

The Timah Language

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1 | Introduction

1.1 | External History

The Timah language (*tíməh* [tʰiməh]; lit. language, speech) is a constructed language (*conlang*) made by me, Mareck (M.M.N.H.). Its primary goal is simply to be documented entirely in \LaTeX (*LaTeX*).

Like most of my constructed languages, it tries to focus balancing between the interesting and the naturalistic, in terms of phonology, grammar, etc. Naturalism, however, is not the primary goal. I have therefore given myself the freedom to take liberties in terms of naturalism.

1.2 | Internal History

The Timah language is spoken by the Khokòjòhe people (*kʰɔ̌kɔ̌tɕɔ̌ʔe* [kʰòkòdɕɔ̌ʔè] lit. many-person).

2 | Phonology

2.1 | Consonants

	<i>Labial</i>	<i>Alveolar</i>	<i>Palatal</i>	<i>Velar</i>	<i>Glottal</i>	<i>Placeless</i>
<i>Nasal</i>	m	n				N
<i>Plosive</i>		t ^h t t̚	tɕ ^h tɕ t̚	k ^h k k̚	ʔ	
<i>Fricative</i>		s ^h s ʃ			h	
<i>Approximant</i>	w	l	j			

Figure 1: Consonant Phonemes

- /n t^h t t̚/ are dental; /s^h s ʃ l/ are alveolar.
- /tɕ^h tɕ t̚/ are alveolo-palatal; /j/ is palatal.
- /h/ is articulated with true frication of the glottis, i.e. it is not a voiceless glottal approximant.
- /N/ is a nasal coda archiphoneme |N|, i.e. not an uvular nasal¹.
- The aspirated obstruents /t^h tɕ^h k^h s^h/ may be accompanied by slight breathy-voice on the following vowel.
- The fortis obstruents /t̚ t̚ k̚ ʃ/ are articulated with laryngeal tension, and may be accompanied by slight creaky-voice on the following vowel.

2.1.1 | Consonant Allophony

- /m n/ surface as the implosives [ɓ ɗ] word-initially.
- The coda archiphoneme |N| surfaces as [n ɲ ŋ] before alveolar, (alveolo-)palatal, and velar plosives, respectively. It surfaces as nasalization of the preceding vowel before all other consonants. It surfaces word-finally as [ŋ].
- The aspirated obstruents /t^h tɕ^h k^h s^h/ are deaspirated to [t tɕ k s] intervocally and after /N/.
- The tenuis obstruents /t tɕ k s/ are voiced to [d dɕ g z] intervocally and after /N/.
- /k^h/ surfaces as [x] before [a].
- /n/ is palatalized to [ɲ] before [i] word-medially.
- The sibilants /s^h s ʃ/ are palatalized to [ɕ^h ɕ ʃ̟] before [i]. [ɕ] is voiced to [ʒ] and [ɕ^h] is deaspirated to [ɕ̟] intervocally and after /N/.
- /l/ surfaces as [ɾ] intervocally and after /N/.
- /w/ surfaces as [ʋ] before [i].

¹Yes, I say /ən 'uvjələ/. Deal with it.

2.1.2 | Dialectal Variations of Consonants

- In some^[which?] dialects, the fortis plosives /t̪ t͡ʃ k̟ s̟/ may surface as ejectives [t' t͡ʃ' k' s'] or geminates [tt tt͡ʃ kk ss].
- In some^[which?] dialects, the alveolo-palatals /t͡ʃ^h t͡ʃ t͡ʃ̞/ may surface as alveolar affricates [ts^h ts t͡ʃ̞].
- In some^[which?] dialects, the lateral [l] has merged with either /j/ or /n/.
- In some^[which?] dialects, the glottal fricative /h/ may surface as pharyngeal [ħ].
- Depending on dialect^[which ones?] and idiolect, the lateral /l/ may variously surface as any of [ɭ ɮ ɾ ɿ ð ʒ z].

2.2 | Vowels

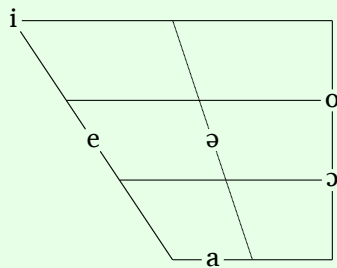


Figure 2: Vowel Phonemes

- /e/ is true mid [e̞]².
- /a/ is near-front [a] (i.e. not central [ä]).

