

The Timah Language

M.M.N.H.

October 2017

| Contents

1	Introduction	6
1.1	External History	6
1.2	Internal History	6
2	Phonology	7
2.1	Consonants	7
2.1.1	Consonant Allophony	7
2.1.2	Dialectal Variations of Consonants	8
2.2	Vowels	8
2.2.1	Vowel Allophony	8
2.2.2	Dialectal Variations of Vowels	8
2.3	Phonological Processes	9
2.3.1	Stress	9
2.3.2	Vowel Harmony	9
2.3.3	Obstruent Alterations	9
2.3.4	Approximant Nasalization	10
2.4	Tone	10
2.4.1	Tone Association	10
2.4.2	Tone Mobility	10
2.4.2.1	Leftward Tone Shift	10
2.4.2.2	Rightward Tone Shift	11
2.5	Phonotactics	11
2.5.1	Syllable Structure	11
2.5.2	Restrains	11
3	Orthography	12
4	Syntax	13
4.1	Sentence Structure	13
4.1.1	Dependent Clauses	13
4.2	Alignment	13
5	Nouns	15
5.1	Pronouns	15
5.1.1	Personal	15
5.1.2	Possessive	15
5.1.3	Relative/Interrogative	16
5.1.4	Demonstrative	16
5.2	Article Enclitics	17
5.3	Declensions	17
5.3.1	Cases	17
5.4	Postpositions	18
5.5	Noun Classes	18

6 Verbs	20
6.1 Valency Classes	20
6.2 Volitional Classes	20
6.3 Conjugations	20
6.3.1 Pronominal Proclitics & Polypersonal Agreement	20
6.3.2 Noun Incorporation & Salience	21
6.3.3 Voice	21
6.3.4 Expressive Moods	21
6.3.5 Mood & Aspect	21
6.3.6 Evidentials	22
6.3.7 Directional Specifiers & Applicatives	22
6.4 Serial Verb Constructions	23
6.4.1 Perceptive	23
6.4.2 Directive	23
6.4.3 Capacitive	23
7 Copulae	24
7.1 Essential Copulae	24
7.1.1 Essential-Assertive	24
7.1.2 Essential-Negative	24
7.1.3 Essential-Revelatory	24
7.2 Existential Copulae	24
7.2.1 Existential-Assertive	24
7.2.2 Existential-Negative	24
7.2.3 Existential-Revelatory	24
8 Descriptives & Derivation	25
8.1 Comparison	25
8.2 Derivation	26
9 Particles	27
9.1 Conjunctions	27
9.1.1 Ellipsis	27
10 Numerals	28
11 Kinship Terms	29
12 Ideophones	29
12.1 Ideophonemes	29
12.2 Ideophones	29
12.2.1 Phonomimes	29
12.2.2 Phenomimes	29
12.2.3 Psychomimes	30
13 Semantics & Pragmatics	31
13.1 Topic & Focus	31
13.1.1 Marking Topic & Focus	31
13.2 Avoidance	31
13.3 Deixis	31
13.3.1 Spatial/Temporal Deixis & Domains	31

CONTENTS	4
Appendices	33
A <i>The King and the God</i>	33

| List of Figures

1	Consonant Phonemes	7
2	Vowel Phonemes	8
3	Vowel Harmony	9
4	Harmony Spread	9
5	Obstruent Alterations	9
6	Approximant Nasalization	10
7	Tone Association	10
8	Leftward Tone Shift	10
9	Syllable Structure	11
10	Alignment	14
11	Personal Pronouns	15
12	Possessive Pronouns	15
13	Relative/Interrogative Pronouns	16
14	Demonstrative Pronouns	16
15	Article Enclitics	17
16	Cases	17
17	Noun Classes	19
18	Pronominal Proclitics	20
19	Voice	21
20	Aspect & Mood	22
21	Numerals	28
22	Ideophonemes	29
23	Deictic Space	32

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 (*kʰɔkʰɔtɕɔʔe* [kʰòkʰòdzɔʔɛ] 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 t ^ʔ	tɕ ^h tɕ tɕ ^ʔ	k ^h k k ^ʔ	ʔ	
<i>Fricative</i>		s ^h s s ^ʔ			h	
<i>Approximant</i>	w	l	j			

