The Proto-Isum Language

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October 20, 2022

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1 Preface

1.1 Motivations and Context

Proto-Isum is the progenitor of several languages in the Ansetla universe. It serves as a mean for deriving further languages that will be more fully fleshed out and utilized, and it will feed other conlangs in universe via loanwords, sprachbunds, and possibly creoles, mixed languages, or pidgins. The speakers of the langage, who call themselves **sulaa** which simply means **person**. Details on their lives and cultures are elaborated in the section that follows this one.

The sound system of Proto-Isum isn't derivative of any particular natural language, but was meant more as an experience in forming a phonology in a strongly a priori fashion. To this end, the vowels were envisioned as two overlying triangles: a stronger one composed of \a, i, u\ with both long and short forms with a weaker \ɨ, ɛ, ɔ\ with only one length. It is abundantly clear that this idea of two overlayed triangles in the vowel bears no rigors of linguistics or scientific understanding of language; it is simply something that felt reasonably natural and was appealing enough to commit to. The large consonant inventory was very loosly based on older Indo-European languages like Ancient Greek, but with some induced oddities and differences so as to avoid something repetitive or boring. For example, placing the rhotic consonant in a uvular-velar category to justify having a labialized version of it, as was done for the other back consonants. The intent was to have something that could feel relatively convincing as a naturalistic inventory while allowing some liberty. Finally, with the sound inventory selected, syllable structure and allophony are set up as something not overbearing that could serve as a basis for pursuing a highly phonaesthic work while still possibly challenging both the author and readers with pronouncing the language out loud if they want to. While what is and is not pleasing to the ear is tremendously subjective, work invested in the phonology of the language hopefully only adds to senses of naturalism and enjoyment for anyone who encounters Proto-Isum .

The grammar, however, is far more tied to real world languages. The aspectual system of the verbs, which makes up a large portion of the language, are strongly influenced by Mayan languages with some personal challenges included. Furthermore, conjunctive and adverbial usage of verbs was something that wanted to be explored deeply. The nouns, while much smaller in the grammatical space than verbs, were likewise meant to be a small personal challenge. The system was modeled very loosely on Japanese with grammatical number being more present, case marking affixes covering a slightly different space, and classifiers having slightly widened usage.

1.2 The Speakers and Their Culture

The speakers of Proto-Isum while all living in loose proximity to each other do not all live homogenous lifestyles. Many groups are semi-sedentary, not living in one spot year round, but rather circulating a large area based on resource availability with some areas having permanent dwellings that are abandonned for months at a time. Other times they live within lighter, more mobile camps with no intention of duration for later or longer use. Some groups still live fully nomadic lives without any permanent housing subsisting on a more hunting and foraging strategy.

1.3 High Level Linguistic Synopsis

Proto-Isum is a fairly synthetic, agglutinative language with a six pure vowels, some in two lengths, and a large cache of consonants that work within a simple phonotactic system. It is topic-prominent with nominative-accusative alignment using Verb-Subject-Object word order with some traces of having recently been Subject-Verb-Object. Subject dropping is strongly preferred when context allows it, and, because of topic fronting, the subject may at times appear to come before the verb.

Overall it prefers head-final word order. Lacking grammatical tense, it makes liberal use of adverbs, temporal specifiers and connectives, and temporal anchoring on perfective verbs to indicate when an event happened; it liberally uses verbs in various conjunctive forms and constructions to tie related events to established topic times.

2 Phonology

The phonology of the protolanguage will be presented in a two parts. First is the full, canonical phonology that the whole language fits under and is needed for understanding the whole of this language description. In particular, the romanization system is tied to this phonology. The second smaller one, intended as a sort of paleophonology within the context of the protolanguage, is a constrained subset of the canonical phonology that is used to generate particular words, especially the classifiers and words deemed more archaic in the language. There is no Romanization provided or really needed for this paleophonology subset since the main system will suffice. Effectively, this constrained set is a tool meant to add some depth into elements of Proto-Isum itself without requiring the work of a Pre-Protolanguage, which seems cumbersome and would only bear diminishing returns for the desire of naturalism. The canonical phonology is unsurprisingly larger and more fleshed out; the paleophonology will present more like something expected of a naming language.

