

# Kalahim grammar sketch

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## 1 Phonology

### 1.1 Consonants

Kalahim has stops, fricatives, nasals, approximants, and a trill. Stops contrast by voicing, while the fricatives are all voiceless.

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
stop	p b	t d	tʃ dʒ	k g	
fricative	f	s	ʃ		h
nasal	m	n			
approximant	w	l	j		
trill		r			

1. The approximant /w/ is always preceded by a consonant. For example: *amua* /amwa/, *fuanen* /fwanen/. Cf. *\*\*/wana/*. Historical note: Single onset /w/ was lost everywhere, and the eventual resulting vowel combination became a diphthong or simplified to a simple vowel. Examples: *reik*- ‘to turn’ /reik/ < *\*rewik*-, *iel*- ‘to sing’ /jel/ < /jail/ < *\*yawal*-.

### 1.2 Vowels

Kalahim has a five-vowel system, with high, mid, and low heights, front, central, and back backness. Note that the mid vowels are both mid-high.

	front	central	back
high	i		u
mid	e		o
low		a	

There are also the following diphthongs: /ei/, /eu/.

### 1.3 Phonotactics

The basic syllabic structure of Kalahim is C(C)V(C). Onsetless syllables are only permitted in word-initial position. Independent of syllabic affiliation, no more than two consecutive consonants are allowed in any position in the word. Any consonant, except /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, can be word-final.

Allowed onset clusters:

- pr, pl, pw, pj
- tr, tl, tw, tj
- kr, kl, kw, kj, ks, kf
- br, bl, bw, bj
- dr, dl, dw, dj
- gr, gl, gw, gj
- sp, st, sk, sw, sj
- ʃp, ʃt, ʃk, ʃl, ʃw, ʃj
- fl, fr, fw, fj

- hw, hj
- mw, mj
- nw, nj
- rw, rj
- lw, lj

## 1.4 Stress

Stress is intensive and it falls always on the penultimate syllable of the word in plurisyllabic words, and in the only syllable of monosyllabic words.

## 2 Writing system

The transliteration is as follows.

Consonants:

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	glottal
stop	p b	t d	c j	k g	
fricative	f	s	sh		h
nasal	m	n			
approximant	u	l	i		
trill		r			

Vowels:

	front	central	back
high	i/y		u
mid	e/ai		o/au
low		a	

- [i, e, o] are written as ⟨i, e, o⟩ and ⟨y, ai, au⟩ for historical reasons.
  - Alternative transliterations for ⟨ai, au⟩ are ⟨ê, ô⟩.

## 3 Morphosyntax

### 3.1 Word order

The general word order is SVO. Complements follow the noun they refer to, but adjectives precede it.

#### (1) **Blin manai acaroni.**

*blin mainai acaroni*  
strong warrior east-GEN:SG

‘The strong warrior of the East.’

### 3.2 Verbs

*Revision:* Verbs end in vowel (are there C-final verbs? what about nouns?). In the Present, the vowel coalesces with the Present Tense suffix *-u*: a-u > o, e-u > ie, i-u > y, o-u > o, u-u > u. Past and Future are analytic? Past uses *lusho* ‘to go’ as auxiliary (new ‘to go’ is different). Future is just the verb stem plus the Subj suffixes.

Infinitive: *-sh* (< *-tʰ*). Hypothetical from *-bʰi*, a form of future?

Passive: it was *-s*, now it has Non-Past form (Present and Future) which is original Gnostic (that takes on future meaning in Active). Passive Past is with auxiliary *dlanti* ‘to come’.

*reika* ‘to turn’

Active	present	past	future	hypothetical
1s	reiko-go	lurgo reika-s	reika-go	lurby-go reika-s
2s	reiko-ni	lurni reika-s	reika-ni	lurby-ni reika-s
3sm	reiko-lo	luelo reika-s	reika-lo	lurby-lo reika-s
3sf	reiko-re	luere reika-s	reika-re	lurby-re reika-s
3sn	reiko-lah	luelah reika-s	reika-lah	lurby-lah reika-s
1pl	reiko-min	lurmin reika-s	reika-min	lurby-min reika-s
2pl	reiko-ty	lusty reika-s	reika-ty	lurby-ty reika-s
3plm	reiko-su	luesu reika-s	reika-su	lurby-su reika-s
3plf	reiko-shi	lueshi reika-s	reika-shi	lurby-shi reika-s
3pln	reiko-sah	luesah reika-s	reika-sah	lurby-sah reika-s