Figure 1: Consonant Phonemes

- /n t^h t t^ʔ/ are dental; /s^h s s^ʔ l/ are alveolar.
- /tɕ^h tɕ tɕ^ʔ/ 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 /t^ʔ tɕ^ʔ k^ʔ s^ʔ/ 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 deäspirated to [t tɕ k s] intervocalically and after /N/.
- The tenuis obstruents /t tɕ k s/ are voiced to [d dɕ g z] intervocalically and after /N/.
- /k^h/ surfaces as [x] before [a].
- /n/ is palatalized to [ɲ] before [i] word-medially.
- The sibilants /s^h s s^ʔ/ are palatalized to [ɕ^h ɕ ɕ^ʔ] before [i]. [ɕ] is voiced to [ʒ] and [ɕ^h] is deäspirated to [ç] intervocalically and after /N/.
- /l/ surfaces as [ɾ] intervocalically and after /N/.
- /w/ surfaces as [ʋ] before [i].

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

2.1.2 | Dialectal Variations of Consonants

- In some^[which?] dialects, the fortis plosives /tʔ tɕʔ kʔ sʔ/ may surface as ejectives [t' tɕ' k' s'] or geminates [tt ttɕ kk ss].
- In some^[which?] dialects, the alveolo-palatals /tɕʰ tɕ tɕʔ/ may surface as alveolar affricates [tsʰ ts tsʔ].
- 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 ʀ ʁ ʁ̥ ʁ̥̥ ʒ].

2.2 | Vowels

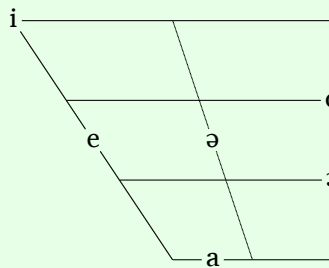


Figure 2: Vowel Phonemes

- /e/ is true mid [ɛ]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 /kʰ k kʔ/ and before coda [ŋ]
- /o ɔ/ raise to [u ɔ̃]² word-finally in open syllables, after the velars /kʰ k kʔ w/, and before coda [ŋ].
- /a/ surfaces as [æ-ɛ] after the palatals /tɕʰ tɕ tɕʔ 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 [ɔ̃].
- Some^[which?] dialects have merged the back the front vowels /i e/ into [i-ɪ]

²[ɛ ɔ̃] 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	tʔ	t	t ^h
*tɕ	tɕʔ	tɕ	tɕ ^h
*k	kʔ	k	k ^h
*s	sʔ	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.

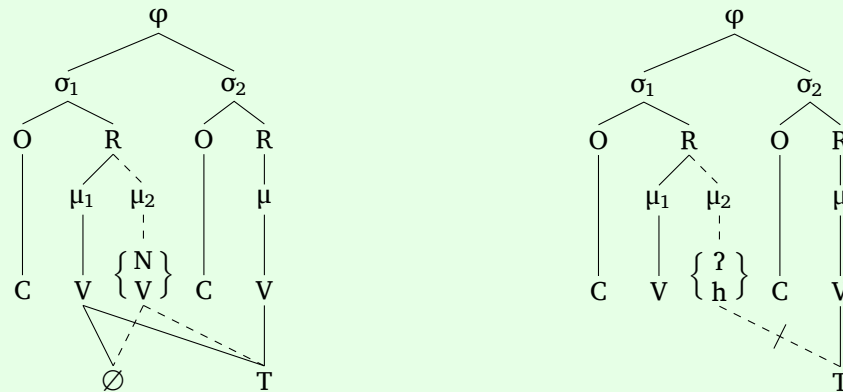


Figure 7: Tone Association

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.

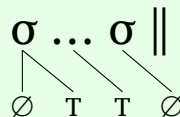


Figure 8: Leftward Tone Shift

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 *sʷólów* ([sʷóɾów]) 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 clause. It consists of one or more *verb phrase(s)*. Some verbs may not take a subject or object (see § 6.1).

4.1.1 | Dependent Clauses

Dependent clauses in Timah are introduced by one of three clausal conjunctions (a subset of *verbal conjunctions*, see § 9.1). They take *Verb-Subject-Object* word order except in copular clauses, where the word order remains *Subject-Copula-Attribute*. Relative clauses are placed before their head noun; only subjects and objects may be relativized, and must take the same role in the relative clause as in the main clause.