2.2.1 | Vowel Allophony

- All vowels are nasalized before nasal consonants.
- /i/ surfaces as [ĩ] after the velars /k^h k ɰ/ and before coda [ŋ]
- /o ɔ/ raise to [u ɔ̃]² word-finally in open syllables, after the velars /k^h k ɰ w/, and before coda [ŋ].
- /a/ surfaces as [æ-ɛ] after the palatals /tɕ^h tɕ tɕ j/ and before coda /j/.

2.2.2 | Dialectal Variations of Vowels

- Some^[which?] dialects have merged the back mid vowels /o ɔ/ into true mid [ɤ].
- Some^[which?] dialects have merged the back the front vowels /i e/ into [i-i]

²[e̞ o̞] will be transcribed as [e o] for the sake of brevity.

2.3 | Phonological Processes

2.3.1 | Stress

Stress placement in Timah is phonologically determined and is not phonemic.

Stress occurs on the left-most live syllable, wherein a syllable ending in a sonorant /*n w j*/ or long vowel are grouped as *live* and those ending in /ʔ h/ are grouped as *dead*.

Open syllables (i.e. syllables with a short vowel and no coda) are superseded by live syllables but take precedence over dead syllables in terms of stress hierarchy.

2.3.2 | Vowel Harmony

Timah displays vowel harmony based on tongue root position.

Vowels are divided into two classes: +ATR and –ATR, traditionally grouped as *light* and *heavy* vowels.

+ATR (Light)	i	ə	o
–ATR (Heavy)	e	a	ɔ

Figure 3: Vowel Harmony

Vowel harmony is very pervasive; harmony spreads rightwards from a stressed vowel until it is terminated.

Vowel harmony is terminated after dead syllables (i.e. syllables ending in /ʔ h/) and non-harmonizing morphemes, e.g. clitics and certain affixes.



Figure 4: Harmony Spread

2.3.3 | Obstruent Alterations

Radical	Fortis	Tenuis	Aspirate
*t	t̪	t	t ^h
*t̪ʰ	t̪ʰ	t̪ʰ	t̪ʰ ^h
*k	k̪	k	k ^h
*s	s̪	s	s ^h
*ʔ		ʔ	h

Figure 5: Obstruent Alterations

2.3.4 | Approximant Nasalization

<i>Approx.</i>	<i>Nasal</i>
w	m
l	n ³
j	

Figure 6: Approximant Nasalization

2.4 | Tone

Timah has two distinct tonemes: *high* and *low*, as well as the option of being unmarked for tone. Tonally unmarked syllables are phonetically realized identically to the low tone, but unlike low tone, it can be affected by various tonological processes such as *tone association* and *tone mobility*.

2.4.1 | Tone Association

Tone association is the process in which the tone of a given syllable spreads (or doesn't spread) to the preceding toneless syllable.

Floating tones follow similar rules, but can associate in either direction.

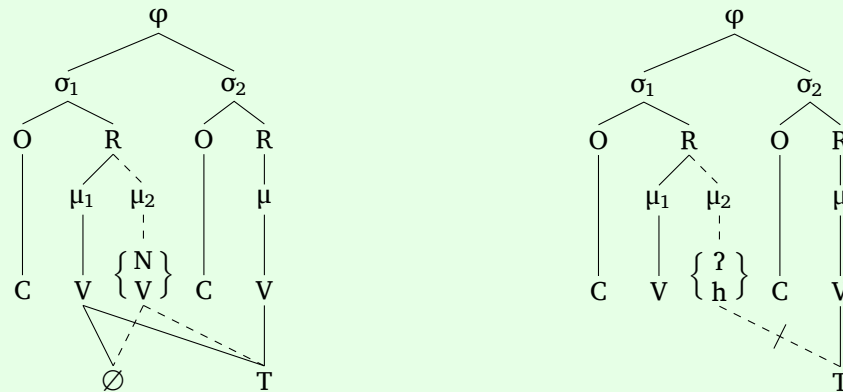


Figure 7: Tone Association

2.4.2 | Tone Mobility

2.4.2.1 | Leftward Tone Shift At the end of a Prosodic Unit (PU), all tones are shifted one syllable leftward until a toneless syllable, leaving the final syllable toneless.

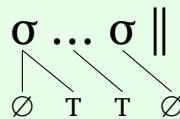


Figure 8: Leftward Tone Shift

³/n/ is denasalized to /j/ before /i/, and to /l/ everywhere else.

2.4.2.2 | Rightward Tone Shift

2.5 | Phonotactics

2.5.1 | Syllable Structure

$$CV(T)(V^4(T)|H|S)$$

$$H = \{?,h\}$$

$$S = \{N,w,j\}$$

$$T = \{ó,ò\}$$

Figure 9: Syllable Structure

2.5.2 | Restraints

These phonotactic restraints govern allomorphy.

