩ ʼutła n̪oõ ǂaãn̪i 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 ʼai *and, and then* because it prevents the clause

from ending in a verb, though the second option would not be considered ungrammatical:

(18) !oono ji ʞǂuĩ ʾutła noõ ʾai 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 vice-versa. 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

(19) U‖a̰a ku ʇoã ał‖ʾi ra !oo̲no ji
U‖a̰a CLF$_{man}$ gift money INSTR boy CLF$_{child}$
U‖a̰a gifted money to the child. (lit. gifted the child with money.)

Into this category of ditransitives fall not only verbs relating to giving, but also verbs concerning speaking, talking and telling – the said thing is the Theme, and the addressee is the Recipient:

(20) Iǂxaaŋe !am ᴎǁañe A!a̰uje ñḛe ᴎǁ'am ra.
ancestor CLF$_{spirit}$ tell A!a̰uje CLF$_{elder\ man}$ story INSTR
The ancestor told A!a̰uje a story.

A construction is also possible where one employs a monotransitive verb as a ditransitive with the meaning of possession – specifically the Theme is the original Patient, while the Recipient role is filled by the possessor of the original Patient. For example

(21) N!upaŋa tła ᴎǁxape tłùm ra A!a̰uje ñèe
N!upaŋa CLF$_{woman}$ scold son INSTR A!a̰uje CLF$_{elder\ man}$
N!upaŋa scolded A!a̰uje's son (lit.: she scolded a son to him / he is getting his son scolded by her)

2.2.2 Causatives

A **causer** of an action is seen as a "super-Agent", i.e. an argument placed even higher in a hierarchy of agency. If an agent is already present, the causer is placed in **ablative (ABL)**, which is to say paired with the post-position 'a. Usually the ABL argument, both in the sense of causer and of literal ablative (motion from), is placed before the verb and possible agent, but its position in the sentence is somewhat more free than the closer arguments.

(22) Uǁa̰a ku 'a N!upaŋa ǁa̰a ᴎǂuĩ 'utła n̰oõ
Uǁa̰a CLF$_{man}$ ABL N!upaŋa CLF$_{young\ woman}$ kick ball CLF$_{round\ tool}$
Uǁa̰a made N!upaŋa kick the ball.

However, in the absence of another true agent, the distinction between agent and causer is usually unimportant. Placing for example an argument in agentive position for an intransitive verb already communicates a meaning of causation:

(23) Uǁa̰a ku iᴎǁa̰a Q'oaɬṵu tła
Uǁa̰a CLF$_{man}$ sleep Q'oaɬṵu CLF$_{young\ woman}$
Uǁa̰a made Q'oaɬṵu sleep. (lit. he slept her)

and, as seen before, forcing the argument into ablative position marks either a stronger emphasis for causation / volition, or focus for that argument (see again Section 2.10). For example:

(24) iɴǁa̰a Q'oaɬṵu tła U‖a̰a ku 'a
sleep Q'oaɬṵu CLF$_{young\ woman}$ Uǁa̰a CLF$_{man}$ ABL
It was U‖a̰a that made Q'oaɬṵu sleep / Q'oaɬṵu slept because of U‖a̰a

2.3 Copula

2.4 Verbal voices

Let us reprise, more in detail, the schema of a ǂA verb phrase, with optional dependants in round brackets:

(Causer) (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 2.6).

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 **main-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*:

(25) ‖aũpe U‖a̰a ku utł'e iñi
walk U‖a̰a CLF$_{man}$ path on
U‖a̰a walks on the path

With the applicative, one may produce the **transitive** verb ‖a‖aũpe *to walk on* (but also potentially *to walk in, into, with...*):

(26) U‖a̰a ku ‖a~ ‖aũpe utł'e
U‖a̰a CLF$_{man}$ APPL~ walk path
U‖a̰a walks on the path

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

examples

2.5 Pronouns

2.5.1 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	!xo͡o		aɴ!xo͡o
1PL.INCL	Speaker + addressee + others	ɬu͡upa	u͡uma	
1PL.EXCL	Speaker + others (no addressee)	!auṭa	jaṭa	e!uũṭa
2SG	Only one addressee	u!'ui	utši	!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 ʾa 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 ʾa 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[2].