- *nəj* : introduces basic dependent clause
- *tən* : introduces causal dependent clause
- *motó* : introduces consecutive dependent clause

- (1)

tə=	ləj-	nómɔ -tá Ø-	hòn -Ø
3SG.ANIM.AGT.COMPLT=	PFV.COMPLT-	bite -AV ANIM.SG.COMPLT-	dog -AGT.COMPLT
=móɔ	nəj	Ø-	tɕəŋi -Ø =móɔ
=REF.VIS.SG	CONJ.DEP	ANIM.SG.COMPLT-	person -AGT.COMPLT =REF.VIS.SG
tə=	kew	sìnkà	
3SG.ANIM.AGT.COMPLT=	COP.ESSNT.ASSRT	weak	
<u>the man that the dog bit is weak</u>			

4.2 | Alignment

The morphosyntactic alignment in Timah is a type of dually-split-ergative that is dependent of factors of *perfectiveness*, *valency*, and *volition*.

Perfectiveness describes the completeness of the verb, *valency* describes the number of arguments of the verb (in this case, a split between one or more than one), and *volition* describes the

degree of control or level of intent concerning the verb. In terms of alignment, all these factors are binary, i.e., [*perfective|non-perfective*], [*monovalent|polyvalent*], [*volitional|non-volitional*].

The *ergative-absolutive* alignment is used obligatorily in polyvalent clauses wherein the subject is specified as perfective.

The *active-stative* alignment is used obligatorily in monovalent clauses wherein the subject is specified as perfective and non-volitional as well as in monovalent clauses wherein the subject is specified only as non-perfective.

Either alignment is possible when the subject in polyvalent clauses is specified as non-perfective, as well as in monovalent clauses wherein the subject is specified as both perfective and non-volitional. Which alignment is used is pragmatically determined (see § 13.1).

			<i>Erg.-Abs.</i>	<i>Either</i>	<i>Act.-Stat.</i>
<i>Mono.</i>	<i>Pfv.</i>	<i>Vol.</i>		×	
		<i>Nvol.</i>			×
	<i>Npfv.</i>	<i>Vol.</i>			×
		<i>Nvol.</i>			×
<i>Poly.</i>	<i>Pfv.</i>	<i>Vol.</i>	×		
		<i>Nvol.</i>	×		
	<i>Npfv.</i>	<i>Vol.</i>		×	
		<i>Nvol.</i>		×	

Figure 10: Alignment

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.	Erg.	Assoc.	Loc.
Sg.	1		lə	ləhi	jəN	s ^h aj	tɕ ^h ɔ̌
	2		nó	nɔ		nò	nə
	3	Anim.	táʔ	təhi			
		Inan.		haN	tɕàN	kéh	té
Pl.	1		to	tò		t ^ʔ áw	já
	2		nɔ́	nó̌		néj	tɕɔ
	3	Anim.	t ^ʔ óʔ	t ^ʔ óhi			
		Inan.		t ^h ɔ̌N	tɕ ^h ON	kèè	k ^h əw

(a) Complete

	Agt.	Pat.	Erg.	Assoc.	Loc.
1	ká	ke	tàʔ	tɕà	ləj
2	nó́	náw		nəw	no
3	səsá	seh		kín	s ^ʔ əw

(b) Incomplete

Figure 11: 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.

	Complete		Incomplete
	Alienable	Inalienable	
1	lón	jə	sèn
2	ná	nəj	wan
3	tóɔ	tɕɔ́	kaá

Figure 12: Possessive Pronouns

5.1.3 | Relative/Interrogative

Relative/interrogative pronouns decline for modality, number, 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>Complete</i>	<i>Sg.</i>	ʔəsè	kʰɔ̃naj	silɔ	sáj	sʰèh
	<i>Pl.</i>	tansà	kʰinɬə			
<i>Incomplete</i>		ʔehi	kéhe	saʔíí	səmóɔ	sʰɔjna

Figure 13: 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 § 13.3.1). 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>Anterior</i>	<i>Posterior</i>	<i>Indefinite</i>
<i>Sg.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	tàá	kò	mɔN	<i>Prox.</i>	sʰà	kɔʔ	nəj
	<i>Med.</i>	sáwhe	kàmeʔ	jéhə	<i>Med.</i>	tòhe	ʔankí	móle
	<i>Dist.</i>	kʔitò			<i>Dist.</i>	sawa		
<i>Pl.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	tɕaà	ʔakə	wón	(b) <i>Incomplete</i>			
	<i>Med.</i>	ʔitɕʰa	kèho	míí				
	<i>Dist.</i>	tekí						

(a) *Complete*

		<i>Complete</i>	<i>Incomplete</i>
<i>Prop.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	jé	likɔN
	<i>Dist.</i>	jín	
<i>Man.</i>	<i>Prox.</i>	wój	misɔN
	<i>Dist.</i>	kəN	

(c) *Proportion & Manner*

Figure 14: 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.