- The nasal coda /N/ cannot precede a nasal /m n/.
- The glottal codae /ʔ h/ cannot precede another glottal /ʔ h/.
- The glottal coda /h/ cannot precede a sonorant /m n w l j/.
- The glides /w j/ cannot precede another glide /w j/.

⁴Long vowel codae must be homorganic in vowel quality but not necessarily in tone quality.

3 | Orthography

The Timah language uses the *Lóma* script (*lóma* [lómà] lit. smooth-word), a defective abugida that was borrowed from a neighboring language *Maryu* (Timah *májlb* [bájɾò]). It was originally written on the large, durable leaves of the *şólów* ([şóɾów]) plant, which contributes to the script's curled aesthetic.

4 | Syntax

4.1 | Sentence Structure

Word order in Timah is primarily *Subject-Object-Peripheral-Verb* in independent clauses, and secondarily *Verb-Subject-Object-Peripheral* in dependent clauses. Only the *verb* must be present. In copular phrases (see § 7), the word order is always *Subject-Copula-Attribute*, wherein the *attribute* is what is being compared to the *subject* of the copular phrase.

The *Subject*, or syntactic agent, is the thing that performs the verb; the verb may grammatically agree with the subject's *person*, *number*, and *modality*. It consists of one or more noun phrase(s).

The *Object*, or syntactic patient, is the thing that the verb is directly performed upon; the verb may agree with the salience, or level of affectedness, of the object. It, like the subject, consists of one or more noun phrase(s).

The *Peripheral*, or oblique/indirect object, is the thing that the verb is indirectly performed upon. It is usually marked with a *postposition* (see § 5.4) or *oblique case* (see § 5.3.1) and consists of noun or postpositional phrase(s).

The *Verb* is the action that is performed within a statement. It consists of one or more *verb phrase(s)*. Some verbs may not take a subject or object (see § 6.1).

4.2 | Alignment

The morphosyntactic alignment in Timah is a type of dually-split-ergative. *Realis* nouns align in an *active-stative* manner, while *Irrealis* nouns align in an *ergative-absolutive* manner.

The *active-stative* alignment is only used on realis arguments and is split-S, i.e. the case of the subject of a monovalent verb is determined by the verb's inherent *volitional class* (see § 6.2). Volitional verbs' subject takes the agentive case, while non-volitional verbs' subject take the patientive case. In *multivalent* (i.e. an ambivalent or polyvalent verb that takes two or more arguments, see § 6.1) verbs, the agentive marks the subject and the patientive marks the object.

The *ergative-absolutive* alignment is used only on irrealis arguments. In multivalent verbs, the *ergative* marks the subject and the agentive marks the object. In monovalent verbs, the agentive marks the subject.

Timah is secundative, with the *theme* (object that is directed toward the recipient) of a trivalent verb (i.e. a polyvalent verb that takes three arguments, see § 6.1) being marked by the a postposition (see § 5.4).

5 | Nouns

5.1 | Pronouns

5.1.1 | Personal

Personal pronouns decline for number, person, animacy (in 3rd person), case, and modality.

			Agt.	Pat.	Assoc.	Loc.
Sg.	1		lə	ləhi	jə́N	s ^h aj
	2		nó	nɔ		nò
	3	Anim.	təʔ	tóhi		
		Inan.		han	tɕàn	kéh
Pl.	1		to	tò		táw
	2		nɔ́	nɔ̀		néj
	3	Anim.	tóʔ	tóhi		
		Inan.		t ^h ɔN	tɕ ^h ON	kèè

(a) *Realis*

			Agt.	Erg.	Assoc.	Loc.
	1		ká	tàʔ	tɕà	ləj
	2		nó		nəw	só
	3		səsá		kín	ʂəw

(b) *Irrealis*

Figure 10: Personal Pronouns

5.1.2 | Possessive

Possessive pronouns decline for person, modality, and alienability. They indicate ownership and relation. They are placed after their head noun.

	Realis		Irrealis
	Alienable	Inalienable	
1	lón	jó	sèn
2	ná	náj	wan
3	tó	tɕó	kaá

Figure 11: Possessive Pronouns

5.1.3 | Relative/Interrogative

Relative/interrogative pronouns decline for modality, number (in realis modality), and domain. They are used to indicate questions and to introduce relative clauses.