Passive	non-past	past
1s	reika-gos	lango reika-s
2s	reika-nis	leni reika-s
3sm	reika-los	lelo reika-s
3sf	reika-res	lere reika-s
3sn	reika-les	lelah reika-s
1pl	reika-meis	lemin reika-s
2pl	reika-tys	lanty reika-s
3plm	reika-sus	lesu reika-s
3plf	reika-shis	leshi reika-s
3pln	reika-ses	lesah reika-s

(2) **Lango (done)ganis nide.**

*lan-go* (done)*gani-s* *ni-de*  
PST:PASS-1sg save-PASS.PRT 2s-ABL:SG

‘I was saved by you.’

Present participles are formed with the suffix *-m* which is attached to the verb root and they can be declined according to the consonant declination.

(3) **Catieni shonamen**

*catie-ni* *shona-m-en*  
person-GEN:SG think-PTCP-GEN:SG

‘Of the thinking person.’

### 3.2.1 Copula

There are two copulas in Kalahim, *om-* (< *aumi-*) and *ash-* (< *ashi-*). The first is used with the Predicative case and refers to a permanent or substantial feature of the subject. For example, *omy ned-es* ‘I am (a) man’. *ash-* is used with temporary states and feelings, like in *ashe cul* ‘it is sweet’.

aum-	present	past	future	hypothetical
1s	omy	on-go/ue-go	om-ei-go	om-by-go
2s	omy-ni	ue-ni	om-ei-ni	om-by-ni
3sm	omy	ue-lo	om-ei-lo	om-by-lo
3sf	omy	ue-re	om-ei-re	om-by-re
3sn	omy	ue-lah	om-ei-lah	om-by-lah
1pl	omy-min	ue-min	om-ei-min	om-by-min

aum-	present	past	future	hypothetical
2pl	omy-ty	on-ty/ue-ty	om-ei-ty	om-by-ty
3plm	omy-su	ue-su	om-ei-su	om-by-su
3plf	omy-shi	ue-shi	om-ei-shi	om-by-shi
3pln	omy-sah	ue-sah	om-ei-sah	om-by-sah

Present should have stem in -ie but it is reduced to -e because of preceding -sh (only when unstressed).

ash-	present	past	future	hypothetical
1s	ashe	e-go	ash-o-go	e-by-go
2s	ashie-ni	e-ni	ash-o-ni	e-by-ni
3sm	ashe	ash-lo	ash-o-lo	e-by-lo
3sf	ashe	e-re	ash-o-re	e-by-re
3sn	ashe	ash-lah	ash-o-lah	e-by-lah
1pl	ashie-min	e-min	ash-o-min	e-by-min
2pl	ashie-ty	ash-ty	ash-o-ty	e-by-ty
3plm	ashie-su	e-shu	ash-o-su	e-by-su
3plf	ashie-shi	e-shi	ash-o-shi	e-by-shi
3pln	ashie-sah	e-shah	ash-o-sah	e-by-sah

### 3.2.2 Locative *om-*

The verb *om-*, which means ‘to be in some place’ derives from *aum-*, although its paradigm has regularised and follows the default verbal conjugation. In the 3rd Neuter Singular and Plural it is also used together with the Predicative case as an expletive to mean ‘There is/are’.

#### (4) Omogo Limlin’ija.

*omo-go*                      *Limlin’-ija*  
 be.LOC.PRS-1s   Limlin-LOC:SG  
 ‘I am in Limlin.’

#### (5) Luesah omis jekines.

*luesah*      *omi-s*                      *jeki-nes*  
 PST.3pl.N   be.EXPL-PST.PRTC   monkey-PRED:PL  
 ‘There were (some) monkeys.’

### 3.2.3 Negation

A verb is negated by placing the negative adverb *an* after the verb.

#### (6) Dlantigo an fladriba.

*dlanti-go*      *an*      *fladri-ba*  
 come.FUT-1s   NEG   forest-ALL:SG  
 ‘I will not come to the forest.’