The phonology of Proto-Isum is fairly large, with 27 distinct consonants and 6 vowels, half of which have long variants. Gaps were included in some places in the consotnant space based on feel, and some sounds were added with the knowledge that they would be used fairly rarely. As mentioned in the introduction, there was not a strong inspiration from any particular natural language; something interesting to experiment with was the main intent.

As a note to the reader, the following sections that enumerate the phonemes in table form also provide the Romanization of each in angle brackets next to it in this fashion: ʎ<ly>. The Romanization will be discussed in its own section as well, but its design was mainly motivated by ease of reading while avoiding diacritics.

2.1 Vowels

There are six qualities balanced across the vowel space. Three of them, \a, i, u\, come in long and short variants, while the other three, \ɛ, ɔ, ɨ\, are present only as short vowels. As noted, the Romanization of the long vowels is represented by simply doubling the letter.

	Front	Central	Back
High	i, iː<i, ii>	ɨ* <y>	u, uː<u, uu>
Mid	ɛ<e>		ɔ<o>
Low		a, aː<a, aa>	

2.2 Consonants

	Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar - Palatal	Velar - Uvular
Plain	p <p>	t <t>	t͡ʃ<c>	k, kʷ<k, kw>
Voiced	b <b>	d <d>		g, gʷ<g, gw>
Aspirate	pʰ<ph>	tʰ<th>	t͡ʃʰ<ch>	kʰ, kʷʰ<kh, khw>
Nasal	m <m>	n <n>	ɲ<ny>	
Fricative		s <s>	ʃ<x>	x, xʷ<h, hw>
Approximant		l <l>	j, ʎ<j, ly>	w, ʁ, ʁʷ<w, r, rw>

There are 27 consonants organized across four conceptual, but six real, places of articulation in six manners of articulation. The reason for organizing them in this way is that the consonants further back in the mouth, including the rhotic, come in both plain and labialized forms while the postalveolar - palatal series was done so reflecting a weak influence of palatalizing. Of note, there are

some gaps with \f\ and \$\widehat{\text{dʒ}}$\ missing, along with the velar nasal not being phonemic. Furthermore, \ʎ\ is very rare with only a few occurences in the whole lexicon.

Within the Romanization scheme, using familiar or letters with some intuition provided the baseline, such as using <c> for \$\widehat{\text{tʃ}}$\. Aspiration is done by simply appending an <h> and labialization with <w>. Palatal consonants are a bit more of a mix, with \ʃ\ as <x> following precedent from Pinyin and some Mesoamerican languages, but the nasal and lateral appending a <y> as a nod to English, with \j\ simply as <j> to avoid confusion at syllable boundaries where <nj> is possible and needs to be distinct from <ny> directly after a vowel. This does allow for romanized sequences like <nyy> representing \ɲɨ\ which are a little unpleasant to look at but clear to read after exposure.

2.3 Syllable Structure and Phonaesthetics

The syllable structure is fairly simple being `(C)V(m/n/p/t/k)`. Coda stops are unreleased, and the nucleus may be either short or long, but diphhongs do not occur and vowel-vowel sequences are avoided. Beyond this rather simple syllable structure, many consonant clusters are not allowed in Proto-Isum . Some are fully absent in the language, while others, that may arise from affixation, change in sound when they arise.

2.3.1 High Level Sound Trends

Despite the rather large phonemic inventory, only nouns and verbs present the whole host of possible sounds, and even within those lexical categories there are still some loose restrictions. Normally, a given root or semantic stem will have at most one long vowel, and there is a strong preference for it to be in the first syllable of the stem. If two roots are with long vowels are joined, the long vowels do not degrade. Outside of nouns and verbs, the aspirate series of consonants is not present and labialized back sounds are very very rare. Rhotic consonants never appear at the start of a word, and, as thus, the rhotic sounds are never the first sound in a noun, verb, or any kind of prefix.