		<i>Personal</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Proportion</i>	<i>Manner</i>	<i>Reason</i>
<i>Realis</i>	<i>Sg.</i>	ʔəsè	kʰònaj	silɔ	sáj	sʰèh
	<i>Pl.</i>	tansà	kʰinhə			
<i>Irrealis</i>		ʔehi	kéhe	saʔii	səmɔɔ	sʰɔjna

Figure 12: Relative/Interrogative Pronouns

5.1.4 | Demonstrative

Demonstrative pronouns decline for number, proximality, and deictic position. They express spatial and temporal position relative to the speaker (see § 12.5.1). Demonstratives of *proportion* and *manner* express to what extent and in what way, respectively.

		<i>Anterior</i>		<i>Posterior</i>					
		<i>Sinister</i>	<i>Dexter</i>						
<i>Sg.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	tàá	kò	mɔN		<i>Anterior</i>	<i>Posterior</i>	<i>Indefinite</i>	
	<i>Med.</i>	sáwhe	kàmeʔ	jéhə		<i>Prox.</i>	s ^h à	kɔʔ	nəj
	<i>Dist.</i>	kitò				<i>Med.</i>	tòhe	ʔankí	móle
<i>Pl.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	tçaà	ʔakə	wón		<i>Dist.</i>	sawa		
	<i>Med.</i>	ʔitçá	kèho	míí		<i>(b) Irrealis</i>			
	<i>Dist.</i>	tekí							

(a) Realis

		<i>Realis</i>	<i>Irrealis</i>
<i>Prop.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	jó	likòN
	<i>Dist.</i>	jín	
<i>Man.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	wój	misòN
	<i>Dist.</i>	kèn	

(c) Proportion & Manner

Figure 13: Demonstrative Pronouns

- **Proximal**; able to be heard by speaker
- **Medial**; able to be seen by speaker and/or heard by listener
- **Distal**; able to be seen by speaker; may be indistinct or non-visible
- **Anterior**; in front of the speaker; associated with the past
 - **Sinister**; to the left of the speaker; associated with volitional events
 - **Dexter**; to the right of the speaker; associated with non-volitional events
- **Posterior**; behind the speaker; associated with the future

5.2 | Article Enclitics

Articles in Timah decline for referentiality, visibility, and number. They attach as enclitics to the final element of their head noun phrase.

	<i>Referential</i>		<i>Non-referential</i>	
	<i>Visible</i>	<i>Non-visible</i>	<i>Visible</i>	<i>Non-visible</i>
<i>Sg.</i>	=móɔ	=han	=ʃi	=tɛʔ
<i>Pl.</i>	=kə	=mé	=kʰəN	=tɕáá

Figure 14: Article Enclitics

5.3 | Declensions

5.3.1 | Cases

- **Agentive** (*Agt.*) : In *multivalent* verbs (i.e. *ambivalent* or *polyvalent* verbs that take two or three arguments, see § 6.1), the *agentive* case marks a realis subject or an irrealis object. In *monovalent* verbs, it marks a volitional realis subject (see § 6.2) or irrealis subject.
- **Patientive** (*Pat.*) : In polyvalent verbs, the *patient* case marks a realis object. In monovalent verbs, it marks a non-volitional realis subject.
- **Ergative** (*Erg.*) : In polyvalent verbs, the *ergative* case marks an irrealis *subject*.
- **Associative** (*Assoc.*) : The *associative* case marks genitive and genitive-like relations that can be further clarified using postpositions.
- **Locative** (*Loc.*) : The *locative* case marks physical and/or temporal location and movement that can be expanded upon using postpositions.

	<i>Realis</i>	<i>Irrealis</i>		<i>Realis</i>	<i>Irrealis</i>
<i>Agt.</i>	-Ø	-né	<i>Agt.</i>	-Ø	-té
<i>Pat.</i>	-si	-séN	<i>Pat.</i>	-si	-séN
<i>Erg.</i>	-ʔi	-ho	<i>Erg.</i>	-ki	-kʰo
<i>Assoc.</i>	-wɔ		<i>Assoc.</i>	-kɔ	
<i>Loc.</i>	-tɕó	-je	<i>Loc.</i>	-tɕó	-se
(a) Open			(b) Closed		

Figure 15: Cases

The *Associative* and *Locative* cases may be accompanied by a postposition (see § 5.4). In isolation the *associative* takes the meaning of an alienable genitive (in contrast to the *ergative*, which may have an inalienable genitive meaning) and the *Locative* takes on the meaning of a general locative or temporal (i.e. marking place or time).

5.4 | Postpositions

There are two types of postpositions in Timah: those of *association* and those of *location*. These types are directly related to the *associative* and *locative* noun cases, as the Postpositional Object must take the respective case of its postposition.

