# Deẽreẽ
## Grammar of a fantasy constructed language

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# Introduction

(1) mosoj'a fãssa eat a
cat-3S wizard 3S.INDEF 3S
'The cat is a wizard'

In example 1, we see that blah blah blah…

fig:glossing abbrevia-tions

# Chapter 1

# Phonology

Phonology regards the phonemes incorporated into the language, consonants or vowels, and their use in syllables and words.

## 1.1 Consonants

| Manner/Point of articulation | Bilabial | Labiodental | Alveolar | Postalveolar | Palatal | Velar | Uvular |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nasal | m | | n | | | | |
| Plosive | p b | | t d | | | k g | |
| Fricative | | f v | s z | ʃʒ | | | ʁ |
| Approximant | | | | | j | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | l | | | | |

Table 1.1 – Consonants in Deẽreẽ

Romanization is done with the IPA symbols, that is, the ones in table , except for ʃ, ʒ and ʁ, which are written respectively as *sh*, *zh* and *r*. Pronunciation of these three letters is:

**sh** as in English '*sh*eep'

**zh** as in English 'vi*s*ion'

**r** as in French 'F*r*ance'

### 1.1.1 Consonant pairs

The combinations of consonants allowed are the following: **tr**, **dr**, **pl**, **bl**, **kl**, **gl**, **kr**, **gr**. Other will occur due to phonotactics, but no other beginning in a plosive.

## 1.2 Vowels

The nine vowels are as described (IPA and orthography) in table .

| | Front | Back |
|---|---|---|
| Closed | /i/, /y/ <ù> | /u/ |
| Mid | /e~ɛ/, /ɛ̃(j)/ <ẽi>, /ø~œ/ <ë> | /o~ɔ/ |
| Open | /a/ | /ɑ̃/ <ã> |

Table 1.2 – Vowels in Deẽreẽ

### 1.2.1 On /ɛ̃j/ or /ɛ̃/

One of the doubtful phonemes in Deẽreẽ's phonology is the grapheme <ẽi>'s pronunciation. It can be pronounced with palatalization or not, that is, /ɛ̃j/ or /ɛ̃/. How to pronounce it is normally determined by its position in the word.

As the last phoneme of a word <ẽi> will be palatalized: /ɛ̃j/. But when <ẽi> is initial or inside a word, it will be pronounced as either palatalized or not. When followed by j, l, s, n, p, t, or sh, that is a consonant from bilabial to palatal but not further back (k, g, r), it is palatalized, otherwise it is not.

## 1.3 Phonotactics

The syllable structure is **(C|B)V(L)(F)** where:

**C** is any consonant

**B** is a group of two consonants among *tr, dr, pl, bl, kl, gl, kr, gr*

**V** is any vowel

**L** is a consonant among *j, l, r, s*

**F** word-final only, a consonant among *n, p, t, k, f, s, sh, l*

### 1.3.1 Vowel pairs

Quite often, two vowels will appear in a word consecutively. In this case, there are three cases: long vowel, diaeresis, or semi-vowel.

#### Long vowel sounds

In a word like aal, There is a long vowel sound due to vowel reduplication. There, it is pronounced as [a.al], instead of [a:l]. That is, the real pronounciation of this word is as close to diaeresis as possible, as opposed to a 'real' long vowel.

#### Diaeresis

Two consecutive vowels will give a diaeresis, that is, the two vowels being pronounced separately without any semi-vowel, in words like fùã, powder, or before a verb ending, for example in tëfuete, to wipe.

#### Semi-vowel

A semi-vowel, that is, a sound like /j/, /w/, or /ɥ/ (the *u* in the French huit), is used in various words, for example the Deẽreẽ word for nature, marùëlf.

# Chapter 2

# Morphology

This chapter, morphology, aims to describe *what the words look like*. This means describing the nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs in their basic forms. Details though will be about person suffixes, Deẽreẽ's equivalent for articles.

## 2.1 Gender

Deẽreẽ has three genders: Human, marked *H*, Magic, marked *M*, and Common, marked *C*. Every word has a gender, whatever its grammatical nature (part of speech) might be: nouns have gender, but verbs have gender too, as well as adjectives. Words that are not nouns do not just agree in gender (if they do), but has their own intrinsic categories.

### 2.1.1 Formation

To determine the gender of a word, you have to look at its last vowel (whether or not it ends in a vowel). The rules are in table .

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Human** | e | ẽi | u |
| **Magic** | a | ã | o |
| **Common** | ù | ë | i |

Table 2.1 – Vowels in the Deẽreẽ genders (H:e/ẽi/u, M:a/ã/o, C:ù/ë/i)

For example:

**zhalbarki** beer, ending in *i*, is of *Common* gender

**drete** to go, ending in *e*, is of *Human* gender

**magra** soul, ending in *a*, is of *Magic* gender

### 2.1.2 Human

The **Human** gender regroups everything that is a non-magic person, a human made thing or skill. Example words are: zeẽi, city, torete, to speak, murtef, door, kueste, noble.