2.3.2 Consonant Clusters and Realizations

While the basic syllable structure allows for any of the coda consonants to theoretically appear before any consonant, many clusters are unattested, and many more are realized as different sounds when the cluster occurs, often as a result of grammatical or derivational suffixes. In the table below, each possible cluster as a coda consonant per column before an initial per row. Clusters that are allowed and attested without any unexpected changes are marked with a ✓. Clusters that surface with some sound change will be noted with the sound in IPA. Finally, disallowed clusters will have their spots left blank.

Onset | Coda	m	n	p	t	k
p	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
t	✓	✓	p	t	✓
c	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
k	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
kw	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
b	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
d	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
g	✓	✓	p	t	✓
gw	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
ph	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
th	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
ch	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
kh	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
khw	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
m	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
n	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
ny	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
s	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
x	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
h	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
hw	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
l	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
j	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
ly	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
w	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
r	✓	mp	p	✓	✓
rw	✓	mp	p	✓	✓

2.4 Allophony

Every language has some variety in how underlying phonemes are realized when placed in different environments, and Proto-Isum was surely no different from that. Some of the synchronic changes that are expected to have existed are evidenced in some way in daughter languages. Please note, this is restricted to expected changes triggered by environment by the speakers of Proto-Isum and not changes witnessed in its various daughter languages.

2.4.1 Velarizing /n/

/n/ almost definitely presented as [ŋ] before velar stops and fricatives and at the end of words. However, change to /n/ seems unlikely before the uvular rhotics.

2.4.2 Intervocalic /w/

/w/ became [v] in all intervocalic word medial positions. No daughter languages present any convincing evidence that it remained a semivowel in this position.

2.4.3 Intervocalic Fortified /j/

Based on reflexes in most daughter languages, it seems highly likely that when /j/ followed a stressed vowel in word medial intervocalic positions, it was realized as [zj].

2.4.4 Interruptive Glottal Stop

While not present as a distinct phoneme, it is expected that the glottal stop, [ʔ], was inserted to break vowel-vowel sequences across word boundaries.

2.5 Final Notes on Romanization

The above sections enumerate everything that is needed for the Romanization; however some digraphs like <kh> and even <khw> could be confusing without disambiiguation. Intervocalic aspirate stops could be confused with clusters of coda stops and the velar fricative. For this reason, when [kx] or other clusters like this occur, the coda stop will be separated with and apostrophe <'>. Thus <akha> is [ak^{h}a] but <ak'ha> is [akxa].

2.6 Stress

Proto-Isum did not make use of contrastive stress, that is stress patterns to distinguish morphemes, but for multisyllabic words in particular stress was present. Many frequently used syntactic particles that were not affixed to main words, and probably many common use words, often acted as unstressed when juxtaposed with more lexically prominent words. Stress within a word was governed seemingly by a few simple rules:

- Monosyllabic words, in isolation, have no stress pattern
- Long vowels in multisyllabic words are always stressed
- If there are no long vowels, the syllable closeset to the end of a word before a consonant cluster not including fricatives or approximnats had stress
  - [**Example**]: `saktu` will have stress on the first syllable
- If there are no clusters, and the final syllable is open, stress is penultimate
  - [**Example**]: `iwa` will have stress on the first syllable
- Finally, if there are no clusters, and the final syllable is closed, stress is ultimate
  - [**Example**]: `lyagwyn` has stress on the final syllable
  - [**Example**]: `khakpet` has stress on the penultimate syllable
  - [**Example**]: `iixyt` has stress on the penultimate syllable

2.7 Paleophonology

3 Nouns

Grammatically, nouns are a fairly simple lexical category. All nouns are marked for nominal case at all times without exception. There are a few suffixes indicating different kinds of the associative plural; however, their use is only mandatory on personal pronouns. Certain nouns are never marked with such plurality while others have a disposition towards them. Finally, there is a wealth of derivational affixes that attach to nouns used for a variety of purposes. A short list of those with examples are provided in this section, while a more exhaustive list of such affixes is provided in the appendices.