	Referential		Non-referential	
	Visible	Non-visible	Visible	Non-visible
Sg.	=móɔ	=haN	=sʔi	=tʔéʔ
Pl.	=kʔə	=mé	=kʰəN	=tɕáá

Figure 15: 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 Complete subject or an Incomplete object. In *monovalent* verbs, it marks a volitional Complete subject (see § 6.2) or Incomplete subject.
- **Patientive (Pat.)** : In polyvalent verbs, the *patient* case marks a Complete object. In monovalent verbs, it marks a non-volitional Complete subject.
- **Ergative (Erg.)** : In polyvalent verbs, the *ergative* case marks an Incomplete *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.

	Complete	Incomplete		Complete	Incomplete
Agt.	-Ø	-né	Agt.	-Ø	-té
Pat.	-si	-séN	Pat.	-si	-séN
Erg.	-ʔi	-ho	Erg.	-kʔi	-kʰo
Assoc.	-wɔ		Assoc.	-kɔ	
Loc.	-tɕó	-je	Loc.	-tɕó	-se
(a) Open			(b) Closed		

Figure 16: Cases

The *Associative* and *Locative* cases, collectively called *oblique 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*
- k^ʔe : *lack of accompaniment/use; negatory theme of trivalent verb*
- k^hɔno : *intent of benefit/purpose; beneficial/purposive theme of trivalent verb*
- sɪ : *intent of reference/relation*
- tɕé : *state of being*
- k^hò : *change of state*
- kéh : *similarity/comparison*
- t^ʔɔka : *causation*

• Locative Postpositions

- tí : *movement toward*
- s^hì : *movement away from*
- mɪ : *movement onto*
- tɕɔɔ : *movement under*
- t^hɪsé : *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*
- sɔt^he : *surrounding, around, encompassing*

5.5 | Noun Classes

Noun classes in Timah are separated into the groups *complete* and *incomplete*, which are associated with semantic wholeness or entirety of the noun.

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

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

(a) *Count*

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

(b) *Non-count*Figure 17: *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 clause entirely.

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

(a) Complete

(b) Incomplete

Figure 18: 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>	-sʰóó	-jǎà
<i>Correlative</i>	-mótè	

Figure 19: 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.

- (2) lǎ= laj- mólá -mótè
 1SG.AGT.COMPLT= PFV.COMPLT- wash -CV
I wash myself
- (3) to= laj- mólá -mótè
 1PL.AGT.COMPLT= PFV.COMPLT- wash -CV
we wash ourselves
- (4) to= tò= laj- mólá -mótè
 1PL.AGT.COMPLT= 1PL.PAT.COMPLT= PFV.COMPLT- 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 clause. They are excluded from the Complete/Incomplete distinction.

- tɕó : **Imperative**; *commands, wishes, desires*
- sʰa : **Interrogative**; *questions, requests*
- tǎj : **Polar Interrogative**; *yes/no questions; tag questions*
- 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-	kʔa(?)	tɕee-	tɕíhi-	həw-, ho-
<i>Affirmative</i>	séme-		tɕʰɔɔ-	jeʔi(h)-	mátɕa-
<i>Irrealis</i>	haj-, he-	tew-, tə-	sʰe(?)	já-	ʔàti-
<i>Conditional</i>	né(h)-	ne(N)-	ʔaa-		
<i>Hypothetical</i>	kʰà-		sà(N)-	taʔe-	nəw-, nò-

Figure 20: Aspect & Mood

- **Moods**

- **Realis** : event is known to be real
- **Affirmative** : event is emphasized as being real
- **Irrealis** : event is unknown or known to be unreal
- **Conditional** : event is dependent upon other events
- **Hypothetical** : event is unknown or counterfactual, but possible

- **Aspects**

- **Perfective** : event is complete
- **Habitual** : event is repeated across multiple timeframes
- **Continuous** : event is incomplete or ongoing
- **Experiential** : event is experienced
- **Iterative** : event is repeated within the same timeframe

6.3.6 | Evidentials

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.

- kʰekʰì : **Witness**; knows of event directly
- sósɔN : **Evidential Inferential**; knows of event via evidence
- tɔNke : **Anecdotal Inferential**; knows of event via prior experience(s)
- mɔ́hɔ : **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 wá move, walk, sʰɔj carry, give/take, and others. These are placed directly after the verb root.