### 2.1.3 Magic

The **Magic** gender represents everything that is of magic or mystical nature. This thus heavily depends on the culture. In the setting of Deẽreẽ, the Kingdom of Reosal, magic, shortly explained, is the soul, present in everyone, and in many animals (eltol), natural elements, and some objects as well. Nouns designating people with magical abilities, like fãssa, wizard, are also of this gender.

Abilities of the mind (sojmata, to think) also fall into this category.

### 2.1.4 Common

What is **Common** is not necessarily unimportant. An example is traùtù, to know. However, kretùl, mole, and a lot of other words, are **Common**. This gender roughly regroups what doesn't fall into the other two categories, that is, what is not specific to humans or what isn't magical.

## 2.2 Number

Number in Deẽreẽ is simply singular (*SI*) and plural (*PL*). As gender is marked with the last vowel of a given word, number is marked with the last consonant.

### 2.2.1 Formation

| **Singular** | -l | -n | -p | -t | -k | -f | -s | -sh | *-vowel* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Plural** | -r | -m | -b | -d | -g | -v | -z | -zh | -r |

Table 2.2 – Number (singular and plural) formation

For example, magra, magrar; aal; aar; sùn (metal), sùm, zërsh (pig), zërzh.

### 2.2.2 Meaning and agreement

#### Nouns

The meanings of singular and plural for nouns are as expected: singular means that the thing is present once, plural that it is present several times: zheo, fairy, zheor, fairies.

As for uncountable nouns, singular means 'some stuff', while plural means 'several kinds of the stuff'. This also is quite an expected behavior: lojshë, history, some part of history; lojshër, histories, or geni, milk, some milk; genir, several kinds of milk.

### 2.2.3 Verbs

Verbs agree in number with the agent. See chapter Conjugation on page 7 for more detail.

### 2.2.4 Adverbs and adjectives

These do not agree, as is explained in chapter Syntax (page 8).

## 2.3 Person suffixes

Person suffixes in Deẽreẽ are suffixes that can be added to different kinds of words, notably nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or postpositions. Their purpose is to precise which person the word refers to. The language uses six grammatical persons, the usual ones:

**1.SI** I, speaker

**2.SI** singular you (thou), whom is spoken to

**3.SI** he/she/it, neither speaker nor person being spoken to

**1.PL** we, several people including the speaker

**2.PL** plural you, several people including the one(s) spoken to

**3.PL** they, several people neither speaking nor being spoken to

### 2.3.1 Form and agreement

Person suffixes have to agree with what they *refer to*. This is very important because, the word they refer to is not always the word on which they are. They decline in *number*, *person*, and *gender*. Their basic forms, preceded by an apostrophe, are listed in table .

| **Gender** | **Human** | | **Magic** | **Common** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Female/neuter** | **Male** | | |
| **1.SI** | ’esh | ’ẽish | ’ash | ’ùsh |
| **2.SI** | ’el | ’ẽil | ’al | ’ùl |
| **3.SI** | ’e | ’ẽi | ’a | ’ù |
| **1.PL** | ’ezh | ’ẽizh | ’azh | ’ùzh |
| **2.PL** | ’er | ’ẽir | ’ar | ’ùr |
| **3.PL** | ’er | ’ẽir | ’ar | ’ùr |

Table 2.3 – Person suffixes in their basic form

We have to notice there is no difference between **2.PL** and **3.PL**. The difference is thus done with context understanding.

### 2.3.2 Definite

The definite article, that is, the equivalent of *the*, is formed simply by applying the person suffix after the noun, in their basic form from table . For example see (2), with mosoj, cat.

(2) a. mosoj'a
cat(MAG)-3.SI.MAG
'the cat'

b. mosoj'ash
cat(MAG)-1.SI.MAG
'I, the cat'

c. mosojr'ar
cat(MAG)-2.PL.MAG
'you, cats'

As we see in this example (2), the person suffixes add meaning to the words in a short, efficient way. They are also used with verbs, as in *dret'ẽil*, I go. Details on conjugation are however in a separated chapter.

### 2.3.3 Indefinite

Indefinite articles express the idea that the speaker doesn't know *which* thing they are speaking about, but *a* thing. Its form in Deẽreẽ is a separate word, not a suffix. This word is *et*, which declines as described in table .

| Gender | Human | | Magic | Common |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Female/neuter | Male | | |
| **1.SI** | etesh | etẽish | et'ash | et'ùsh |
| **2.SI** | etel | etẽil | et'al | et'ùl |
| **3.SI** | et | ẽit | eat | eùt |
| **1.PL** | etezh | etẽizh | et'azh | et'ùzh |
| **2.PL** | eter | etẽir | et'ar | et'ùr |
| **3.PL** | ed | ẽid | ead | eùd |

Table 2.4 – Indefinite article *et* and its declensions

The position of the indefinite article is still after the noun it describes. See example 3.