3.1 Overview of Case suffixes

Affix	Case	Notes
-∅	Nominative	
-min	Accusative	
-nye	Genetive	
-wyk	Dative	
-ba	Locative	

There are five distinct cases used to indicate structure. The Accusative and the Genetive both cover a wide range of uses beyond the common understanding for the cases cross linguistically. The Genetive can effectively act as an attributive sort of case, while the Accusative as the default object case is frequently found in constructions where the Dative and Locative may have also been options. Notably, the Locative case is fairly weakly used as it has a lot of overlap with prepositional like phrases with less specificity in regards to both location and what it is modified. Often, the Locative simply indicates where a particular action had taken place.

3.2 The Nominative: -∅

The nominative case, which is unmarked, indicates subects of sentences and clauses, much like in other languages that feature it. Furthermore, it is found in disjoint usages as well, such as responses to questions that only require specifying what a thing is with a bare noun.

3.3 The Accusative: -min

The accusative case, marked with the **-min** suffix, indicates that the noun is the target of some kind of verb or action. It's most common use is to indicate the direct object of verbs.

3.3.1 Sound Changes

Much like the plural, when a noun with a final \m\ is marked as accusative, the final consonant is dropped, such that **gwiim** becomes **gwiimin** rather than **gwiimmin** which would imply a geminated \m\ at the conjunction of the word and suffix.

3.3.2 Prepositional Objects

Prepositions effectively being a category of verbs, the object of such prepositional verbs is in the accusative case. For example, **chiici thi asaminnye** is **the bird under the tree**, where **asa**, tree, is marked accusative. The subsequent genetive marker indicates that **chiici**, which comes before it, is modified.

3.4 The Genetive: -nye

Genetive marking is used to indicate some form of attribution, such as possession and nominal or phrasal modification of nouns. Genetive nouns follow the noun or noun phrase that they modify.

Thus, **gwiim sulaanye**, is **the person's house**. Reversing it to **sulaanye gwiim** was regarded as incorrect and, while understandable would feel very odd.

3.4.1 Sound Changes

When a word ends with \n\, much like the accusative and plural with \m\, the \n\ would be dropped and the affix added. For example, **can** would become **canye**.

3.4.2 Nominal Augmentation

Nouns on their own, cannot modify other nouns as in English since there is no implied zero-derivation to a verbal form. For example, **byna muinye** is literally `milk of the cow`, but idiomatically is simply **cow milk**.

3.4.3 Relative Clauses

Relative clauses hinge on the use of the genetive case marker. While covered more in its own section, relative clauses follow the noun they modify with, optionally, one of the demonstrative pronouns after it marked genetive. For example, **Sulaa cyri chiicimin erunye** is translated as **The man who sees the bird**. As will be seen, the demonstrative could optionally be dropped.

3.5 The Dative: -wyk

The Dative case indicates the indirect object, motion towards something, and was used to mark subjects for some verbs and for some lower volition subjects as well. The affix, **-wyk**, is notable for having quite a bit of volatility in its own sound. It was never used to indicate any sort of benefactive use.

3.5.1 Quirky Subjects

A collection of particular verbs expected Dative marked nouns as their subject; when these ones have direct objects they are always in the accusative case. Many of these verbs have to do with mental activities like thinking or feeling affection. Culturally, this seems to have lead some people to feel that aspects of these things were more spontaneous to the human mind than meditated, which gave rise to a few idioms and collocations which manifest in certain ways in the daughter languages

3.5.2 Absence of Benefactive Usage

Very notably, Proto-Isum did not make use of the Dative to indicate those who benefitted from an action or state, at least directly. Giving food or affection surely benefits the person, but this was not something overtly indicated by the Dative Case. The Proto-language and almost all of its daughter languages up to the present day use subordination of some kind for benefactive indicators. Those that presently do grammatically use the Dative in a benefactive sense seem to have innovated it through contact with neighboring languages that do.