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

Classifiers are the 3rd person pronouns

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 ᴎ!upaṇa nui *ᴎ!upaṇa* CLF_{woman}, it would be considered ungrammatical then to later employ tła CLF_{woman} with the same referent.

example

2.5.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

todo

2.6 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]:

(27) !a ǂǁa [!a ǂq'ula ʼu̯a] ŋa̯ã (n̲ui)
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:

(28) [!a ǂq'ula ʼu̯a] ŋa̯ã 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.

2.7 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 uji ... for the antipassive), in which case they can be understood better as auxiliary verbs, though fundamentally the spirit is that of SVCs, which are productive.

In the simplest kind of SVC two intransitive verbs are chained together sharing a patient – this is 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:

(29) ǂaã ɪɴǁa̰a n̥a̰ã 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. + ...
uɬum *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 ...,
tɬ'oi *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:

(30) *s̥ǂa ku ǂaã !ope n̥a̰ã ǂ'a
human CLF$_{\text{man}}$ go kill eland CLF$_{\text{large herbivores}}$
**The man went to kill the eland.*

because this construction would appear to attempt to share an argument between the patientive and agentive role 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**[3]. In a chain SVC, an argument is placed, unmarked, *inbetween* an intransitive and a transitive

[3]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.

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)[4]. This quite readily fixes the previous example:

(31) ǂaã sǂa ku !ope ŋ̃aã 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:

(32) !Xao'aã ku ᴎǁxape t̪ui ᴎ!upaŋa tła
!Xao'aã CLF$_{man}$ insult cry ᴎ!upaŋa CLF$_{woman}$
!Xao'aã insulted ᴎ!upaŋa 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:

(33) !Xao'aã ku !ope au!q'o ŋ̃aã 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:

[4] 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.

SVC type	V. 1	V. 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
Tr. Patientive	tr.	intr.	Patient	Causal
Binary	tr.	tr.	Both Patient and Agent separately	Consecution

2.8 Imperatives and Polarity

To doo be doo

2.9 Interrogatives

To doo be doo

2.10 Topic-Comment

You guessed it

Chapter 3

Corpus

3.1 The North Wind and the Sun

ʟaula Nǃòõ Uǃqʼa maã Jùu aje ǂu eɬǁa iñi nʇum nui ʼèe sʇaʇau ǁùuɲa. Ṭurra, loõɲi ʇxoi onʇʼa oǃʼo qʼañi. Maã aje ǂu Nǃʼoirre nui ʼèe ǂa ʼa qʼañi ku Nǁxòi upa ʇxoi ṭèe, unʇu sʇaʇau tɬìi šǃu nui. Nǃòõ Uǃqʼa maã ǂxàuʼa tṣe ra tsùu ɴΘaã, ɲam ča uji tsùu maã, qʼañi ku ʼa ṭèe onʇʼa ǃqʼati Nǃxùu. ʼai Uǃqʼa maã eña ṣǂqʼo. ʼai ʼai, loõɲi ra čìiči Jùu aje, ʼai ǂu ku uǃqʼo ʇxoi ṭèe. Nǃòõ Uǃqʼa maã ɬǁa sʇaʇau Jùu aʇe.

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.

(34) ǂaula N!òõ U!q'a maã Jùu aje
once.upon.a.time North wind CLF$_{weather}$ sun CLF$_{celestial\ object}$
ǂu eǂǁa iñi
and conflict over
Once upon a time, the North Wind and the Sun were discussing

(35) nʇum nui 'èe sʇaʇau ǁùuɳa .
two CLF$_{people}$ PTV COMP~strong about
over which one of them two was stronger.

(36) Ṭurra , loõɳi ʇxoi onʇ'a o!'o q'añi .
suddenly warm cloak envelop walk.into vagabond
Suddenly, a vagabond wrapped in a warm cloak arrived to them.