### 3.3 Nouns

Nouns end either in a vowel or a consonant and follow their respective class declension. Archaic forms of suffixes are given in square brackets. The predicative plural ending has two forms, *-nes* and *-nesse* which tend to be respectively the standard in the spoken and written language.

The predicative is used with the verb *aum-* ‘to be’, which has an existential meaning (while *ash-* is more generally stative).

vowel	singular	plural
nominative	[varies]	-m
accusative	-l [arc. -lu]	-le [arc.-leo]
predicative	-sse	-nes(se)
dative	-vo	-vi
instrumental	-ru [arc.-kru]	-du [arc.-dru]
genitive	-ni [arc.-nig]	-nek
locative	-ja [arc.-jai]	-ce
allative	-ba	-pe
ablative	-da [arc.-de]	-te
vocative	-ku	-ho

consonant	singular	plural
nominative	[varies]	-am
accusative	-olu	-elo
predicative	-es [arc.-esse]	-enes
dative	-ol	-ive
instrumental	-ur [arc.-ruk]	-udu [arc.-udru]
genitive	-en	-ek
locative	-ija	-ice
allative	-iba	-ipe
ablative	-ida [arc.-eda]	-ete
vocative	-uk	-oho

### 3.4 Subordination

**Complement clauses** are introduced by the particle *nai*. All complement clauses are finite (they always have a finite verb).

*Kabasiesu nai korashiego.*

kabas-ie-su    nai korash-ie-go  
 know-PST-3plm SUB be.happy-PST-1s  
 'They knew I was/have been happy.'

*Tokago nai noirgah-a-go nil.*

tok-a-go    nai sibu-a-go    ni-l  
 want-PRS-1s SUB meet-PRS-1s 2s-ACC:SG  
 'I want to meet you.'

Subject complement clauses are preceded by an independent clause of the form ‘be.PRED + ADJ/PTCP’.

*Omalah pushaitam nai sibuemin.*

om-a-lah            pushait-am    nai sibu-o-min  
 be.PRED-PRS-3sn scare-PTCP SUB meet-PST-1pl  
 'It scares me that we will meet.'

**Adverbial clauses** are introduced by a variety of adverbial subordinating conjunctions.

**Relative clauses** are introduced by *ki* and a resumptive pronoun is used. The resumptive pronoun in the relative clause is in the case and position it would be if the clause were independent. A nominative resumptive pronoun is generally omitted. If the antecedent is the object of the main clause and the subject of the relative clause, *ki* and the subject pronoun are omitted and the antecedent is in the nominative case.

*Lonum ki voinalo korashalo.*

lonu-m ki voin-a-lo korash-a-lo  
boy-PL REL play-PRS-3sm be.happy-PRS-3sm  
'The boy who plays is happy.'

*Nem korashielo mol noirgahielo lonu voinielo.*

nem korash-ie-lo mol noirgah-ie-lo lonu voin-ie-lo  
yesterday be.happy-PST-3sm GRND see-PST-3sm boy.NOM play-PST-3sm  
'Yesterday he rejoiced in seeing the boy who was playing.'

Cf. with the object complement clause *Nem korashielo mol noirgahielo nai lonu voinielo* 'Yesterday he rejoiced in seeing that the boy was playing.'

*Firkiniego catieru ki noirgahieni laholu.*

firkin-ie-go catie-ru ki noirgah-ie-ni lah-olu  
speak-PST-1s person-INST:SG REL see-PST-2s 3sn-ACC:SG  
'I spoke with the person you saw.'

*Noirgahiego catiel ki firkinieni lahur.*

noirgah-ie-go catie-l ki firkin-ie-ni lah-ur  
see-PST-1s person-ACC:SG REL speak-PST-2s 3sn-INST:SG  
'I saw the person you spoke to.'

## 4 Glossed examples

### (7) *Ashani lof namshal gonji shimalah ki mallabalah vinedolu, e Firniluk goniguk!*

ash-a-ni lof namsha-l gonji shim-a-lah ki mallab-a-lah vined-olu e  
be-PRS-2s like star-ACC:SG so.much shine-PRS-3sn CONJ obscure-PRS-3sn other-ACC:PL oh  
Firnīl-uk gonig-uk  
Firnīl-VOC:SG my-VOC:SG

'You are like a star that is so bright to obscure the others, oh my Firnil!'