3.6 The Locative: `-ba`

The Locative case indicates where something occurs. The sense entailed by the Locative is that of "in, on, or at". For example, **gwiimba**, in the house. However, the locative is not used for purely

copular forms, such as `The birds are in the tree` would be rendered as **zenyi qhiiqimu asamin** as opposed to using the possibly expected **asaba**

4 Pronouns

Personal pronouns were rather simple, with the third person pronouns normally being the proximate demonstrative pronouns, though very distant non-moving or conceptual things could be refered to by the other demonstratives. As with the rest of the language, only humans are marked for plurality. This means that multiple people noted via pronoun could be marked plural, but multiple trees or rocks would not ever be plural marked either on the noun or pronouns refering to them. The following sections layout what the pronouns are, though there are few wrinkles in this arena.

4.1 First and Second Person Personal Pronouns

	First Singular	Second Singular	First Plural	Second Plural
Nominative	dii	awa	diimu	awamu
Accussative	diimin	awamin	diimumin	awamumin
Genetive	diinye	awanye	diimunye	awamunye
Dative	diiwyk	awawyk	diimuwyk	awamuwyk
Locative	diiba	awaba	diimuba	awamuba

In this section, we only list the First and Second personal pronouns since the 3rd is the same as the demonstratives, and notes on its use will come in that section. These two pronouns are notably the only ones reconstructed as having mandatory plural marking with `-mu`. Vestiges of this appear in all daughter languages, even ones that did not extend this plural marker much beyond the space present in the proto-language here. It's notably where some of the irregularity in daughter languages can find its source.

4.2 Demonstrative Pronouns

	Proximal Singular	Medial Singular	Distal Singular	Proximal Plural	Medial Plural	Dista
Nominative	eru	nyru	taru	erumu	nyrumu	ta
Accussative	erumin	nyrumin	tarumin	erumumin	nyrumumin	taru
Genetive	erunye	nyrunye	tarunye	erumunye	nyrumunye	taru
Dative	eruwyk	nyruwyk	taruwyk	erumuwyk	nyrumuwyk	taru
*Locative	eruba	nyruba	taruba	erumuba	nyrumuba	tar

Demonstrative pronouns, such as "this" and "that" in English, is split into three spatial categories. The proximal, **eru**, refers to objects close to the speaker or events relatively close in time, both past and future. The medial, **nyru**, refers to things closer to the listener or near term events, such as within the past day or so or expected in the next few days. Finally, the distal, **taru**, indicates things that are far from both the speaker and listener or events deemed a bit more remote, such as prior or upcoming weeks. Of note, locative demonstratives are relatively rare because place words were prefered; in fact, in some daughter languages where case remained fairly in tact, fused locative demonstratives are seemingly absent. Furthermore, plural demonstratives would be less used given the predisposition for assumed plurals.

4.2.1 Third Person Usage of Demonstrative Pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns **eru** and **taru** were used where most languages have a third person pronoun. **nyru** was not used in this way. When used in reference to other people, groups, or

beings regarded with some intellect, mandatory pluralization was present just like in the first and second person pronouns. The choice of proximate or distal pronoun was governed by situational and conversational context. When no other third person referent was easily in mind, the choice was simply based on presence; people near by would be proximate, while those out of sight or dead are distal. However, if multiple third person actors are present in a story or conversation, the use of the proximate demonstrative indicates a referent who was more recently in charge of action while distal more often was for those on the receiving end of said actions. For example, in **Cyri etu ymaaminasaba. Bulotnytaru** is **At the tree, dad saw mom. She was walking around**. Here we know it has to be mom walking around because of the use of the distal demonstrative pronoun.

5 Classifiers

Classifiers and measure words are used to specify nouns when bening counted, ordered, or specified in certain particular ways. Classifiers are completely non-inflectional; however some are highly subject to environmental sound changes. Phonetically, classifiers in Proto-Isum are all one syllable with a short vowel, and none have aspirate consonants. Unlike many other languages with classifiers, the plural marker may co-occur with explicitly numeral classified nouns. This is largely mandatory for humans, but strongly avoided otherwise. Finally, some classifiers have an implicit number, such as for things that come in pairs or that refer to groups.

5.1 Synactic Positioning

The ordering of words in a noun phrase that uses a classifier is `Verbal Adjective - Noun - Demonstrative - Number - Classifier`. Of note here, using a demonstrative without a classifier can change what is understood. Furthermore, if elements of this construction can understood implicitly, it may be dropped with the meaning preserved, sometimes even including the noun.