(37) Maã aje ǂu ʞ!'oirre nui 'èe ǂa
CLF$_{weather}$ CLF$_{celestial\ object}$ and decide CLF$_{people}$ PTV first
'a q'añi ku ʞǁxòi upa ʇxoi ṭèe ,
ABL vagabond CLF$_{man}$ 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,

(38) unʇu sʇaʇau tǂìi š!u nui .
truly COMP~strong COND RES CLF$_{people}$
truly that one would have been stronger.

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

(40) ɳam ča uji tsùu maã , q'añi ku 'a
but while ANTIP throw CLF$_{weather}$ vagabond CLF$_{man}$ ABL
ṭèe onʇ'a !q'ati ʞ!xùu .
CLF$_{clothing}$ envelop self.ACC more
but as the wind blew, the vagabond enveloped themselves in the cloak ever more.

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

(42) ʾai ʾai , loõn̩i ra čìiči Jùu aje , ʾai ɬu
and.then warm INSTR shine sun CLF$_{\text{celestial object}}$ and and
ku u!qʾo ɻxoi t̩èe .
CLF$_{\text{man}}$ peel.off cloak CLF$_{\text{clothing}}$
But then, the Sun shone warmly, and so the vagabond took off their cloak.

(43) N!òõ U!qʾa maã ɬǁa sɻaɻau Jùu aje .
North wind CLF$_{\text{weather}}$ see COMP~strong sun CLF$_{\text{celestial object}}$
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 -ʾa !o͡o *one from* and -ǂa *next after* are used to create cardinals respectively one or more less than one with a simpler name, main-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 pe͡e

digit or *'double ten'*, where 10 itself is a!u̯uma *hand* (instead of it being assigned, more logically, to 5).

	Cardinal	Ordinal		Cardinal
1	!o̯o	ǂa	13	ŋum ǂa
2	ᵑǂum	!aaru	14	ŋum !aaru
3	eǂaaka	*ᵑǂumrru	15	š!o!q'oi
4	sǂ'e		16	n̯on̯ot̯i
5	š!q'oi		17	n̯on̯ot̯i ǂa
6	a‖um		18	a‖umñu
7	ᵑǂoiči		19	*pe̯e 'a !o̯o
8	n̯ot̯i		20	pe̯e (or *a!u!u̯uma)
9	ᵑǂaat̯i		21	pe̯e ǂa
10	a!u̯uma		22	*pe̯e !aaru
11	ŋum 'a !o̯o		23	*ŋuŋum 'a !o̯o
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.

- The subtler syntax of some verbs is clarified by expressing the action in terms of explicit arguments, namely (A) for agent, (P) for patient, (T) for theme (instrumental), and (ABL) for ablative/causer.
- For a language such as this one, alphabetical sorting is useless and cumbersome. I find it more practical and meaningful to present entries classified primarily by the main, i.e. first consonant instead.

‖

a‖um - /a‖mː/ • *card.num.* six

‖a - /‖a/ • *card.num.* few

‖arra - /‖arra/ • *v.intr.* close one's eyes, not see, refuse to look • *v.-intr.* (in SVC) refuse to ..., not intend to ..., resist ...

‖aũpe - /‖ãmpe/ • *n.* foot [CLF ɬu̯u] • *v.intr.* walk

‖a̯a - /‖a̯ː/ • *v.tr.* hold • *clf.* young women, recent mothers

‖o̯i - /‖ɔ̯i/ • *N/A* NEG

‖u̯uɳa - /‖uːɳa/ • *post.* about

‖ʼ

‖ʼu - /‖ʔu/ • *Ditransitive verb* give, provide, (A) give (T) to (P)

‖x

‖xa - /‖͡χa/ • *n.* penis [CLF ɬu̯u]

‖qʼ

‖qʼa - /‖͡qʼa/ • *adj.* big, large

‖qʼooña - /‖͡qʼɔːɲa/ • *n.* crab • *n.* lobster

‖ɠ

‖ɠa - /‖͡ɠɓa/ • *v.tr.* scare, (P) be afraid of (A), • *n.* fear [CLF ɬa]