• Associative Postpositions

- lí : *accompaniment/use; basic theme of trivalent verb*
- ɬe : *lack of accompaniment/use; negatory theme of trivalent verb*
- kʰɔno : *intent of benefit/purpose; beneficial/purposive theme of trivalent verb*
- sɪ : *intent of reference/relation*
- tɕé : *state of being*
- kʰò : *change of state*
- kéh : *similarity/comparison*
- ɬɔka : *causation*

• Locative Postpositions

- tí : *movement toward*
- sʰì : *movement away from*
- mí : *movement onto*
- tɕɔɔ : *movement under*
- tʰisɛ : *movement into*
- siiʔi : *movement out of*
- tɕoli : *beginning of movement/time*
- ʔan : *end of movement/time*
- kanʔɔ : *movement through, by way of, adjacent to*
- soʔa : *in front of/below/before*
- sàkə : *behind/above/after*
- seeʔá : *between, amidst, within*
- sɔtʰe : *surrounding, around, encompassing*

5.5 | Noun Classes

Noun classes in Timah are separated into the groups *realis* and *irrealis*, which are in part related to verbal modality (see § 6.3.5), but are also determined by the speaker's semantic notion of existence concerning the noun (see § 12.2).

The *realis* group is further divided into the classes *animate* and *inanimate*, and also distinguishes the *singular* and *plural* numbers. The *irrealis* group does not make any of these distinctions in isolation, but number can be indicated by articles (see § 5.2).

The concepts of *realis* and *irrealis* are directly associated with *yaks* and *tigers*, respectively (see § 12.4). Yaks and things closely associated with yaks are obligatorily marked as *realis*, while tigers and things closely associated with tigers are obligatorily marked as *irrealis*.

Nouns are also divided into *count* nouns and *non-count* nouns. *Count* nouns are inherently *singular* and are marked for *plural*, while *non-count* nouns are inherently *transnumeral* (i.e. number

is underspecified) and are marked for *singulative* or *plurative*. *Non-count* nouns are also unmarked for inanimacy instead of animacy.

	<i>Realis</i>		<i>Irrealis</i>
	<i>Animate</i>	<i>Inanimate</i>	
<i>Sg.</i>	∅-	kaw-, kɔ-	wí-
<i>Pl.</i>	tɔ-	jé-	

(a) *Count*

	<i>Realis</i>		<i>Irrealis</i>
	<i>Animate</i>	<i>Inanimate</i>	
<i>Col.</i>	na(n)-	∅-	kɔ-
<i>Sgv.</i>	sé-	kəw -, kɔ-	wí-
<i>Plv.</i>	to-	jí-	

(b) *Non-count*

Figure 16: *Noun Classes*

6 | Verbs

6.1 | Valency Classes

There are four main valency classes in Timah: *avalent*, *monovalent*, *ambivalent*, and *polyvalent*.

- *Avalent* verbs take zero arguments.
- *Monovalent* verbs take one argument.
- *Ambivalent* verbs take one or two arguments.
- *Polyvalent* verbs take two or more arguments.

Ambivalent and polyvalent verbs that take exactly two arguments are grouped as *divalent*, polyvalent verbs that take exactly three arguments are grouped as *trivalent*, and polyvalent verbs that take three or more arguments are grouped as *multivalent*. These terms (*divalent*, *trivalent*, *multivalent*) are used only in analysis and meta-grouping.

6.2 | Volitional Classes

Verbs are inherently classed as either *volitional* or *non-volitional*. These classes determine the case of the subject in monovalent verbs, as well as semantic intention regardless of valency.

- *Volitional* verbs usually denote an action that is intentionally performed by the subject.
- *Non-volitional* verbs usually denote an action that is accidentally performed by the subject.

6.3 | Conjugations

6.3.1 | Pronominal Proclitics & Polypersonal Agreement

Pronominal proclitics are appended to verb phrases and must agree with their respective argument. Said argument(s) can subsequently be dropped from the statement entirely.

		Agt.	Pat.			Agt.	Erg.
	1	lə=	le(h)=		1	ká=	tà(?)=
Sg.	2	nó=	nɔ=		2	nó=(ó)	no=
	3	tə=	té(h)=		3	sá=	kí(N)=
			ha(N)=				
	1	to=	tò=				
Pl.	2	nɔ=(ó)	nó=(ò)				
	3	tó=	tó(h)=				
			tʰɔ(N)=				

(a) *Realis*

		Agt.	Erg.
	1	ká=	tà(?)=
	2	nó=(ó)	no=
	3	sá=	kí(N)=

(b) *Irrealis*

Figure 17: Pronominal Proclitics

6.3.2 | Noun Incorporation & Salience

6.3.3 | Voice

The verbal voices in Timah are symmetric, i.e. they do not alter the valency of the verb, only the arguments' roles.