- -tí : **Venitive**; motion toward
- -sʰì : **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*
- -k^hòN : **Beneficial**; *intent of benefit/purpose or reference/relation*
- -tʔʔ : **Causal**; *causation, final causation*
- -kéh : **Complemental**; *similarity/comparison, state of being*
- -tçò : **Locational**; *absolute physical or temporal location and movement*
- -sòʔ : **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 clause 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 clause, 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, attitude, 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 *?owó* expresses surprise or doubt from the speaker toward the clause. It suppletes the essential-assertive copula in Incomplete 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 Incomplete 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*
- sìnkà : *bad, negative; empty*
- kʰɔkʰɔ : *big, strong; many*
- tɕʰi : *small, weak; few*
- semɔʔ : *fast; loud; hard, rough*
- lɔ : *slow; quiet; soft, smooth*
- sɔN : *short, wide; feminine*
- ʔin : *long, narrow; masculine*
- tɕósʰa : *white, light; fresh, new*
- káj : *warm (color); hot, dry*
- sɔtɕe : *cool (color); cold, wet*
- tʰawsá : *black, dark; stale, old*

8.1 | Comparison

Comparative constructions are made by appending a postposition after the descriptive in a copular clause. The recipient of comparison is placed after the subject, i.e., *Subject-Recipient-Copula-Attribute*.

- sʰi : *positive comparison*
- míh : *equative comparison*
- tí : *negative comparison*

- (5) Ø- keteh -Ø =mɔɔ Ø- tɕəʔi
 ANIM.SG.COMPLT- child -AGT.COMPLT =REF.VIS.SG ANIM.SG.COMPLT- person
 -tɕó sʰi =mɔɔ tɕə= kew tɕósʰa
 -LOC.COMPLT ABL =REF.VIS.SG 3SG.ANIM.AGT.COMPLT= COP.ESSNT.ASSRT new
the child is younger than the man

8.2 | 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. Other derivations are possible by appending a descriptive onto a noun or verb as a prefix.

Additionally, there exists a small closed class of various derivational affixes.

Prefixes

- t̀̀j-, t̀̀- : *opposite, reverse*
- t̀̀hà(?) : *person, profession*
- lə(h)-(ó) : *place; time*
- kósó : *homorganic group/mass*
- k^he- : *heterorganic group/mass*
- t̀̀á(N)-(ò) : *prevent, stop, interrupt*
- sáj-, sé- : *pretend, mimic, falsify*
- sóo- : *cause, source*
- ʔikə- : *expected accompaniment*

Suffixes

- -t̀̀éʔ : *attempt, try*
- -t̀̀àj : *product, result*
- (ó)-litó : *within a period of time*
- -kʔéʔe : *tool, instrument*
- (ò)-sʔoo : *abstraction, mass*
- -t̀̀èi : *animals, inedible plants*
- -mitàN : *edible plants, food*
- -kosée : *pejorative, derogatory*
- -t̀̀èi : *previous, former*
- (ó)-nə : *eventual, later*

9 | Particles

9.1 | Conjunctions

There are two groups of conjunctions in Timah: *nominal* and *verbal*. *Nominal* conjunctions connect nouns, noun phrases, and descriptives; *verbal* conjunctions connect verbs and verb phrases.

- **Nominal**

- ní : *presents non-contrast*
- ʔika : *presents contrast*
- teh : *presents alternative*

- **Verbal**

- nəj : *presents non-contrast; introduces basic dependent clause*
- ten : *presents rationale, causality; introduces causal dependent clause*
- motó : *presents consequence; introduces consecutive dependent clause*
- ʔihi : *presents contrast*
- kàh : *presents alternative*

9.1.1 | Ellipsis

- (6) kaw- melə -si lə= ha= niwi -tá nəj
 INAN.SG.COMPLT- bread -PAT.COMPLT 1SG.AGT= 3SG.INAN.PAT= eat -AV and.VRBL
 tóʔ kaw- k^hətàj -si
 3SG.ANIM.AGT INAN.SG.COMPLT- milk -PAT.COMPLT
I eat bread and he (eats) milk

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 21: Numerals

11 | Kinship Terms

12 | Ideophones

12.1 | 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.