N‖

iN‖a̯a - /ĩᵑ‖a̯ː/ • *v.intr.* sleep

iN‖oi - /ĩᵑ‖ɔi/ • *v.* say

N‖añe - /ᵑ‖aɲe/ • *Ditransitive verb* (A) tell, recount, say (T) to (P)

N‖a̯ʼa - /ᵑ‖a̯ʔa/ • *n.* gold

N‖oi - /ᵑ‖ɔi/ • *v.* can

N‖otṣo - /ᵑ‖ɔ͡ʈʂɔ/ • *n.* door

N‖o̯õ - /ᵑ‖õ̯ː/ • *v.* descend

N‖ui - /ᵑ‖ui/ • *v.intr.* jump

N‖ʼ

N‖ʼam - /ᵑ‖ʔãm/ • *n.* story, tale [CLF ɳu̯ĩ]

N‖x

N‖xape - /ᵑ‖͡ʁape/ • *v.tr.* insult, berate, scold

N‖xo̯i - /ᵑ‖͡ʁõ̯i/ • *v.* remove

ɬ‖

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

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

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

ɬ‖’

aɬ‖’i - /aɬ‖ˀi/ • *n.* money

ɬ‖q’

ɬ‖q’a - /ɬ‖q͡’a/ • *n.* egg [CLF n̲oõ]

ꞇ

eꞇaaka - /eꞇaːka/ • *card.num.* three

uꞇuṇa - /uꞇuɳa/ • *n.* song

ꞇa - /ꞇa/ • *ord.num.* first

ꞇaã - /ꞇãː/ • *v.intr.* go, travel, move • *v.intr.* (in SVC) begin ..., go to do..., go there and ...,

ꞇaãñi - /ꞇãːɲi/ • *v.* flee

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

ꞇoipe - /ꞇɔipe/ • *adv.* maybe.not

ꞇootṣi - /ꞇɔːt̪͡s̪i/ • *n.* mountain

ꞇoĩ - /ꞇõĩ/ • *v.intr.* fly

ꞇo̲õ - /ꞇõ̲ː/ • *clf.* lid

ꞇu - /ꞇu/ • *conj.* and

ꞇu̲m - /ꞇm̲ː/ • *clf.* liquids, drops, rain, beverages

ꞇu̲’u - /ꞇu̲ʔu/ • *n.* sun [CLF aje]

ꞇ’

aꞇ’ui - /aꞇˀui/ • *clf.* wooden

ꞇ’a - /ꞇˀa/ • *clf.* larger herbivores, elands, elephants, giraffes, etc

ꞇx

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

ꞇxa̲u̲’a - /ꞇχ͡a̲u̲ʔa/ • *n.* effort, strain, force

ꞇxoiṭa - /ꞇχ͡ɔiʈa/ • *adj.* strange

ꞇxoĩ - /ꞇχ͡õĩ/ • *post.* through • *post.* across

ꞇq’

ꞇq’aĩ - /ꞇq͡’ãĩ/ • *v.* know

ꞇq’ula - /ꞇq͡’ula/ • *adv.* before • *n.* (anatomy) back, spine, buttocks

nꞇ

anꞇa̲i - /ãⁿꞇa̲i/ • *adj.* every

unꞇa̲aki - /mⁿꞇa̲ːki/ • *v.intr.* (S) climb

uɴǂoi - /mᵑǂɔi/ • *n.* language, way of speaking [CLF ṇu̯ĩ]

uɴǂu̯u - /mᵑǂu̯ː/ • *rel.pr.* which.ERG

ɴǂaã - /ᵑǂãː/ • *v.* complain

ɴǂoa - /ᵑǂɔa/ • *v.intr.* discover

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

ɴǂo̯õ - /ᵑǂõ̯ː/ • *n.* bed

ɴǂuĩ - /ᵑǂmĩ/ • *v.* kick

ɴǂu̯u - /ᵑǂu̯ː/ • *v.intr.* die

ɴǂ’