Voice indicators also inflect for the *salience* of the patient, i.e. if the patient is or is not significantly affected by the agent.

	<i>Salient</i>	<i>Non-salient</i>
<i>Actor</i>	-tá	-tɕà
<i>Undergoer</i>	-ʃóó	-jǎà
<i>Correlative</i>		-mótè

Figure 18: Voice

The *correlative* voice indicates that both the agent and patient are in some way related; it is often used for reflexive constructs, but can also be used for reciprocal constructs.

- (1) lǎ= laj- mólá -mótè
1SG.AGT.REAL= PFV.REAL wash -CV
I wash myself
- (2) to= laj- mólá -mótè
1PL.AGT.REAL= PFV.REAL wash -CV
we wash ourselves
- (3) to= tò= laj- mólá -mótè
1PL.AGT.REAL= 1PL.PAT.REAL= PFV.REAL wash -CV
we wash each other

6.3.4 | Expressive Moods

There are three moods in Timah that are independent from normal moods. These are called *expressive moods*, and are placed at the beginning of a statement. They are excluded from the realis/irrealis distinction.

- tɕó : **Imperative**; *commands, wishes, desires*
- s^ha : **Interrogative**; *questions, requests*
- kǐ : **Precative**; *polite requests and commands*

6.3.5 | Mood & Aspect

Mood and *aspect* are optionally marked using fused mood-aspect prefixes.

	<i>Perfective</i>	<i>Habitual</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Experiential</i>	<i>Iterative</i>
<i>Realis</i>	laj-, le-	ka(?)	tʰee-	tʰi-	həw-, ho-
<i>Irrealis</i>	haj-, he-	tew-, tə-	sʰe(?)	já-	ʔàti-
<i>Conditional</i>	né(h)-	ne(N)-	ʔaa-		
<i>Dubitative</i>	kʰà-	sà(N)-		taʔe-	nəw-, nò-
<i>Desiderative</i>	sò-	sʰeʔtə-		jeʔi(h)-	mátça-
<i>Necessitative</i>	séme-	tʰɔɔ-			

Figure 19: Aspect & Mood

6.3.6 | Evidential Modality

Timah optionally marks four levels of evidentiality (as well as a *quotative*), which express how the information was gathered. Evidentiality markers are placed before their head verb. They are inherently grouped as realis moods, but can be used in conjunction with any mood.

- kʰekʰi : **Witness**; *knows of event directly*
- sʰsɔN : **Evidential Inferential**; *knows of event via evidence*
- tɔNke : **Anecdotal Inferential**; *knows of event via prior experience(s)*
- mʰhɔ : **Reportative**; *knows of event indirectly*
- ʔaj : **Quotative**; *marks quoted speech, dialogue; can be used in conjunction with other evidentials*

6.3.7 | Directional Specifiers & Applicatives

The *ventitive* and *andative* suffixes, collectively called *directional specifiers*, are commonly used with verbs of movement, such as *wʰ* move, walk, *sʰj* carry, give/take, and others. These are placed directly after the verb root.

- -tí : **Venitive**; *motion toward*
- -sʰi : **Andative**; *motion away from*

Applicatives are valency-increasing operations that switch the syntactic position of the oblique (indirect) object with that of the (direct) object. They are formed by appending an applicative suffix to the verb, which can be used in tandem with the venitive and andative markers in order to specify direction or efficiency. These are placed directly after the verb root and, if present, the directional specifier.

- -lí : **Relational**; *accompaniment*
- -kʰòN : **Beneficial**; *intent of benefit/purpose or reference/relation*
- -tʰʔ : **Causal**; *causation, final causation*
- -kéh : **Complemental**; *similarity/comparison, state of being*
- -tʰò : **Locational**; *absolute physical or temporal location and movement*
- -sʰʔ : **Positional**; *relative physical or temporal location and movement*

The applicatives *-lí* and *-k^hòN* may be used to invert the secundative construction (see § 4.1), making it indirective. This inversion does not change the statement semantically, only syntactically.

Further specifications can be made by supplementing the applicative suffix with a postposition (see § 5.4) placed after the object.

6.4 | Serial Verb Constructions

A *serial verb construction* (SVC) in Timah is a verb phrase that contains two or more verbs that, within the context of their statement, share the same inflections and one or more arguments. They may be *continuous* (the constituent verbs are placed adjacent to each other) or *discontinuous* (the constituent verbs are separated by an argument.)

Continuous SVCs obligatorily share the same subject and object, while *discontinuous* SVCs only obligatorily share the same subject (i.e they may take different objects).

