

### Journal 3

**Phonology.** A few expansions on what I proposed last time.

ϕ vs. x. I proposed ϕ as a consonant but was hesitant because I'd only heard it in the 'colors' word. I heard it again in *orubaichi ohuriguϕ*, 'many necks'. I'm still having trouble determining whether it is a [ϕ] or an [x]. My only familiarity with [x] is from hearing it in some words in Urdu, and I have never studied a language with [ϕ] as a significant consonant. I'll need to watch out for more words with [ϕ] (or not). It may be worth the while to track down these segments in the WAV files and try to look at the spectrograms for these problematic segments.

Front rounded vowels. I should have taken German or French instead of Latin. After not hearing anything like [ø] or [y] for the first few sessions, I start hearing them *all over* after Lara and Michael, sitting next to me, mentioned that they were hearing these. Thinking back, I think I was too eager to interpret anything that sounded unfamiliar as an [ɨ]. I would thus expand my phonology to include [ø] and maybe [y].

**Note-taking.** I'm the only one in the class using a computer for note-taking. At the onset I told myself I'd do it this way all the way through so we (the others in the class and I) could compare our experiences at the end. Here's my thinking on it right now. A laptop is obviously advantageous in some respects, and the disadvantages can be mitigated by clever preparation and a bit of flexibility. That means that at least for me the laptop pulls ahead overall. A quick decomposition of the two, i.e. the pencil-and-paper approach and the laptop approach, as done by me:

- Pencil and paper
  - Pros
    - Easily represent uncertainty in orthography (superscript ?'s, parentheses)
    - Easily introduce new characters into orthography
    - More degrees of freedom in structuring notes
      - (Laptops have two dimensions in which you can write: down and to the right. Paper pages are more fluid.)

- Cons
  - Legibility concerns (smudges, errant strokes)
  - More easily perishable
  - Slower input
  - Slow lookup of desired items (where was that word for 'tree kangaroo' I wrote in the margins...?)
  - Slow transfer to a digitized representation
- Laptop
  - Pros
    - Faster input (if you have significant experience typing)
    - Instant lookup of desired items
    - Ready-to-archive format
    - Durable (assuming regular backups)
  - Cons
    - Harder to produce Unicode characters fluidly
    - Harder to represent uncertainties in orthography

A few remarks here. Typing is only quicker if you've poured an inordinate amount of time into practicing typing. I estimate that I've spent at least 3,000 hours typing in my lifetime. The ready-to-archive advantage of laptops only holds if the user is consistent in conforming to a certain format in her input. Here's a sample line from mine:

```
@VERBS, NOUNS
ei yəkən brady okudəkɸuk,ei yəkən brady əkodəkɸuk
'i give this book to brady',

ɸək ɸasu glas
'you have the glass'

@NOUNS
əməkəbəs
'fingers'

biəbəs əməkəbəs
'two findgers'

atuk əməkəb
'one finger'
```

The @VERBS line is something I call a “tag”, which tells the machine that parses this list of words that every element following it (until the next tag) is to be labeled with this tag. So in this toy data set, if I went in and typed “find\_by\_tags(“NOUNS”)”, I would get all 5 items, but if I did the same with “VERBS”, I would get only the first two items. This tag feature is something the field linguist would need to be very consistent in using lest its usefulness be vitiated. Further, you'll note that in the first entry I thought I heard the same utterance two different ways. I had to rewrite *the entire utterance* to capture a difference of {**o/ə**}kodəkɸuk, something that is not too user friendly.

Overall I'd repeat what's probably obvious, that the irksome quirks that use of a computer produces for input are not worth accommodating unless the field linguist already has a fair degree of tech literacy. Keying the forms into a database manually later on is not a terrible fate if using pencil-and-paper in the field allows a better workflow.