ɴǂ’i - /ᵑǂˀi/ • *Particle* NEG, not, negates a preceding adverb, adjective or noun (not verbs)

ɴǂx

ɴǂxa - /ᵑ͡ǂʁa/ • *adv.* always, often, it is a regular occurrence that

ṣǂ

ṣǂa - /ʂǂa/ • *n.* human being, person

ṣǂum - /ʂǂmː/ • *n.* knife [CLF !xatłe]

ṣǂ’

ṣǂ’o - /ʂǂˀɔ/ • *v.intr.* sweat • *n.* sweat [CLF ǂu̯m]

ṣǂq’

ṣǂq’o - /ʂ͡ǂqˀɔ/ • *n.* neck

!

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

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

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

i!o̯orri - /i!o̯ːrri/ • *v.* eat

o!ao - /ɔ!aɔ/ • *adj.* old

u!a̯ama - /u!a̯ːma/ • *n.* misstep, mistake

u!oõ - /u!õː/ • *n.* year

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

!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)

!am - /!ãm/ • *clf.* spirits, ghosts, ancestors, the dead • *clf.* trees

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

!oa - /!ɔa/ • *adj.* idiot

!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

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

!oo̱no - /!ɔːn̪ɔ/ • *n.* boy [CLF ji,n̪ui]

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

!o̱otło - /!o̱ːt͡ɬɔ/ • *n.* vulva

!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 - /!mːɔi/ • *N/A* hello, hi

!’

e!’aṇi - /e!ʔaɳi/ • *v.* sing

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

u!’ui - /u!ʔui/ • *pers.pr.* 2.ERG

!’a - /!ʔa/ • *post.* besides, to the side of, near • *n.* hips, iliac crests [CLF ʇu̱u]

!’iṉa - /!ʔiɲa/ • *n.* boat

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

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

!x

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

o!xu - /ɔ!χ͡u/ • *n.* walking cane

u!xa̱m - /u!χ͡a̱m̱/ • *v.* concern

!xaje - /!χ͡aɟe/ • *v.tr.* open

!xape - /!χ͡ape/ • *adj.* happy

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

!xa̱a - /!χ͡a̱ː/ • *n.* house, hut • *n.* roof [CLF ɬo̱õ]

!xo̱o - /!χ͡o̱ː/ • *pers.pr.* you and I

!q’

u!q’a - /u!q͡’a/ • *n.* wind [CLF maã]

u!q’o - /u!q͡’ɔ/ • *v.tr.* peel, scrape or remove a covering, protective

layer, film, piece of clothing

!q'ao - /ǃq'aɔ/ • *n.* clock

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

!ɠ

!ɠoa - /ǃɠɔa/ ←variant form of !oa

ɴ!

ɴ!ai - /ᵑǃai/ • *adj.* similar to, akin to

ɴ!a̲a - /ᵑǃa̲:/ • *n.* fire

ɴ!ooṭo - /ᵑǃɔ:ʈɔ/ • *n.* chicken [CLF uṭu]

ɴ!o̲õ - /ᵑǃõ̲:/ • *n.* North

ɴ!o̲'o - /ᵑǃo̲ʔɔ/ • *v.intr.* breathe

ɴ!'

ɴ!'oirre - /ᵑǃʔɔirre/ • *v.* decide

ɴ!x

aɴ!xo̲o - /ãᵑǃʁo̲:/ • *pers.pr.* me and you

ɴ!xa̲a - /ᵑǃʁa̲:/ • *post.* inside

ɴ!xu̲u - /ᵑǃʁu̲:/ • *adv.* more

š!

išǃuka - /iʃǃuka/ • *N/A* the very same

ušǃuupa - /uʃǃu:pa/ • *v.* re-organize

šǃo - /ʃǃɔ/ • *Copulative verb* be temporarily, be contingentially

šǃo ... iñi - /ʃǃɔ ... 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 šǃo ku nǂòõ iñi *he is lying on the bed*

šǃoiñe - /ʃǃɔiɲe/ • *n.* meat [CLF la̲a]

šǃu - /ʃǃu/ • *Resumptive marker* RES

š!'