6.4.1 | Perceptive

Perceptive SVCs are always discontinuous, and express sensory interaction.

6.4.2 | Directive

Directive SVCs may be either continuous or discontinuous, and express movement or position.

6.4.3 | Capacitive

Capacitive SVCs are always continuous, and express ability or causality.

7 | Copulae

There are two classes of *copulae* in Timah: *essential* and *existential*. These classes are further divided into *assertive*, *negative*, and *revelatory* forms.

Copulae only inflect for person and mood/aspect (see §§ 6.3.1 and 6.3.5), and the constituent arguments within a copular phrase (i.e. the subject and attribute) both take the (unmarked) agentive case. As noted in § 4.1, all copular phrases have *Subject-Copula-Attribute* word order.

7.1 | Essential Copulae

The *essential* copulae express nominal and descriptive predication.

7.1.1 | Essential-Assertive

The *essential-assertive* copula *kew* is the basic copula used for predicating nouns and descriptives.

7.1.2 | Essential-Negative

The *essential-negative* copula *kələ* expresses negative predication of nouns and descriptives.

7.1.3 | Essential-Revelatory

The *essential-revelatory* copula *ʔowó* expresses surprise or doubt from the speaker toward the statement. It suppletes the essential-assertive copula in irrealis moods (see §§ 6.3.5 and 6.3.6).

7.2 | Existential Copulae

The *existential* copulae express locational predication as well as possession and existence.

7.2.1 | Existential-Assertive

The *existential-assertive* copula *nén* is the basic locative copula used for predicating location as well as indicating possession and existence.

7.2.2 | Existential-Negative

The *existential-negative* copula *néjé* expresses negative predication of location and indicates lack of possession/existence.

7.2.3 | Existential-Revelatory

The *existential-revelatory* copula *təjə* expresses surprise or doubt from the speaker toward the predicated location or possessive/existential phrase. It suppletes the existential-assertive copula in irrealis moods (see §§ 6.3.5 and 6.3.6).

8 | Descriptives & Derivation

There are twelve descriptives (which function as adjectives or adverbs) in Timah. They are placed before their head noun or verb.

- tɕʰàné : *good, positive; full*
- sɪnkà : *bad, negative; empty*
- kʰɔ̌kɔ̌ : *big, strong; many*
- tɕʰi : *small, weak; few*
- semɔ̌ʔ : *fast; loud; hard, rough*
- lɔ̌ : *slow; quiet; soft, smooth*
- sɔ̌n : *short, wide; feminine*
- ʔǐn : *long, narrow; masculine*
- tɕʰósʰa : *white, light; fresh, new*
- káj : *warm (color); hot, dry*
- sɔ̌tɕe : *cool (color); cold, wet*
- tʰawsá : *black, dark; stale, old*

8.1 | Derivation

Noun and verbs can be zero-derived from each other, i.e. no overt marking is used to change a noun to a verb and vice versa. More derivations are possible by appending a descriptive before a noun or verb, i.e. attaching it as a prefix.

8.1.1 | Inactive Derivation

8.1.2 | Active Derivation

9 | Particles

9.1 | Conjunctions

10 | Numerals

Timah uses a base-60 numeral system. This is not a pure base-60 system, as it uses base-12 as a sub-base to construct the constituent numeric symbols.

0	12	24	36	48
1	13	25	37	49
2	14	26	38	50
3	15	27	39	51
4	16	28	40	52
5	17	29	41	53
6	18	30	42	54
7	19	31	43	55
8	20	32	44	56
9	21	33	45	57
10	22	34	46	58
11	23	35	47	59

Figure 20: Numerals

11 | Ideophones

11.1 | Ideophonemes

There exists a set of phonemes in Timah that can appear only in ideophones. These are called *ideophonemes*, and they cannot cluster (i.e. codae /ʔ h ɳ w j/ may not precede them). Basic consonants can appear in ideophones, but ideophones are restricted to a reduced vowel inventory.