5.2 Classifier Selections

Each noun will have a selection of possible classifiers that can be used with it. First, there is a completely generic classifier, **te**. This classifier may be used with any noun at any time; however, it does feel a bit less refined and overuse of it will feel monotonous and lazy. Beyond that, there each noun is also associated with a more particular classifier based on its perceived characteristics. For example, **ut** is the classifier for small round dull things, such as **can**, rock, and **deklu**, charcoal. A smaller category of nouns which refer to things that come in pairs, especially body parts, or natural groups, such as clusters of certain kinds of fruit. In these cases, there is one classifier for individual things apart from the assumed group, such as **ka** for one eye whereas **rok** is for the pair or eyes. Finally, there is a group of classifiers used for common but not inherent collections of nouns, such as **xyt** for a sack or skin full of something like meat or clay.

5.3 Enumeration

Maybe the most prominent usage of nominal classifiers will be specifying the exact number of a noun. Following the syntax section above, we can follow a simple pattern to show specific numbers. For example, **can su ut** is directly **three rocks**. Likewise, the same can be done with the generic classifier in **can su te**.

5.4 Ordinals

third cat

5.5 Definiteness

this cat, those 3 cats, which cat

5.6 Quantification

Some cats, every cat, no cat

5.7 List of Classifiers

Classifier	Main Usages	Sound Changes	Notes
te	Generic Classifier		
na	Sticks, long thin stiff objects		
ut	rocks, charcoal lumps, small round things		
ka	One of a paired body part like hands		
rok	Body parts as naturally paired or gathered		
xyt	Inaninmate things collected in sacks		

6 Particles

Particles are a category of small monosyllabic morphemes that bind to other words, indicating grammatically how the marked word is understood.

6.1 Grammatical Affixes

7 Verbs

Proto-Isum morphologically splits all verbs into one of two categories, transitive or intransitive. Transitive verbs in dictionary form end with **-i** while intransitive verbs with **-ot**, barring a few irregular ones which will be enumerated separately. Each verb is lexically inferred to exist in one of three default temporal categories: instantaneous, delimited, and essential. There is no grammatical tense, but an abundance of aspectual categories that each verb may be marked with that can. Understanding of a given verbs usage primarily relies on the interaction of the temporal category and aspect. For example, an instantaneous verb like **iriot**, to squeak, marked with the continuous aspect becoming **iriny** means ”is squeaking” or ”was squeaking”. With no overt grammatical tense, disambiguating when an event occurs is moreso in the domain of adverbials indicating time, sequential coordinators like ”before” and ”while”, and anchoring stories or topics to verbs in perfective aspect.

7.1 Passive Voice

7.2 Causative

7.3 Adjectival Verbs

Adjectives are not a distinct lexical category, so verbs cover the majority of adjective like activities in Proto-Isum . The most common verbs to act in this way are stative intransitive verbs, like **kajot**, *big* or *to be big* or **thaarot**, *good* or *to be good*. The verb in this usage will come before the noun being modified in the noun phrase, for example **Cyri dii kajot etumin awanye**, *I saw your big father*, where **kajot** modifies **etu** by coming before it. Of note, simple subject predicate sentences with intransitive stative verbs would still idiomatically be `X is Y` in translation, such as **kajot saktu** is better understood as *The sky is big* rahter than *big sky*, which would be better as a noun phrase embedded in some other utterance.

7.4 Prepositional Verbs

Prepositions being an absent category, when nominal case does not cover a particular meaning, verbs cover this need. All prepositional use verbs are transitive stative verbs. For example **thi etu diinye asamin** is the predicate usage of the verb for *to be under*, so this is translates to *My father is under the tree*. However, when used in a fashion like a prepositional phrase the structure is `NOUN PREP OBJECTmin DEMONSTRATIVEnye`; this is exactly using a relative clause containing the prepositional phrase. The demonstrative used related where the modified noun is perceived to be in relation to the speaker, thus something close to the speaker would expect **erunye**. Some daughter languages imply that the demostrative was optional as they use a gapping strategy. So, **Cyri dii qhiiqimin awanye ybi gaarumin tarunye** is *I saw your bird near the pond*.