šǃ'a - /ʃǃʔa/ • *n.* tooth [CLF !xatłe,ʇu̲u]

šǃq'

šǃq'oi - /ʃǃq'ɔi/ • *card.num.* five

ʇ

iʇaã - /iǀã:/ • *v.intr.* do nothing, be slacking, loiter Nǂxa iʇaã !Xao'aã ku. *!Xao'aã is always slacking.* • *v.intr.* lie down, be on the ground

uʇum - /uǀm:/ • *v.intr.* stand up, stand up straight, get up • *v.-intr.* (in SVC) be about to ..., will

..., be likely to ..., plan to ..., intend to ...

ɬa - /|a/ • *clf.* feelings, emotions, relationships, mental states

ɬaala - /|a:la/ • *adv.* easily

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

ɬaõ - /|ãõ/ • *clf.* orifices, bodily holes, openings, wounds

ɬoã - /|õã/ • *Ditransitive verb* (A) gift (T) to (P)

ɬuli - /|uli/ • *n.* breast [CLF **ɬu̱u̱**] • *n.* mother [CLF **tła**]

ɬu̱u - /|u̱:/ • *clf.* body parts

ɬu̱upa - /|u̱:pa/ • *pers.pr.* 1.PL.INCL.ERG

ɬʼ

iɬʼali - /i|ʔali/ • *n.* barrier

iɬʼi - /i|ʔi/ • *clf.* small animal

uɬʼule - /u|ʔule/ • *v.* create, make, build, manufacture

ɬx

ɬxoi - /|χɔi/ • *n.* cloak

ɬqʼ

ɬqʼa - /|qʼa/ • *n.* night

nɬ

unɬaã - /mⁿ|ã:/ • *n.* wolf [CLF **ṭa̱a**] • *adj.* (of a person) unpredictably aggressive, pugnacious, cruel, dangerous

unɬu - /mⁿ|u/ • *adv.* truly

nɬaaṯi - /ⁿ|a:t͡s̪i/ • *card.num.* nine

nɬai - /ⁿ|ai/ • *post.* face

nɬa̱ʼã - /ⁿ|a̱ʔã/ • *n.* womb, vagina [CLF **ɬu̱u**]

nɬum - /ⁿ|m:/ • *card.num.* two

nɬʼ

onɬʼa - /ɔ̃ⁿ|ʔa/ • *v.* envelop

sɬ

sɬau - /s̪|au/ • *adj.* strong

sɬui - /s̪|ui/ • *n.* snake

sɬʼ

sɬʼe - /s̪|ʔe/ • *card.num.* four

sɬʼi - /s̪|ʔi/ • *clf.* slender

ʘ

ʘui - /ʘui/ • *v.tr.* want

nʘ

nʘaã - /ⁿʘã:/ • *n.* air

ʞΘu̱m - /ᵑΘm̱:/ • *Ditransitive verb* (A) suck (substance (T)) from (P), (A) suck on (P) • *v.tr.* suckle on, (A) be breastfed by (P) ʞΘùm Q'oaɻùu ‖àa *Young Q'oaɻùu is breastfeeding (her child).* • *v.tr.* kiss (on the lips or otherwise)

c'

c'aã - /c'ã:/ • *n.* arm [CLF ɻu̱u] • *n.* wing (of bird) [CLF ɻu̱u]

c'i - /c'i/ • *adj.* such, similar, of the same kind, of the type being discussed

j

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

ja - /ɟa/ • *pron.* 1S.INTR

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

ji - /ɟi/ • *clf.* child

jipa - /ɟipa/ • *n.* hare

je̱eñi - /ɟe̱:ɲi/ • *N/A* this

ju̱m - /ɟm̱:/ • *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

uji - /uɟi/ • *preverb* ANTIP

k

ku - /ku/ • *clf.* male adults, men

kuñe - /kuɲe/ • *adv.* simply

l

laã - /lã:/ • *n.* tongue [CLF ɻu̱u]