(3) a. eltol eat
bird(MAG) 3.SI.MAG.INDEF
'a bird'

b. shil et'ùl
worm(COM) 2.SI.COM.INDEF
'You worm!'

### 2.3.4 Demonstrative

Without a pretty table this time; demonstrative articles are used to designate a specific object out of a group, as a transition from indefinite to definite. The English equivalent are *this* and *that*.

These are of two types: proximal and distal.

#### Proximal demonstrative

The word proximal means *close*, so a proximal demonstrative is an article designating a thing close to the speaker (*this*). In Deẽreẽ, it is formed with the definite suffixes preceded with the letter *m*.

(4) mosoj'ma
cat(MAG)-3.SI.PDEM
this cat

#### Distal demonstrative

As proximal means close, distal means *remote*. It is so the equivalent of *that*. It is made in the language with the definite suffixes preceded with *asm*. It is the occasion here to introduce the word senù, fish.

(5) senù'asmù
fish(COM)-3.SI.PDEM
that fish

### 2.3.5 Genitive

It is useful to repeat that the person suffixe on a word do *not* necessarily refers to this word, and agrees with what it refers to. In this part, we'll describe how person suffixes can express the notion of property, or a general link between two objects.

Its shape is very simple: prefix the suffix with the letter *R* (*'e* becomes *'re*). It is always used to refer to the *owner* in a relationship.

#### Owner derived from context

todel'rẽi

#### Explicitely given owner

ëj adal'e ãblẽi're

## 2.4 Adjective

before: all, no suffix
after: one only, 3S suffix

## 2.5 Adpositions

post-positions a lot
pre-positions with stuff.

# Chapter 3

# Conjugation

## 3.1 Tense

### 3.1.1 Present

et

### 3.1.2 Past

ẽiet

### 3.1.3 Future

et trã

## 3.2 Mood

### 3.2.1 Indicative

et

### 3.2.2 Participle

ej

### 3.2.3 Interrogative

Vf es

### 3.2.4 Subjunctive

Vf es

### 3.2.5 Imperative

Vf a-V-et

## 3.3 Aspect

### 3.3.1 Perfect/Imperfect

drej

### 3.3.2 Cessative/Inchoative

drẽiej/drej trã

## 3.4 The Copula

first suffix repetition
Mosoj'a fãssa eat'a. => the cat is a wizard.

# Chapter 4

# Syntax

## 4.1 Noun phrase

## 4.2 Sentence

### 4.2.1 Basic order

### 4.2.2 Questions

### 4.2.3 Imperatives

## 4.3 Subclauses

Vf

## 4.4 Existentials

at

# Chapter 5

# Pragmatics

## 5.1 Sayings

## 5.2 Samples

### 5.2.1 Ëj un naklër'ùr dësish'rù — The King of All Snakes

*This was the first 'poem' written in Deẽreẽ.*

Asaber ëj edan'a mete're,
Akùt'er i noshi nushata lavëdã'ar,
Atraùt'er ëj lëlù aal eùt ëj eltol'ra nën'rù,
Asãkrer ëj adal tis'mù mik'rù ak ãdijl'rar.

Iszher kerbo pitrëk'ù ùsaat ëj un naklër'ùr dësish'rù.
Sabeser un'me, kùs'er un'me, traùs'er un'me, sãkreser un'me, osket dësish'ù.
Dësistis'rù kla drẽiej ãgret kiden'me.
Pa vimẽilf're nãjlat un grebas eltol'mar.

**English translation**

Hear the river's laugh,
See in the sky the clouds swim,
Know the calm of the great wind bird,
Love the riches and flowers of this old place.

In the yellow mangrove lives the king of all snakes.
Everything you hear, everything you see, everything you know, everything you love, belongs to the king.
This noble being hasn't finished ruling his kingdom.
Every bird that flies sings his just name.

# Glossary

**A**
**aal** wind. 2, 10

**D**
**drete** to go. 3, 10

**E**
**eltol** bird. 3, 5, 10
**et** indefinite article. 10

**F**
**fãssa** wizard. 3, 10
**fùã** powder. 2, 10

**G**
**geni** milk. 4, 10

**K**
**kretùl** mole. 3, 10
**kueste** noble. 3, 10

**L**
**lojshë** history. 4, 10

**M**
**magra** soul. 3, 10
**marùëlf** nature. 2, 10
**mosoj** cat. 5, 10
**murtef** door. 3, 10

**N**
**naklë** snake. 10

**S**
**senù** fish. 6, 10
**shil** worm. 5, 10
**sojmata** to think. 3, 10
**sùn** metal. 4, 10

**T**
**torete** to speak. 3, 10
**traùtù** to know. 3, 10
**tëfuete** frotter. 2, 10

**Z**
**zeẽi** city. 3, 10
**zhalbarki** beer. 3, 10
**zheo** fairy. 4, 10
**zërsh** pig. 4, 10

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# Todo list

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