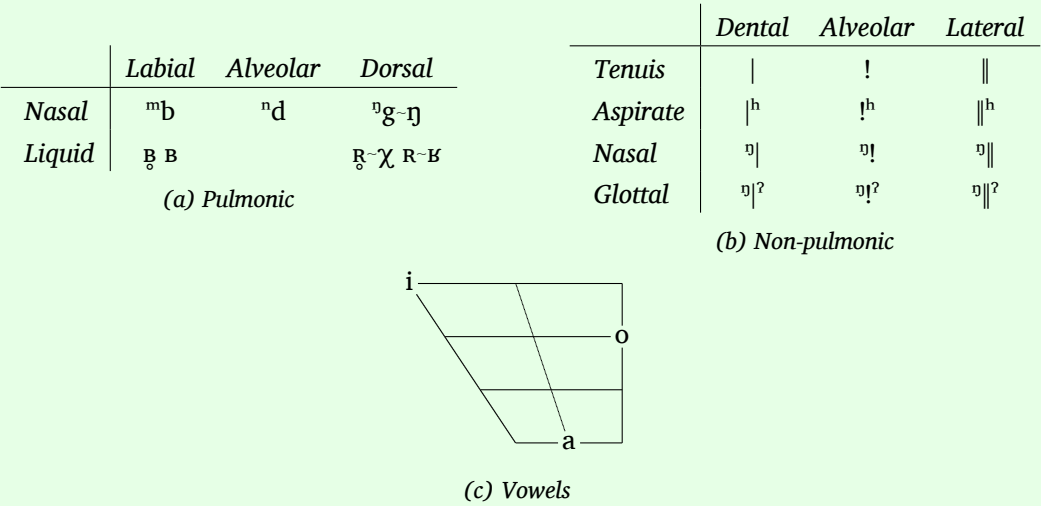


Figure 21: Ideophonemes

Additionally, the syllabic nasals /ᵐᵑ ᵑ ᵑ/ also appear, but only in isolation.

11.2 | Ideophones

There are three types of ideophones in Timah: *phonomimes*, *phenomimes*, and *psychomimes*.

11.2.1 | Phonomimes

Phonomimes imitate sounds directly.

11.2.2 | Phenomimes

Phenomimes imitate sounds associated with tangible states and conditions.

11.2.3 | Psychomimes

Psychomimes imitate sounds associated with intangible states and conditions.

12 | Semantics & Pragmatics

12.1 | Topic & Focus

The *topic* marks old information, while the *focus* marks new information.

Both topic- and focus-marking are optional, and are usually only used in spoken contexts in order to direct the flow of information.

12.1.1 | Topic & Focus Markers

There are various particles that mark *topic* and *focus*. They are placed before the emphasized phrase.

- **Topic Markers**

- t^həj : *phrasal topic; topicalizes the entire phrase*
- lóó: *head topic; topicalizes the head of the phrase*
- şáhe : *dependent topic; topicalizes the dependents of the phrase*

- **Focus Markers**

- kati : *phrasal focus; focuses the entire phrase*
- móne : *head focus; focuses the head of the phrase*
- seé: *dependent focus; focuses the dependents of the phrase*

12.2 | Existence

12.3 | Avoidance

12.4 | Yak/Tiger Dichotomy

12.5 | Deixis

12.5.1 | Spatial/Temporal Deixis & Domains

The deictic space of Timah is divided into three main domains: *anterior-sinister*, *anterior-dexter*, and *posterior*.

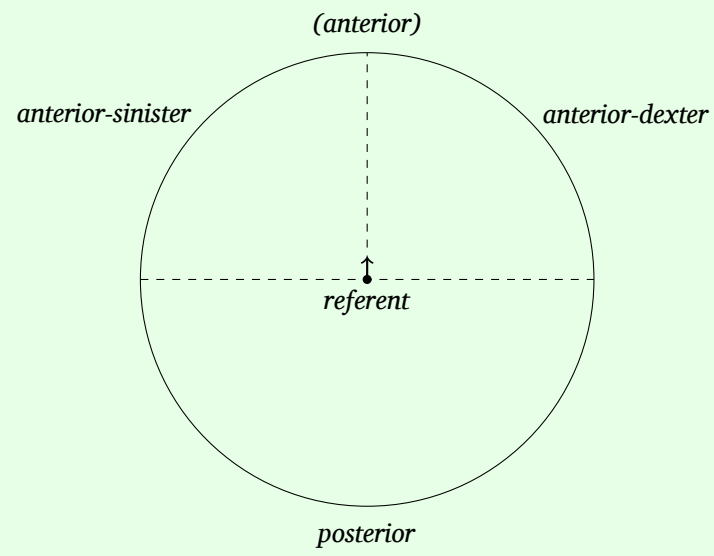


Figure 22: Deictic Space

Appendices

A | *The King and the God*

(4) wí- ʔi(N)- nètɕa -né =móɔ ká= nén
 IRR- MASC- royalty -AGT.IRR =REF.VIS.SG 3.AGT.IRR= COP.EXIST.ASSRT
a king existed

(5) ká= néjé keteh -té =móɔ
 3.AGT.IRR= COP.EXIST.NEG child -AGT.IRR =REF.VIS.SG
he did not have a child

(6)

(7)

(8)