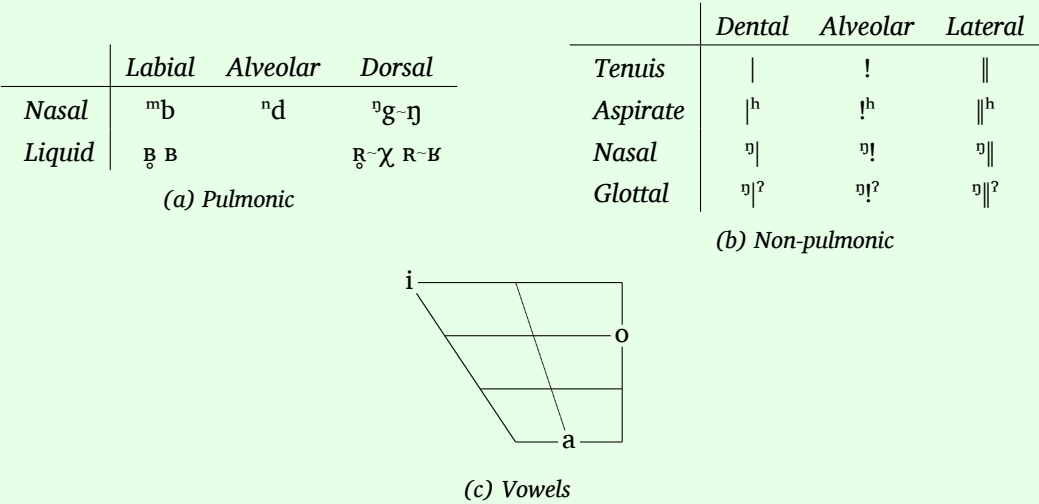


Figure 22: Ideophonemes

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

12.2 | Ideophones

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

12.2.1 | Phonomimes

Phonomimes imitate sounds directly.

12.2.2 | Phenomimes

Phenomimes imitate sounds associated with tangible states and conditions.

12.2.3 | Psychomimes

Psychomimes imitate sounds associated with intangible states and conditions.

13 | Semantics & Pragmatics

13.1 | Topic & Focus

Topic and *focus* are important elements of discourse in Timah. Under certain circumstances (see § 4.2), the presence of explicit topic-fronting and/or focus-marking can change which alignment is used.

In general, the topic marks known or old information, while the focus marks unknown or new information.

13.1.1 | Marking Topic & Focus

The *topic* of a clause can be explicitly marked by fronting it and obligatorily appending a referential article enclitic (see § 5.2) onto the phrase. The topic strongly correlates to the subject of the clause, but this is not always the case.

The *focus* of a clause can be explicitly marked by appending one of three *focus markers* before the phrase containing the focus.

- kʔitò : *focuses the entire phrase*
- tàá : *focuses the head of the phrase*
- kò : *focuses the dependents of the phrase*

13.2 | Avoidance

13.3 | Deixis

13.3.1 | Spatial/Temporal Deixis & Domains

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

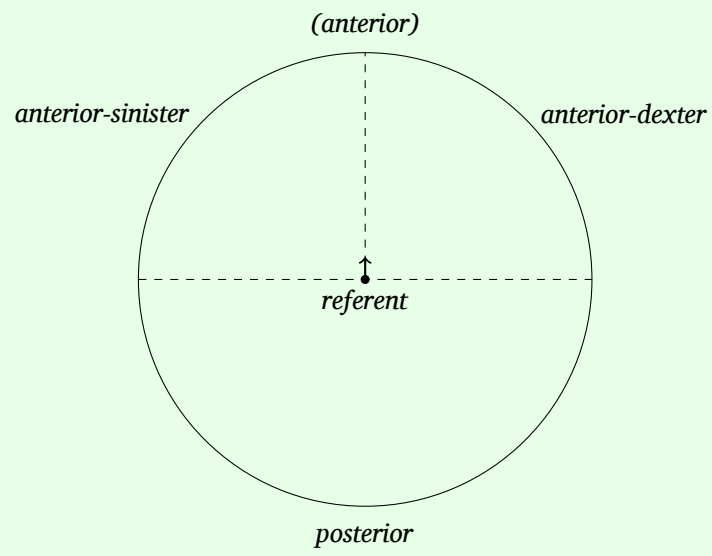


Figure 23: Deictic Space

Appendices

A | *The King and the God*

(7) wí- ʔi(N)- nètɕa -né =móó ká= nén
 IRR- long- royalty -AGT.NCOMPLT =REF.VIS.SG 3.AGT.NCOMPLT= COP.EXIST.ASSRT
a king existed

(8) ká= néjé keteh -té =móó
 3.AGT.NCOMPLT= COP.EXIST.NEG child -AGT.NCOMPLT =REF.VIS.SG
he did not have a child

(9)

(10)

(11)