8 Numbers

Proto-Isum had a fairly direct number system. It was decimal with a quinary sub-base. The section essentially only presents basic numbers, how to combine and build further numbers using the language's simple pattern, and how to create ordinal numbers from cardinal ones. Of note, since the language was particularly old, there was no concept of zero, and many of the higher order numbers were interchangeable with meanings like "many" or "abundant" and are thus also verbs.

Number	Cardinal	Ordinal	Notes
1	ku		
2	cen		
3	su		
4	im		
5	yaa		Sub-base
6	yak		5 + 1
7	yacen		5 + 2
8	yasu		5 + 3
9	yiim		5 + 4
10	rogy		Major Base

9 Human Body Terms

This section provides reconstructions for various Proto-Isum anatomical terms. These terms were frequently utilized to describe other things in the language, so we're introducing them early in hopes of easing the reader into a gentler time understanding the language. Of note, Proto-Isum seems to have had a weak distinction between the hand-arm and foot-leg pairs, though it is thought terms like palm could be used to clarify hand or foot when needed explicitly; other evidence suggests a 'big'-'little' contrast for arm or leg and hand or foot respectively.

9.1 General Body Parts

This section will cover general body parts, looking at the whole body. Further sections will focus on terms specific to the face, hand, and others.

- **Head** – `Qhympu`
- **Neck** – `Unle`
- **Shoulder** – `Lekry`
- **Chest** – `Dirwak`
- **Belly** – `Khaama`
- **Back** – `Naga`
- **Arm / Hand** – `Thuu`
- **Leg / Foot** – `Beni`
- **Knee / Elbow** – `Sawak` (**N.B.:** also seems to mean a *bend, crook* in many cases)
- **Finger (Toe)** – `Zu`
- **Bum** – `Rop`

In the case of `Zu` meaning *toe* it seems that the term was more specific to fingers, and in context could be *toe*; however, in isolation it is expected that `Zu Benina`, that is exactly *finger of the foot*.

9.2 The Face

The terms for facial anatomy show some polysemy with non-anatomic elements, but there are not interesting collisions in meaning like seen in the more general anatomy such as 'hand-arm'.

- **Face** – `Hebu`
- **Ajo** – `Eye`
- **Lyek** – `Ear`
- **Nose** – `Nunu`
- **Mouth** – `Nyaam`

- **Lips** – `Marwa`
- **Chin** – `Ipu`
- **Cheek** – `Ek`
- **Hair** – `Xaa`

9.2.1 Inside the Mouth

Cover things like teeth, tongue, etc

9.2.2 The Eye in Focus

Cover things like white (kaolin), iris, pupil, eyelid...

10 To Do

- Preface with more detail on world and speakers
- Elaborate on vowel space shape ??
- Consonant Cluster table completion
- Deeper discussion on Allophony, esp w/ clusters
- More detail on disambiguation in the Romanization section
- Overhaul stress section, maybe simplify stress since it is implied in Romanization
- Examples in stress section look horrible
- Paleophonology with reasoning
- Revamp overview of nouns
- Nouns and Associative Plural Suffixes section
- Better overview of grammatical suffixes and their mutations covered more clearly
- Collective particles ?
- Derivational affixes, maybe non-exhaustive
- Full section on grammatical particles, they will interact with verbs
- Full section on word order, morphology, topic-prominence, etc
- Revamp classifier order
- Ordinals, definiteness [?], quantification, and list of classifiers (should be exhaustive)
- Associative Plurals in pronouns section ?
- Interrogative Pronouns
- Continue numbers table until 1,000
- Verb aspects (3 or 4 for protolang)
- Verb moods
- Verb valency modifying operations
- Verb nominalization via generic classifier
- Verb conjuntive use via particles and classifiers
- Verb reflexivity
- Relational nouns to replace Adpositional Preverbs
- Relativization and nominalization

- Topic-Comment patterns
- Story telling structures, patterns, and devices
- Sections on selected lexical categories (body, family, society, nature)
- Interlinear stories