la̱a - /la̱:/ • *clf.* foul-smelling objects, rotting matter, feces, waste, corpses, infections, pus, diseases, the severely diseased

loõn̥i - /lõ:ɳi/ • *adj.* warm, warming • *n.* warmth • *adj.* sensual, seductive, comforting

m

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

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

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

p

pau - /pau/ • *adj.* abundant

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

upa - /upa/ • *preverb* SUBJ

q’

q’añi - /q’aɲi/ • *n.* vagabond

r

ra - /ra/ • *post.* INSTR

tɬ

tɬa - /t͡ɬa/ • *clf.* adult women

tɬi̯i - /t͡ɬi̯:/ • *preverb* COND

tɬ’

tɬ’oi - /t͡ɬ’ɔi/ • *v.intr.* leave, abandon (ABL), exit • *v.intr.* (in SVC) stop, interrupt ..., finish, conclude ...

utɬ’e - /ut͡ɬ’e/ • *n.* walking path, paved path, dirt road • *n.* groove, incision, indented strip

tš

tša - /t͡ʃa/ • *conj.* while

tše̯’e - /t͡ʃe̯ʔe/ • *n.* (of tree) trunk, log, column

tši̯itši - /t͡ʃi̯:t͡ʃi/ • *v.* shine

utši - /ut͡ʃi/ • *pers.pr.* 2.INTR

tṣ

tṣe - /t͡ʂe/ • *n.* peak

tṣui - /t͡ʂui/ • *n.* nose

ñ

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

eña ṣɬq’o - /eɲa ʂɬt͡q’ɔ/ • *v.tr.* (A) surrender oneself, give up (lit. offer neck)

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

ñą̃ã - /ɲą̃:/ • *N/A* liver

ñe̯’e - /ɲe̯ʔe/ • *clf.* elder men

ŋ

ŋą̃ã - /ŋą̃:/ • *n.* woman

ŋum - /ŋm:/ • *card.num.* twelve

ŋe̯e - /ŋe̯:/ • *n.* evening, time of sunset [CLF ’urri] • *n.* sunset (the process of sun setting)

’

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

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

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

ʾa̰o - /ʔa̰ɔ̰/ • *n.* water [CLF ǂṵm]

ʾu - /ʔu/ • *post.* of

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

ʾutła - /ʔut͡ɬa/ • *n.* playing ball [CLF n̰oõ]

ʾḛe - /ʔḛː/ • *post.* PTV

ʾḭi - /ʔḭː/ • *clf.* slithering.animals

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

ɳ

ɳam - /ɳãm/ • *conj.* but

ɳa̰ã - /ɳã̰ː/ • *n.* eland [CLF ǂʾa]

ɳṵĩ - /ɳm̰ḭ̃/ • *clf.* spoken word, utterances, phrases, languages, words, voices, thoughts, reasonings, stories

n̰

n̰a - /n̰a/ • *n.* grass • *n.* hair, head hair, facial hair, body hair • *n.* (of animal) fur

n̰a̰ã - /n̰a̰ã̰ː/ • *v.* laugh

n̰oõ - /n̰õ̰ː/ • *clf.* round tools, round instruments, artificial balls, spheres, globes, round toys

n̰oʈi - /n̰ɔ͡ʈ̰si/ • *card.num.* eight

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

ʈ

uʈu - /uʈu/ • *clf.* bird

ʈa̰a - /ʈa̰ː/ • *clf.* predatory animals, carnivores

ʈuma - /ʈuma/ • *adj.* great, awesome

ʈurra - /ʈurra/ • *adv.* suddenly

ʈḛe - /ʈḛː/ • *clf.* articles of clothing, cloth, shoes

ʈʾ

ʈʾoa - /ʈʾɔa/ • *n.* corpse, cadaver, carcass (human or animal) [CLF la̰a]

t̰

eṯe - /et͡s̪e/ • *N/A* when

ṯui - /t͡s̪ui/ • *v.intr.* cry

ṯu̯u - /t͡s̪u̯ː/ • *v.tr.* throw, launch • *v.tr.* produce, spit out, blow, excrete